

John Galusha, Chairman  
Arica Andreatta, Commissioner  
Karl Sporleder, Commissioner



**Board of County Commissioners**

September 26, 2023

Alejandra Y Castillo  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Southern Colorado Economic Development District Recompete Pilot Program Application

Dear Ms. Castillo,

We, the Huerfano County Commissioners, write in unanimous support of the Southern Colorado Economic Development District (SCEDD) grant application through the Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program to benefit those in the 25-54 prime-age employment gap (PAEG). Huerfano County has historically been an underserved area with a demonstrated workforce development need and SCEDD's proposed program would ultimately result in a profound impact on the long-term economic viability of Southern Colorado and the 22 impacted counties. This program is the direct result of tremendous regional collaboration by public and private organizations at the state, county, and local level to identify specific problem areas and address them through a cohesive, customized program.

PAEG participants will receive education, training, and mentoring - as well as wrap-around services throughout employment - in the fields of Healthcare, Information Technology, Business, Education, and Construction/Trades. These areas were established through workgroups that assessed deficiencies in the program region, and outreach for eligible participants will focus on underserved populations, people with disabilities, communities of color, post-incarcerated individuals, and the chronically unemployed. Financial assistance for transportation, childcare needs, and other barriers to success is included in SCEDD's program. Many Colorado universities and community colleges, including Colorado State University-Pueblo, Trinidad State College, Otero College, and more have partnered with SCEDD to help participants achieve meaningful, well-paying jobs that will uplift the region. Full support from the Economic Development Administration would reinforce our collective efforts and help establish sustainable growth throughout Huerfano County and Southern Colorado.

Sincerely,

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John Galusha, Chairman

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Arica Andreatta, Commissioner

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Karl Sporleder, Commissioner