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BENNETTE MISALUCHA
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**STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA**

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**HAWAII WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
BOARD MEETING- 2026 THIRD QUARTER**

AGENDA

Date: September 10, 2026
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon
In-Person Princess Ruth Ke'elikolani Building

Meeting Location: 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 317
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Virtual Participation: Virtual Videoconference Meeting – Zoom Meeting (Link below)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84276507600?pwd=gq22FlvzGpK6RkQirJLX2m0MUou5Gk.1>

Meeting ID: 832 3164 9250

Passcode: 951728

Agenda: The agenda was posted to the State electronic calendars as required by §92-7(b), Hawai'i Revised Statutes ("HRS")

Board Meeting Materials: Meeting materials are available for review at
<https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/meeting-docs/>

Individuals may submit written testimony by hard copy mail or hand delivery to: Attn: Workforce Development Council, 830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 317, Honolulu, HI 96813 or by email at DLIR.Workforce.Council@hawaii.gov. We request submission of testimony at least 24 hours prior to the meeting to ensure that it can be distributed to the Board members. Any written testimony submitted after such time will be retained as part of the record and distributed to members as soon as practicable, but we cannot ensure members will receive it in sufficient time to review prior to any decision-making.

Internet Access:

To view the meeting and provide live oral testimony, please use the link at the top of the agenda. You will be asked to enter your name. The Board requests that you enter your full name, but you may use a pseudonym or other identifier if you wish to remain anonymous. You will also be asked for an email address. You may fill in this field with any entry in an email format, e.g., *****@***mail.com

Your microphone will be automatically muted, and video will be turned off. When the Chairperson asks for public testimony, you may click the Raise Hand button found on your Zoom screen to indicate that you wish to testify about an agenda item. You will individually be enabled to unmute your microphone, turn on your video if you choose to, and testify. When recognized by the Chairperson, please unmute your microphone and turn on your video if you choose to before speaking and mute your microphone and turn off your video after you finish speaking

Phone Access:

If you do not have internet access, you may get audio-only access by calling the Zoom Phone Number listed at the top on the agenda. Upon dialing the number, you will be prompted to enter the Meeting ID which is also listed at the top of the agenda. After entering the Meeting ID, you will be asked to wait to be admitted into the meeting. When the Chairperson asks for public testimony, you may indicate you want to testify by entering “*” and then “9” on your phone’s keypad. After entering “*” and then “9”, a voice prompt will let you know that the host of the meeting has been notified. When recognized by the Chairperson, you may unmute yourself by pressing “*” and then “6” on your phone. A voice prompt will let you know that you are unmuted. Once you are finished speaking, please enter “*” and then “6” again to mute yourself.

For both internet and phone access, when testifying, you will be asked to identify yourself and the organization, if any, that you represent. Each testifier is asked to limit their testimony to five minutes per agenda item. Pursuant to section 92-3.7(e), HRS, the Board may remove or block any person who willfully disrupts or compromises the conduct of the meeting.

If connection to the meeting is lost for more than 30 minutes, the meeting will be continued on a specified date and time. This information will be provided on the Council’s website at <https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/meeting-docs/>.

Vision Statement

The Workforce Development Council’s vision is that all employers have competitively skilled employees and all residents seeking work or advancement have sustainable employment and self-sufficiency.

Mission Statement

It is the intent of the Workforce Development Council to support and guide the implementation of the Unified State Plan through active collaboration and regional sensitivity for the purpose of aligning, coordinating, and integrating workforce services to meet the needs of employers and residents in order to foster a robust economy.

I. Call to OrderKeith DeMello, Workforce Development Council Chair

II. Approval of Minutes

- A. *February 18, 2026, Board Meeting*
- B. *April 2, 2026, Special Board Meeting*
- C. *May 21, 2026, Board Meeting*

III. Ceremonial Swearing in of New and Returning Board Members by Representative Andrew Garrett (House Designee to the Workforce Development Council)

- 1. **Gina Woo Anonuevo**, Vice Chair and Chief Administrative Officer/Chief Human Resources Officer, First Hawaiian Bank (representing private sector)
- 2. **Jason Benn**, Senior Vice President and Chief Transformation & Administrative Officer at Hawaiian Electric. (representing private sector)
- 3. **Douglas Chang**, General Manager, The Ritz-Carlton O’ahu, Turtle Bay (representing private sector)
- 4. **Cheryl Cross**, (returning)Executive Search Consultant, Inkinen Executive Search (representing private sector)
- 5. **Keith DeMello**, (returning) Current Chair of the Workforce Development Council and Senior Vice President of Communications & External Affairs, Ulupono Initiative (representing private sector)
- 6. **George Denise**, Director, Project Management, General Contractors Association (representing private sector)
- 7. **Rona Fukumoto**, (returning), Chief Executive Officer and President, Lanakila Pacific (representing private sector)
- 8. **Ashleigh Loa**, Director of Operations, Hawaiian Community Assets (representing private sector)
- 9. **Trang Malone**, (returning) Vice Chair of the WDC and Workforce Initiatives Manager, CVS Health (representing private sector)
- 10. **Cary Miyashiro**, (returning) President, Quad D Solutions (representing private sector)
- 11. **Sean Nakamura**, Corporate Controller and Treasurer, TradeWind Group (representing private sector)
- 12. **Chris Burnett**, Director of the Committee on Political Education for the Hawaii State AFL-CIO(representing labor sector)
- 13. **Mark Phongsavath**, Lead Organizer, IBEW Local Union 1186 (representing labor sector)

***Swearing in of New Board Members**

IV. Presentation: Roles and Functions of Labor Market Information in the Workforce Eco-System

..... Scott Wheeler, Chief, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) Research and Statistics Office

Scott Wheeler, the DLIR Research and Statistics Chief, will provide an overview of the role of labor market information in the workforce development system and what information and services the R&S office can provide.

The Research and Statistics (R&S) office drives workforce development by providing critical data on the labor market, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, and wage standards. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), State and Local Boards must integrate

Labor Market Information (LMI) into their strategic planning. R&S directly supports this mandate by delivering the real-time analysis needed to identify in-demand industries, design data-driven training programs, and coordinate regional initiatives. To ensure compliance and maximize regional economic growth, R&S continuously updates this labor market data, transforming it into a practical service for employers and job seekers.

V. Proposed By-Laws Amendments on Article V “Meetings, Attendance, Voting, and Quorum”Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council

The Workforce Development Council has operated under established meeting guidelines and protocols for a number of years to promote orderly, transparent, and consistent conduct of its meetings. However, these practices have not been fully codified in the WDC By-Laws, particularly with respect to procedures that have evolved with the use of virtual and hybrid meetings. The proposed amendments are intended to formalize these existing practices, incorporate applicable meeting and testimony requirements, and establish clear and consistent protocols for both in-person and virtual meetings. Upon approval, these provisions will be incorporated into Article V of the WDC By-Laws, “Meetings, Attendance, Voting, and Quorum.”

The proposed amendments to the by-laws specifically include rules on submission of written testimony, oral testimony and disruptive individuals, as stated in Office of Information Practices Guidance, November 24, 2025, Newsletter Archive – Office of Information Practices,

HRS §92-3.

Open meetings: The boards shall afford all interested persons an opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, in writing, on any agenda item. The boards shall also afford all interested persons an opportunity to present oral testimony on any agenda item; provided that the oral testimonies of interested persons shall not be limited to the beginning of a board's agenda or meeting. The boards may provide for reasonable administration of oral testimony by rule. To enforce a rule limiting oral testimony to five minutes for each agenda item, the board must establish that rule in writing.

The Executive Committee considered this matter at its August meeting and voted to recommend its approval by the full Board. The matter is now being forwarded to the full Board for consideration and action at its September 10, 2026 meeting.

***Requires Board Action**

VI. Governor’s Time Dan Kouchi, Policy Advisor at Governor’s Office and Designee for Governor Josh Green

Final 2026 Legislative Session Snapshot

Governor Green wrapped up the 2026 Legislative Session, by signing 266 of the 267 bills that were passed by the Legislature and required his action. Of the four bills that were originally included on the Governor’s intent-to-veto list, Governor Green vetoed one of the bills, and signed the other three into law, including one line-item reduction on one of those bills.

Governor Green held 18 bill signing ceremonies during the 2026 bill signing season. These ceremonies brought together stakeholders, legislators and media members to highlight the important legislation that was passed. Ceremonies covered several issues including healthcare, kupuna, conservation, education, housing affordability and strengthening Hawai'i's economy to name a few.

2027 Western Governors’ Association Chair and Chair Initiative

On July 2nd, Governor Green officially assumed the role of Western Governors’ Association Chair. In this capacity Governor Green will lead the bipartisan association that represents the governors from 22 Western States and U.S. Pacific territories for the next year.

In addition to his leadership role, Governor Green also launched his Chair Initiative, “Health Beyond Healthcare.” This initiative is aimed at improving mental health outcomes by expanding access to care, while addressing the broader factors that shape health and well-being. Over the next year, WGA will convene governors, policymakers, healthcare leaders, researchers and stakeholders from across the West through workshops, webinars and policy discussions. Together, they will develop bipartisan recommendations focused on four core priorities:

- Improving mental healthcare access and delivery
- Prioritizing prevention and early intervention
- Expanding coverage and affordability
- Building lifelong well-being and community resilience

VII. Labor Director’s Update.....David Rodriguez, Designee for Department of Labor Director Jade Butay

1. The Program Year 2026 (July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028) allocations and contracts were provided to the Local Areas, and the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) is awaiting the signed contracts. Local areas are reminded that 80 percent of a local area’s allocation must be obligated or awarded by June 30, 2027.
2. The United States Department of Labor has not provided the 2nd allotments for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. However, we are optimistic that the Notice of Award for the remaining allotments will be provided sometime in October.
3. The Department continues to promote Apprenticeship as it is a proven model: workers earn wages and learn a skill that leads to success.
4. DLIR has partnered with the University of Hawaii to help address the teacher shortage by providing the Hele Imua Internship to college students during their last semester as “Student Teachers”.
5. The board and local areas are encouraged to use the labor market information published by the Research and Statistics Office (R&S) to determine whether industries/occupations are in demand, as required under WIOA. Their office is available to demonstrate the labor market information, reports, and tools available in HireNet Hawaii.
6. The DLIR certified Oahu and Hawaii Local Boards and provided staff with technical assistance to improve future certification cycles, including ensuring that nominating entities follow required member categories, strengthening documentation, and keeping bylaws current with State Criteria.

VIII. Legislative Update: Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 139 Keith DeMello

A report on the contents of Resolution SCR 139 which affirms the Workforce Development Council’s

role as the statewide convener and coordinator of Hawai'i's workforce strategy. It directs WDC to advance a long-term, cross-sector workforce plan that aligns education, training, and economic development efforts to ensure residents can learn, work, and thrive in Hawai'i by 2045.

IX. Report on the Use of General Appropriation Funds for FY 2026 *..... Performance Management and Finance Committee Chair Sean Nakamura

Since 2024, the State Legislature had restored the general funds appropriations to the Workforce Development Council. Last year, the state monies went to the McKinley School for adults (which administers Title II or Adult Education and Financial Literacy Act funds). The monies were used to purchase educational modules for the various training programs including Build Your Farm, and Build Your Business

This year, the Council will allocate funds for two major projects:

- 1) Contract with the University of Hawaii Community colleges to continue the work of sector partnerships.*
- 2) Contract with the University of Hawaii office of the President to partially fund the Ai Institute Day on August 11, 2026.*

The Executive Committee's recommendation passed this measure during will be forwarded to the full board for further action when it meets on September 10, 2026.

*** Requires Board Action**

X. Report on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 General Appropriation Funds Budget *..... Performance Management and Finance Committee Chair Sean Nakamura

The Performance Management and Finance Committee is responsible for monitoring the Council's financial resources and performance outcomes. For FY 2027, the Committee will present the recommended budget for the Council's General Appropriations (GA) funds for consideration by the full Workforce Development Council. The budget spreadsheet and details can be found in the board packet as well as on the Workforce Development Council website.

The Executive Committee considered this matter at its August meeting and voted to recommend its approval by the full Board. The matter is now being forwarded to the full Board for consideration and action at its September 10, 2026 meeting.

***Requires Board Action**

XI. Update on WDC's Employer Engagement PlanBennette Misalucha. Executive Director, Workforce Development Council

Recognizing that employer engagement has historically been the weakest link in the three-legged stool of job seekers, public sector, and employers, the Council elevated this priority through several

tactical actions over this year. The initiative was identified as a priority in the State Modified Plan.

- a) Restructuring of the Education and Career Pathways Committee -DONE
- b) Restructuring of the Employer Engagement Committee -DONE
- c) Allocation of resources for Sector Partnership through the contract with University of Hawaii Community College - DONE
- d) Listening Sessions on eight employment sectors - DONE
- e) A qualitative and quantitative Survey on employers' pulse. This is in collaboration with the Hawaii Employers Council -ONGOING

XII. Fiscal Reports: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act GrantsJeanne Ohta, WDC

An overview of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant expenditures, budget status, and financial performance. The report will highlight current allocations, spending trends, and forecasts

XIII. Report on the Renewal of Executive Director's Contract Keith DeMello

The Chair will report to the Board the outcome of the contract process on the Executive Director's employment contract. Note that this agenda item pertains solely to contract renewal and should not be construed as the formal performance evaluation of the Executive

XIV. Executive Director's Report Bennette E. Misalucha

D. Projects/ Activities

The Executive Director will report on the Second and Third Quarter Activities.

- Status of the Workforce Pell Grant working group
- Symposium Series on Artificial Intelligence;
- Synergy Summit III on August 3, 2026
- Industry Listening Sessions- June 22, 2026 to September 1, 2026.
- National Governor Association Convening in Nashville, Tennessee

E. FOCUS FOR Quarter 4

The Executive Director will report on the focus for the next quarter:

- Workforce Prell Grant
- Eligible Training Provider List Task Force
- Eligible Training Provider Platform Modernization project with University of Hawaii
- Mandatory training for all State and local board members, focusing on roles, governance, and compliance).
- State Board Acting as the Local Board on Kaua'i (Training was conducted for Kauai stakeholders in August to pave the way for transition on Kauai).
- Prepare to conduct a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the operation of the Kauai American Job Center
- Future of Work Conference on September 23, 2026

XV. O'ahu Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Service Delivery and Contract Status Update Chris Lum Lee, Board Chair and

The O‘ahu Workforce Development Board (OWDB) will provide an update on contracting and service-delivery matters affecting WIOA Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth services on O‘ahu, including the recent interruption in services during the transition between contracts. The briefing will address the circumstances leading to the interruption, the current status and restoration of services, impacts on participants, and actions taken in response. OWDB will also discuss lessons learned and measures being implemented to strengthen contract planning, transitions, and continuity of workforce services going forward.

XVI. Acceptance of Written Reports from Core Partners of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (No Oral Presentation)

This agenda item is informational only and does not include oral presentations.
Written reports are included in the Board Packet and will be accepted into the record.

- A. *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and Title III – Workforce Development Division*..... Maricar Pilotin-Freitas, Administrator, Workforce Development Division*

**PowerPoint slide deck will be part of the Board Packet*

- 1. WIOA Title I Performance Report*
- 2. Wagner-Peyser (Title III) Performance Report*
- 3. Negotiated Performance Levels*
- 4. WIOA Contract Distribution Status*
- 5. HELE Imua Internship Program*
- 6. Summer Youth Internship Program*
- 7. Apprenticeship Program*
- 8. Community Outreach*
- 9. Success Stories*

- B. *WIOA Title II – Adult Education Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)..... Wanelle Kaneshiro, Hawaii Department of Education, Workforce*

- 1. Program Data on learners served*
- 2. Federal Performance targets versus Actual outcomes (PY 25-28) The graph can be found in the board packet which can also be accessed in the WDC website.*
- 3. Key Program Updates*

- C. *WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Lea Dias, Administrator, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Department of Human Services*

- 1. Program Year 2024 Performance Tables can be found in the Board Packet.*
- 2. Update on the Program Year 2025 WIOA Performance Improvement Plan*
- 3. Agency Updates*
- 4. Report on Vacancies*

XVII. Acceptance of Written Reports from Local Workforce Development Boards.

*This agenda item is informational only and does not include oral presentations.
Written reports are included in the Board Packet and will be accepted into the record.*

A. Oahu Workforce Development Board..... Harrison Kuranishi, Executive Director

- 1. Key accomplishments*
- 2. KEY TRANSITION PRIORITY*
- 3. Changes to American Job Center and One-Stop System*
- 4. Fiscal Stewardship*
- 5. Strategic Priorities*
- 6. Issues Requiring Continued Attention*
- 7. Focus for next 60-90 days*

B. Maui County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB)

1. Funding and Contracting of WIOA expenditures
2. Procurement of Services
3. Community Outreach
4. Youth-to-Work and Employer Engagement:
5. Board Governance and Recertification
6. Project Pilina and Workforce System Alignment.
7. Finance Sub-Committee Meeting – Held on Friday, August 7, 2026 reviewed WIOA program operations.
8. PY24 Expenditures and Fund Utilization
9. PY25 Contract and Budget Oversight
10. Training and Supportive Services
11. Program Sub-Committee Meeting, August 13, 2026
12. Internships, OJT and Work-Based Learning:
13. Sector Strategies & Employer Engagement Sub-Committee
14. WIOA Alignment with Industry Demand
15. WIOA Dislocated Worker Outreach
16. Career Pathways and Employee Retention
17. Sector Partnership Development
18. Employer Engagement Framework
19. Events/Announcements

C. Hawaii County Workforce Development Board..... Clinton Mercado, Executive Director

- 1. Status Updates/ Key Milestones and Convenings*
- 2. One-Stop Operator Operations*
- 3. Workforce Development Partnerships & Service Delivery*
- 4. Employer Engagement & Work-Based Learning*
- 5. Eligible Training Provider Referrals*

6. Fiscal Year-End Resource Utilization

7. Ongoing Challenges

XVIII. Acceptance of Written Reports from Workforce Development Council Standing Committees

This agenda item is informational only and does not include oral presentations.
Written reports are included in the Board Packet and will be accepted into the record.

A. Education and Career Pathways Committee

Chair: Cary Miyashiro, Quad D Solutions

Vice Chair – Rona Fukumoto, Lanakila Pacific

The Committee met on May 11, 2026 and August 10, 2026.

Please see minutes of the two committee meetings which are part of the board packet

B. Youth Services Committee

Chair: Carla Kurokawa, Chair

Vice Chair – Amber Akana

The Youth Services Committee met on June 26, 2026 and the minutes of that meeting is included in the board packet.

C. Employer Engagement Committee

Chair: Gina Anunuevo

Vice Chair – Derek Kanehira

Vice Chair – Cheryl Cross

The Committee held listening sessions from May to September. Recordings of these sessions can be found on the WDC website.

D. Performance Management and Finance Committee

Chair: Sean Nakamura

Vice Chair – Sean Knox

Vice Chair – Lea Dias

Performance Management and Finance committee met on July 2, 2026. Minutes of that meeting are included in the board packet. The minutes as well as the recording of the meeting can be accessed through the WDC website.

XIX. Workforce Development Council's Next Meeting

Tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2026 at 9:30 am-12 noon

Virtual Videoconferencing Meeting via Zoom and in-person at 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 317,

XX. Adjournment

Reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities are available upon request. Requests for accommodations should be submitted via email to Bennette.E.Misalucha@hawaii.gov or by calling Bennette Misalucha at (808) 586-8815 (voice) as soon as possible. Such requests should include a detailed description of the accommodation needed. In addition, please include a way for Bennette Misalucha to contact the requester if more information is needed to fulfill the request. Last minute requests will be accepted but may not be possible to accommodate. Upon request, this notice is available in alternate formats.