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February 1, 2019

Ms. Lenita Jacobs-Simmons
National Director, Office of Job Corps
U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration
200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4459,
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Director Jacobs-Simmons,

I would like to urge you to reconsider Docket Number ETA-2018-0006 "Job Corps Centers Proposed for Consolidation and Deactivation of Non-Operational Job Corps Centers" as it pertains to the Gainesville, Florida Job Corps Center. The closure of this facility would have severe impacts on both opportunities for youth and local employers in the Gainesville, FL community.

In Alachua County, the median household income is lower than the state and national averages for all demographics groups. Additionally, 11.8% of youth in the state of Florida aged 16-24 are not working or in school. For each of these disconnected youths that remain so at age 25, the estimated social cost is approximately \$500,000 to their community over their lifetime. Additionally, the suicide rate for youth aged 12-25 in Alachua County has tripled over the last year alone, and it is vital that programs remain available to combat the isolation disconnected youth face.

In order to combat these costs, opportunities must be made available to reconnect these youths. One of the few programs in the area targeted at making sure these disconnected youths are trained for well-paying jobs in high growth industries in our community is Job Corps. The closure of the Gainesville Job Corps facility would result in a net loss of training opportunities targeted at disconnected youth in my district.

While the notice of proposed deactivation states that these youths will continue to have access to these programs at the 3 other centers in Florida, the reality is none of the other Florida centers offer the same training opportunities that Gainesville has. These include automotive technology (across Florida there will be 47,000 automotive job openings by 2026), pre-law enforcement/ homeland security which creates a pathway to the Police Academy (over 51,000 job openings in Florida by 2026), and advanced solar installation (with an estimated job growth of 63.4% by 2026). By eliminating access to these programs through the closure of the Gainesville Job Corps Center, it reduces the feasibility of disconnected youths from being able to take advantage of the growth in these industries.

Because of the societal and community costs of eliminating opportunity for disconnected youth, I ask that you reconsider the closure of the Gainesville, Florida Job Corps Center. Additionally, I ask if the Department moves ahead with the closure, that a detailed plan be provided to my office accounting for how the other centers in Florida will provide these training opportunities as well as access for the Gainesville community.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Ted S. Yoho, DVM
Member of Congress