



WORKFORCEDEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
PACKET**

2025 Third Quarterly Executive
Committee Meeting

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

1:30 PM to 3:00 PM

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING PACKET
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Agenda

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS**

**KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 317
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

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**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL'S
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday, July 30, 2025
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Remote Meeting:

This meeting will be held remotely by Zoom interactive conference technology. Board members, staff, and members of the public may participate in the remote meeting by using the following Zoom link:

Workforce Development Council is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88692815908?pwd=QffkOIkN3VvNX6Eqa8i1PV5NqgzGbE.1>

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If you do not have the technology or ability to join the remote meeting via Zoom, please dial +1 (669) 444-9171 on the telephone to participate in the remote meeting.

Meeting ID: 886 9281 5908

Passcode: 931639

Physical Meeting:

A physical meeting location will be open to the public and will have an audiovisual connection, which will allow individuals at the physical meeting location to participate in the remote meeting. The address of the physical meeting location is 830 Punchbowl Street, Room #317, Honolulu, HI 96813.

Written and Oral Testimony:

Individuals may submit written testimony by U.S. mail or hand delivery at 830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 317, Honolulu, HI 96813 or by email at DLIR.Workforce.Council@hawaii.gov. To ensure that members are able to review testimony prior to the meeting, we encourage interested persons to submit written testimony by 24 hours prior to the meeting. Any written testimony submitted after such time testimony 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.

Individuals may provide remote oral testimony during the remote meeting at the Zoom link listed above. Individuals participating at the physical meeting location may also provide oral testimony during the remote meeting.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, please contact Bennette Misalucha at (808) 586-8815 (for TTY/TTD Dial 711 then ask for (808) 586-8815) or email dlir.workforce.council@hawaii.gov as soon as possible. Requests made as early as possible will allow adequate time to fulfill your request. Upon request, this notice is available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, or electronic copy.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order.....*Workforce Development Council Chair Ken Loui*

II. Approval of June 4, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting*

**Executive Committee Action Required*

III. Financial Reports.....*Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director*

The Financial Reports will include the status of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds as well as an analysis of the 2025 allocation to the States.

**There will also be a proposal on the disbursement of funds from the 2026 Workforce Development Council's General appropriations (GA) funds.*

This presentation to the Executive Committee is in line with the By-laws which stipulates that "The Executive Committee reviews and makes recommendations on all personnel matters, Council governance and compliance matters, standing committee matters, and other matters as directed by the Council".

**Executive Committee Action Required*

IV. Report on the Disposition of Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds
.....*Bennette Misalucha*

The Workforce Development Council has been tasked with the disposition of \$1.5 million in Program year 2022 Unexpended Funds. This report will discuss the status of the six projects that are being funded by these funds.

a. Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7-12) through Work-Based Learning Intermediary Support (Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education)

b. Building Community College Workforce Capacity (University of Hawaii Community College)

c. Research to Improve Hawai'i's WIOA Workforce Systems (Axios Consulting)

d. Professional Public Relations Services to Increase Awareness of the American Job Centers (AJCs) in Hawai'i (Becker Communications)

e. Expanding Sector Partnerships into new High Growth Industries (University

of Hawaii/Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii)
f. *Fiscal Management and Budget Processes Training (TheGAteam)*

v. *Executive Director's Report... Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council*

a. *Executive Director's Annual Report*

The Program Year for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) concluded on June 30, 2025. As is customary, the Executive Director has prepared a summary of the prior year's key highlights and milestones. The report will initially be reviewed by the Executive Committee and will be presented to the full Council at its meeting on August 20, 2025.

1. *Highlights*

- a. Implementation of the State Unified Plan*
- b. Board Governance*
- c. Delineation of WDC Role*
- d. Fiscal Management*
- e. Local Board Coordination*
- f. Convenor, Analyst and Voice*
- g. Community Collaboration*

2. *Challenges*

- a. Uncertainty in WIOA funding*
- b. Limited resources*
- c. Prioritizing Initiatives*

3. *Opportunities*

- a. Statewide alignment*
- b. Generational Commitment*

b. *Update on the Implementation of the State Workforce Development Unified Plan: The State Workforce Unified Plan was submitted on March 4, 2024 as prescribed by United States Department of Labor and was approved in June 2024. As part of its federal mandate, the Workforce Development Council is charged with the*

implementation of the Plan. A Synergy summit II was held on July 9, 2025 attended by about 100 community stakeholders.

- c. *Update on the delineation of duties of the Workforce Development Council as an attached agency to Department of Labor and Industrial Relation effective July 1, 2024.*

- Roles and Responsibilities

- d. *Focus for Third Quarter 2025*

- *Operational Transition from Workforce Development Division*
- *Implementation of the Unified Plan*
- *Building Strategic Partnerships with Community Organizations*
- *Kauai Operations*

- e. *Upcoming Activities/Events in 2025*

- *Workforce Development Heroes*
- *September is Workforce Development Month*
- *September 24 is the Future of Work conference*

- VI. **Plans for Executive Director's Performance ReviewWDC Chair Ken Loui*

A discussion regarding the survey results for Executive Director's Performance Review.

This presentation to the Executive Committee is in line with the By-laws which stipulates that "The Executive Committee reviews and makes recommendations on all personnel matters, Council governance and compliance matters, standing committee matters, and other matters as directed by the Council".

**Executive Committee Action Required.*

- VII. Next Meetings **2025 BOARD MEETING DATES (subject to change)**

Third Quarter Wednesday, August 20, 2025 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Fourth Quarter Wednesday, November 19, 2025 9:30 am to 11:30 am

2025 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DATES (subject to change)

Wednesday, October 22, 2025/1:30 pm to 3 pm

VIII. Announcements and Constituent Comments (if any)

At this time, the public is welcome to announce upcoming events and comment on relevant issues that were not included in this meeting's agenda. Please be advised that in compliance with the Sunshine Law, the Committee cannot discuss or act on issues that were not included in this meeting's agenda, but issues raised in constituent comments may be included in a future agenda for the Committee's consideration.

IX. Next meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled on October 22, 2025 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. over zoom and in person at the Department of Labor Office at 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 317, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817.

x. Adjournment

Minutes

June 4, 2025



STATE OF HAWAII

KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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Workforce Development Council

Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes Summary

Wednesday, June 04, 2025

1:30 – 3:00 pm

In-person and online via Zoom

I. Call to Order / II. Welcome to Summer Intern Angela Chock (00:00:03 – 00:04:30)

The Executive Committee meeting of the Workforce Development Council was called to order at 1:30 PM by Vice Chair Cary Miyashiro, who presided in the absence of Chair Ken Loui (excused due to family travel). The meeting was held in accordance with Hawai'i's Sunshine Law, with both Zoom and in-person access available at Room 317 of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Roll call was conducted, and quorum was established with 6 of 9 representatives present:

Members Present:

- Cary Miyashiro (Vice Chair)
- Dion Dizon (Vice Chair, Special Projects)
- Carla Kurokawa (Vice Chair, Youth Services)
- Sean Knox (Vice Chair, Performance Management)
- Trang Malone (Chair, Military & Veterans Affairs)
- Lorna Woo (Vice Chair, Sector Partnerships)

Members Excused:

- Ken Loui

- Keith DeMello
- Tui Scanlan
- Donovan Dela Cruz
- Cheryl Cross
- Derek Kanehira

Following roll call, public guests introduced themselves, including representatives from McKinley Community School for Adults, the office of Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, and a DNP student attending for clinical practicum hours.

The committee also welcomed Angela Chock, the current Hele Imua Intern, who introduced herself and shared her appreciation for the opportunity to learn alongside the WDC staff.

III. Financial Reports (00:04:30 – 00:27:46)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha presented the financial reports, referencing pages 9–20 of the meeting packet.

She reviewed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant summary as of March 31, 2025, noting that the total Program Year 2023 (PY 2023) allocation was \$10.3 million, of which approximately \$6.3 million had been expended. County-level spending breakdowns were shared:

- Honolulu: 57%
- Hawai‘i Island: 67%
- Maui: 52%
- Kaua‘i: 33%
- State WIOA: 91%

It was explained that 15% of total funds are retained by the state for administration and program support, while 85% are distributed to counties based on population and economic data. Counties have two years to spend their allocations, after which unused funds revert to the state. The state then has one additional year to expend those funds before they are returned to the federal government.

PY 2024 funds had not yet been spent because prior-year allocations must be used first.

Bennette then presented the status of the FY 2025 Council's General Appropriations (GA) funds. Of the original \$455,000 budgeted, only \$416,000 was available after a 20% restriction for budgetary savings. As of May 31, about \$40,000 had been spent, leaving approximately \$372,000 to be encumbered before June 30, 2025.

A proposal was made to allocate the remaining GA funds to Adult Education in partnership with the Department of Education. This would allow for a direct transfer of funds without the need for an RFP process. The program was described as "shovel-ready," and its relevance was supported by recent presentations to legislators and sector partners.

During this portion of the meeting, Pane Meatoga III joined the call as an observer.

Questions and discussion followed, including:

- Sean Knox asked about the future of Job Corp which was not funded in the new federal budget. He inquired about allocating funds towards Job Corps. Bennette explained that the program cut does not leave the infrastructure for Job Corp to continue.
- Trang Malone inquired about how students would learn about the adult education opportunities. Helen Sanpei (McKinley Community School for Adults) shared outreach methods including newspaper, television, school partnerships, and use by the Department of Public Safety.
- Dion Dizon asked about supporting displaced Job Corps youth. Bennette Misalucha explained that local workforce boards on Maui and O'ahu are working to absorb participants, though housing remains a concern.

A motion to encumber the remaining GA funds for Adult Education was made by Dion Dizon and seconded by Sean Knox. The motion passed unanimously with 6 voting members present.

IV. Report on the Disposition of Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds (00:27:46 – 00:35:08)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha reported on the disposition of Program Year 2022 (PY 2022) unexpended WIOA funds, referencing pages 20–23 of the packet.

She explained that \$1.5 million in PY 2022 funds had been allocated across 3 projects with government agencies. These include projects undertaken by:

- Hawai'i P-20
- UH Community Colleges

- UH System / Chamber of Commerce of Hawai‘i

All agencies involved have been informed that services must be rendered and funds encumbered by June 30, 2025, to avoid lapsing back to the federal government. All projects are reported to be on track.

In addition to agency contracts, three projects were awarded through an RFP process:

1. Axios Consulting – to research, evaluate and make recommendations on the American Job Center and state workforce system.
2. Becker Communitcations – Focused on American Job Centers, with campaign rollout expected during summer and fall. Funds are encumbered even if services continue beyond June 30.
3. GATeam – Scheduled for June 27–28, 2025, for board executive directors, fiscal officers, and stakeholders. The training responds to recent staffing changes at the Administrative Services Office and aims to standardize fiscal knowledge and develop a reference handbook.

There were no further questions. The update concluded this agenda item.

V. Special Projects Report (00:35:08 – 00:37:14)

Vice Chair Dion Dizon delivered a report on behalf of Special Projects Chair Keith DeMello, who was absent due to business travel. Dion Dizon read a prepared statement outlining an assessment of the Council’s legislative engagement during the 2024 session.

The report noted that the Council’s legislative response mechanisms were successfully tested during the past session, allowing testimony to be delivered on key legislation.

Moving forward, it was recommended that the Council adopt a more proactive strategy by:

- Developing policy initiatives during the pre-session year;
- Initiating early discussions through the Special Projects Committee;
- Seeking formal Council approval in fall meetings;
- Entering each session with a clear and comprehensive legislative agenda.

This shift would allow the Council to shape, rather than merely respond to, legislation and better leverage its workforce expertise.

There were no questions or comments from the Committee.

VI. Certification of the Kaua'i American Job Center (00:37:14 – 00:44:53)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha presented findings from the April 9, 2025 site visit to the Kaua'i American Job Center (AJC). As Kaua'i does not have a local workforce board, the WDC is responsible for certifying the AJC under WIOA.

The review was conducted using a federally mandated checklist. Although the center demonstrated strengths, particularly in staff diligence, areas for improvement included:

- Staffing limitations, which restrict outreach;
- Lack of written policies, including those required under the ADA;
- Need for greater coordination among core partners;
- Limited engagement with the County's Department of Economic Development.

As a result, the WDC issued a provisional certification with a corrective action plan and proposed extending the due date for compliance from June 16 to September 30, 2025, to allow more time for implementation.

A motion to endorse the provisional certification and updated corrective action timeline was made by Sean Knox, seconded by Trang Malone, and passed unanimously.

Cary Miyashiro inquired whether the McKinley Community School for Adults could potentially help run the Kaua'i AJC. Bennette Misalucha informed that this would require a formal RFP process.

VII. Executive Director's Report (00:44:53 – 00:50:30)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha provided updates on several key items:

- Board Recruitment: The Council currently has four private sector vacancies and one labor representative vacancy. A potential replacement from the labor sector is being coordinated with AFL-CIO. Former member Eileen Caldwell is relocating to San Francisco but has agreed to stay on temporarily until a replacement is appointed.
- Implementation of the State Unified Plan: Currently developing the North Star. The Council is receiving technical assistance via a National Governors Association grant. The four Pillar Catalyst Teams have met multiple times and are working through their task lists. Each team will report on their progress at the Synergy Summit II on July 9, 2025.

- Transition to Attached Agency Status: The subcommittee working on the delineation of roles and responsibilities of WDD and WDC continues to meet with full transition anticipated by September 2025.
- Strategic Focus Areas for 2025: The Executive Director shared a slide highlighting areas of focus for the second and third quarters of 2025. The slide is available in the meeting packet posted on the WDC website.
- Upcoming Events:
 - Board Orientation: June 5, 2025
 - Synergy Summit II: July 9, 2025
 - Future of Work Conference: September 24, 2025
 - WDC has also been invited to deliver opening remarks at the Hawai'i on the Hill event.

VIII. Plans for Executive Director's Performance Review (00:50:30- 00:50:56)

Chair Ken Loui was not present; therefore, the discussion on the Executive Director's Performance Review was deferred to the next Executive Committee meeting.

IX. Announcements and Constituent Comments (00:50:56 – 00:51:40)

No announcements or public comments were made.

X. Next Meeting (00:51:42 – 00:51:59)

The next Executive Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, 2025, from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM, held in person at Room 317, DLIR, and via Zoom.

XI. Adjournment (00:51:59 – 00:52:12)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:52 PM.

Financial Reports

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
Grants Summary As of 05/31/2025

PY22

County	Allocated	Expenditures	Balance As of 6/30/24	Lapsed 6/30/25
Honolulu	4,711,403	2,692,707	2,018,696	
Hawaii	1,647,337	1,111,897	535,440	
Maui	1,221,938	642,938	579,000	
WDD-Kauai	617,019	207,407	409,612	
Rapid Response	557,592	253,345	304,247	
WIOA State Level	1,545,051	1,409,296	135,755	
Total by County	10,300,340	6,317,590	3,982,750	-

Funds to Lapse 6/30/25

Statewide from				Balance	
Unexpended Funds	Unexpended Funds	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Encumbrances	As of 05/31/2025
WIOA Adult	1,303,410.01	254,943.37	1,048,466.64	0.00	0.00
WIOA Youth	1,421,927.78	1,269,552.00	152,375.78	0.00	0.00
WIOA DW	817,410.37	264,219.49	553,190.88	0.00	0.00
WIOA RR	304,247.00	304,247.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
WIOA State Level	135,755.00	24,476.87	111,278.13	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	3,982,750.16	2,117,438.73	1,865,311.43	0.00	0.00

PY23

County	Allocated	Expenditures	Balance As of 5/31/2025	Lapsed 6/30/26
Honolulu	4,816,645.00	3,183,391.55	1,633,253.45	
Hawaii	1,697,603.00	927,752.75	769,850.25	
Maui	1,039,013.00	704,561.12	334,451.88	
WDD-Kauai	537,493.00	187,769.72	349,723.28	
Rapid Response	511,366.00	85,824.35	425,541.65	
WIOA State Level	1,518,020.00	646,737.84	871,282.16	
Total by County	10,120,140.00	5,089,299.49	4,384,102.67	-

GRANT SUMMARY DETAILS
AS OF MAY 31, 2025

		PY22/FY23 EXPENDITURES				
		Expenditures		PY22	PY22	
		PY22	PY22	Funds Avail.	% Expended	PY22
		Budget	06/30/24	06/30/24	06/30/24	Participants
Adult Program:	Hawaii	615,398.00	456,194.35	159,203.65	74%	202
DW Program:	Hawaii	277,263.00	217,556.05	59,706.95	78%	37
Local Admin:	Hawaii	164,734.00	130,996.43	33,737.57	80%	
Youth Program:	Hawaii	589,942.00	307,149.68	282,792.32	52%	46
Rapid Response	Hawaii	94,791.00	59,936.10	34,854.90	63%	
	Hawaii Total	1,742,128.00	1,171,832.61	570,295.39		285
Adult Program:	Honolulu	1,566,467.00	977,778.19	588,688.81	62%	751
DW Program:	Honolulu	815,479.00	426,181.85	389,297.15	52%	151
Local Admin:	Honolulu	471,141.00	347,678.25	123,462.75	74%	
Youth Program:	Honolulu	1,858,316.00	941,069.13	917,246.87	51%	154
Rapid Response	Honolulu	278,796.00	41,612.27	237,183.73	15%	
	Honolulu Total	4,990,199.00	2,734,319.69	2,255,879.31		1,056
Adult Program:	Kauai	217,564.00	88,477.17	129,086.83	41%	18
DW Program:	Kauai	235,583.00	70,614.03	164,968.97	30%	8
Local Admin:	Kauai	-	-	-		
Youth Program:	Kauai	163,872.00	48,315.66	115,556.34	29%	4
Rapid Response	Kauai	72,487.00	40,278.88	32,208.12	56%	
	Kauai Total	689,506.00	247,685.74	441,820.26		30
Adult Program:	Maui	419,589.00	184,231.78	235,357.22	44%	105
DW Program:	Maui	326,191.00	128,634.70	197,556.30	39%	32
Local Admin:	Maui	122,193.00	65,140.85	57,052.15	53%	
Youth Program:	Maui	353,965.00	264,930.75	89,034.25	75%	35
Rapid Response	Maui	111,518.00	111,518.00	-	100%	
	Maui Total	1,333,456.00	754,456.08	578,999.92		172
	Grand Total	8,755,289.00	4,908,294.12	3,846,994.88		1,543

GRANT SUMMARY DETAILS
AS OF MAY 31, 2025

		PY23/FY24 EXPENDITURES				FORECASTING	
		Expenditures		PY23	PY23		
		PY23	PY23 Exp	Funds Avail.	% Expended	PY23	PY23 Exp
		Budget	5/31/2025	5/31/2025	5/31/2025	Participants	6/30/2025
Adult Program:	Hawaii	698,272.00	383,541.81	314,730.19	55%	108	37,467.81
DW Program:	Hawaii	254,277.00	165,199.91	89,077.09	65%	21	18,498.46
Local Admin:	Hawaii	169,760.00	56,119.07	113,640.93	33%		3,871.86
Youth Program:	Hawaii	575,294.00	322,891.96	252,402.04	56%	33	32,804.21
Rapid Response	Hawaii	86,932.00	65,941.69	20,990.31	76%		7,530.41
Hawaii Total		1,784,535.00	993,694.44	790,840.56		162	100,172.75
Adult Program:	Honolulu	1,687,490.00	1,306,472.33	381,017.67	77%	686	126,377.01
DW Program:	Honolulu	777,787.00	374,975.33	402,811.67	48%	140	32,169.38
Local Admin:	Honolulu	481,665.00	237,454.19	244,210.81	49%		19,470.37
Youth Program:	Honolulu	1,869,703.00	1,264,489.70	605,213.30	68%	140	142,125.47
Rapid Response	Honolulu	265,910.00	-	265,910.00	0%		11,192.36
Honolulu Total		5,082,555.00	3,183,391.55	1,899,163.45		966	331,334.59
Adult Program:	Kauai	145,473.00	78,870.47	66,602.53	54%	13	7,148.82
DW Program:	Kauai	194,447.00	66,684.27	127,762.73	34%	6	6,184.74
Local Admin:	Kauai	53,749.00	20,562.96	33,186.04	38%		1,894.27
Youth Program:	Kauai	143,824.00	21,652.02	122,171.98	15%	2	1,427.34
Rapid Response	Kauai	66,478.00	2,685.22	63,792.78	4%		2,671.83
Kauai Total		603,971.00	190,454.94	413,516.06		21	19,327.00
Adult Program:	Maui	378,230.00	302,190.64	76,039.36	80%	90	50,382.97
DW Program:	Maui	269,234.00	131,309.36	137,924.64	49%	26	12,060.58
Local Admin:	Maui	103,902.00	69,633.67	34,268.33	67%		6,577.02
Youth Program:	Maui	287,647.00	201,427.45	86,219.55	70%	22	18,016.00
Rapid Response	Maui	92,046.00	17,197.44	74,848.56	19%		6,482.00
Maui Total		1,131,059.00	721,758.56	409,300.44		138	93,518.56
Grand Total		8,602,120.00	5,089,299.49	3,512,820.51		1287	544,352.91

GRANT SUMMARY DETAILS
AS OF MAY 31, 2025

		PY24/FY25 EXPENDITURES			
		Expenditures		PY24	PY24
		PY24	PY24 Exp	Funds Avail.	% Expended
		Budget	5/31/2025	5/31/2025	5/31/2025
					Participants
Adult Program:	Hawaii	550,121		550,121	0%
DW Program:	Hawaii	252,020		252,020	0%
Local Admin:	Hawaii	140,931		140,931	0%
Youth Program:	Hawaii	466,233		466,233	0%
Rapid Response	Hawaii	86,161		86,161	0%
	Hawaii Total	1,495,466	0.00	1,495,466	0
Adult Program:	Honolulu	1,545,579		1,545,579	0%
DW Program:	Honolulu	756,060		756,060	0%
Local Admin:	Honolulu	448,563		448,563	0%
Youth Program:	Honolulu	1,735,425		1,735,425	0%
Rapid Response	Honolulu	258,482		258,482	0%
	Honolulu Total	4,744,109	0.00	4,744,109	0
Adult Program:	Kauai	157,198		157,198	0%
DW Program:	Kauai	177,897		177,897	0%
Local Admin:	Kauai	51,620		51,620	0%
Youth Program:	Kauai	129,509		129,509	0%
Rapid Response	Kauai	60,819		60,819	0%
	Kauai Total	577,043	0.00	577,043	0
Adult Program:	Maui	366,747		366,747	0%
DW Program:	Maui	296,494		296,494	0%
Local Admin:	Maui	102,474		102,474	0%
Youth Program:	Maui	259,019		259,019	0%
Rapid Response	Maui	101,366	0.00	101,366	0%
	Maui Total	1,126,100	0.00	1,126,100	0
	Grand Total	7,942,718	0.00	7,942,718	0

		PY23 EXPENDITURES FORECASTING			
		PY23	PY23	PY23	6/30/2025
		3/31/2025	4/30/2025	5/31/2025	Forecasting
Adult Program:	Hawaii	25,491.52	37,874.23	49,037.67	37,467.81
DW Program:	Hawaii	9,089.82	8,137.69	38,267.87	18,498.46
Local Admin:	Hawaii	4,055.74	3,603.22	3,956.63	3,871.86
Youth Program:	Hawaii	28,362.07	39,525.46	30,525.11	32,804.21
Rapid Response	Hawaii	10,400.00	9,100.00	3,091.23	7,530.41
Hawaii Total		77,399.15	98,240.60	124,878.51	100,172.75
Adult Program:	Honolulu	101,841.82	82,282.07	195,007.15	126,377.01
DW Program:	Honolulu	38,811.77	24,364.70	33,331.66	32,169.38
Local Admin:	Honolulu	19,158.83	18,417.33	20,834.96	19,470.37
Youth Program:	Honolulu	184,935.63	123,621.27	117,819.50	142,125.47
Rapid Response	Honolulu	12,675.92	12,325.59	8,575.56	11,192.36
Honolulu Total		357,423.97	261,010.96	375,568.83	331,334.59
Adult Program:	Kauai	8,617.53	6,646.66	6,182.28	7,148.82
DW Program:	Kauai	6,063.87	6,426.82	6,063.53	6,184.74
Local Admin:	Kauai	2,006.15	2,246.85	1,429.81	1,894.27
Youth Program:	Kauai	1,218.47	1,394.49	1,669.06	1,427.34
Rapid Response	Kauai	2,316.25	2,995.30	2,703.94	2,671.83
Kauai Total		20,222.27	19,710.12	18,048.62	19,327.00
Adult Program:	Maui	26,717.41	83,129.21	41,302.28	50,382.97
DW Program:	Maui	10,865.84	14,115.84	11,200.06	12,060.58
Local Admin:	Maui	6,257.04	6,355.03	7,118.99	6,577.02
Youth Program:	Maui	15,934.63	21,610.80	16,502.56	18,016.00
Rapid Response	Maui	2,346.00	11,300.00	5,800.00	6,482.00
Maui Total		62,120.92	136,510.88	81,923.89	93,518.56

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**LBR 135***As of July 24, 2025*

General Funds Appropriation FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026)

\$455,000

DISBURSEMENT	AMOUNT	NOTES
Governor's Automatic Savings	\$45,500	represents 10% of total
Personnel*	\$90,000	Salaries not covered by WIOA admin funds
Workforce Analysis/Studies	\$100,000	Studies on WD relevant issues that confront Hawaii
Grants	\$125,000	Parameters TBD
Future of Work Conference	\$20,000	Conference fees, neighbor island travel, etc, Workforce Heroes
Conferences	\$17,000	conference fees, travel, etc
Employers Boot Camp	\$20,000	Parameters TBD
Board Members Conference	\$10,000	travel for neighbor island, room rental, etc
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$25,000	
TOTAL	\$452,500	

Subject to approval by Department of Budget and Finance*PROPOSED: To Be Submitted to DLIR/ Governor's package/2026 Legislative Session**

General Funds Appropriation FY 2027 (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027)

\$455,000

DISBURSEMENT	AMOUNT	NOTES
Governor's Auto Savings	\$45,500	represents 10% of total
Personnel*	\$155,000	Salaries not covered by WIOA admin funds/1 add FTE
Workforce Analysis/Grants	\$75,000	Studies on WD relevant issues that confront Hawaii
Grants	\$100,000	Parameters TBD
Future of Work Conference	\$20,000	Conference fees, neighbor island travel, etc, Workforce Heroes
Conferences	\$17,000	conference fees, travel, etc
Employers Boot Camp	\$20,000	Parameters TBD
Board Members Annual Conference	\$10,000	travel for neighbor island, room rental, etc
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$10,000	
TOTAL	\$452,500	

**Subject to approval by Department of Budget and Finance*

Report on the Disposition of Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds



Presentation on the Status of Program Year 2022 WIOA Unexpended Funds As of July 24, 2025

Background:

According to guidance from the U.S. 20 CFR § 683.110: “Funds which are not expended by a local area(s) in the 2-year period described in [paragraph \(c\)\(1\)\(i\)](#) of this section, must be returned to the State. Funds so returned are available for expenditure by State and local recipients and subrecipients only during the third program year of availability in accordance with WIOA secs. 128(c) and 132(c). These funds are available for only the following purposes: (i) For statewide projects; or (ii) For distribution to local areas which had fully expended their allocation of funds for the same program year within the 2-year period.”

In a letter to the Workforce Development Council, the Director of the Department of Labor has put forth the new protocols for Hawaii in the redistribution of the unexpended funds, wherein the Workforce Development Council has been charged with the disposition of \$1.5 million in unexpended funds.

An evaluation team composed of the Deputy Director, the Workforce Development Division Administrator, the Administrator of the Administrative Services Office, and the Executive Director of the Workforce Development Council have been meeting regularly to discern the disposition of the funds.

The presentation will provide an update on the status of the Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds. For information purposes only. No Board action needed.

PROJECT I

Title: Research to Improve Hawai`i's WIOA Workforce Systems

Status: The final report was submitted by June 30, 2025. A final meeting to discuss the findings will be set up and relevant stakeholders will be invited to participate.

PROJECT II

Title: Professional Public Relations Services to Increase Awareness of the American Job Centers (AJCs) in Hawai`i

Status: Becker Communications rolled out the awareness campaign on June 30, 2025. The ads and the outreach initiatives will run until September. We are engaging with the American Job Center to track impact.

PROJECT III

Title: Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7-12) through Work-Based Learning Intermediary Support

Status: The targeted schools throughout the state have received the work-based learning efforts from the intermediaries. Review of the work reports are pending.

PROJECT IV

Title: Building Community College Workforce Capacity

Status: The UHCC has a protocol in place at all the seven campuses focused on identifying possible WIOA participants. The relevant reports have been submitted. There are 48 enrollees in the Certified Drivers License (CDL) programs, and they are expected to go through their licensing process shortly.

PROJECT V

Title: Expanding Sector Partnerships into new High Growth Industries

Status: The Transportation Sector partnership has been set up with Hawaii Department of Transportation Deputy Director Tammy Lee as the lead convenor. The group had its first meeting in May and will have a next meeting this summer. The Chamber of Commerce has submitted a presentation on the steps to set up a sector partnership.

PROJECT VI

TITLE: Fiscal and Budget Process training for Pertinent Employees

Status: The contractor, The GATeam, conducted a fiscal training on June 27-28, 2025 attended by about 40 participants. The fiscal trainers also met with the Administrative Services office (ASO) employees to discuss ways to make internal processes more efficient. The contractor also submitted a folder of internal policies which need to be updated based on current rules.

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Executive Director's Report

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Committee Meeting
July 30, 2025
Bennette E. Misalucha
Executive Director



ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS

- Implementation of the State Unified Plan
- Board Governance
- Delineation of WDC Role
- Fiscal Management
- Local Board Coordination
- Convenor, Analyst and Voice
- Community Collaboration



ANNUAL REPORT

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges

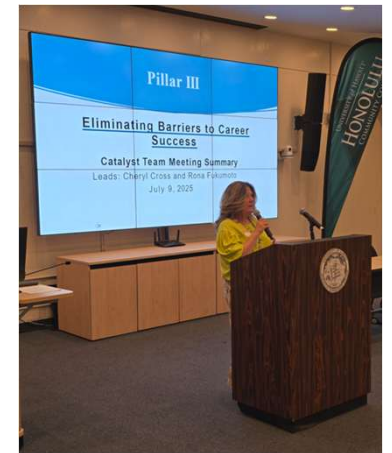
- Uncertainty in WIOA funding
- Limited resources
- Prioritizing Initiatives

Opportunities

- Statewide alignment
- Generational Commitment



UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE UNIFIED PLAN: SYNERGY SUMMIT II



HAWAII'S GENERATIONAL COMMITMENT: WORKFLOW FROM PREVIEW TO PUBLIC LAUNCH

July 2025

MILESTONE # 1 : JULY 9, 2025 (Preview to Workforce Stakeholders)

August 2025

Design & Package

*(Brand Design & Package)
(branding, graphics, data,
measurements)*

Statewide Alignment

*(Communicate with
Relevant Internal and
External Stakeholders)*

SYNCHING WITH GOVERNOR'S POLICY TEAM

*Prepare for Governor's Proclamation of
Workforce Development Month
Media Event*

MILESTONE # 2 : September 2025
(Governor's Launch/ Public Launch)

September
2025

Community Roll-out

Identify Changes to Policy,
If any
Find Alternate Sources of
Funding for Initiatives

Oct, Nov, Dec
2025

Policy Action (if any)

Introduce 2026
Legislative Session

FOCUS FOR THIRD QUARTER



*Operational Transition
from Workforce
Development Division*



*Implementation of the
Unified Plan*



*Building Strategic
Partnerships with
Community Organizations*



Kauai Operations

ANNUAL REPORT

UPDATE ON DELINEATION OF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Third Quarter completion
- Memorandum of Understanding



ANNUAL REPORT

UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Workforce Development Month: **September**
- Future of Work Conference: **September 24**
- Workforce Development Heroes



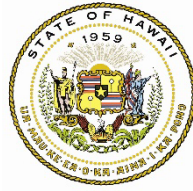
MAHALO

Executive Director's Report
Executive Committee Meeting
July 30, 2025
Bennette E. Misalucha



DR. JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE BUTAY
DLIR DIRECTOR

WILLIAM KUNTSMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

KEN LOUI
CHAIRPERSON

BENNETTE E. MISALUCHA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 317, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8815 Web: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>

STATE OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

REPORT

This report, prepared on July 30, 2025, covers the period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

Message from the Executive Director

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) is pleased to present the 2025 *State of the WDC Report*, summarizing key accomplishments and milestones during the Program year from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

This annual report, which is anticipated to be presented at the Council's August quarterly board meeting, also outlines the challenges faced and the strategic actions underway to strengthen the Council's role in furthering workforce development objectives in the State.

Now in its second year, the *State of the WDC Report* follows the inaugural edition presented at the August 22, 2024 Council meeting. That report remains available on the WDC website.

Prior to May 2023, the Council had experienced a prolonged vacancy in the Executive Director position, resulting in a period of uncertainty and transition. Since then, the primary focus for the last two years has been to reestablish stability, provide strategic direction, and work with community partners - private sectors, philanthropic organizations, and other government agencies - to uplift the State's workforce development systems. During this critical rebuilding phase, the challenges of limited staffing became even more apparent. For nine months, from April 2024 to January 2025, the Executive Director served as the sole WDC employee, navigating a continuity in the operations (Board and Committee work) while laying the groundwork for a

stronger organizational structure.

These efforts were further strengthened by action from the State Legislature, which restored the Workforce Development Council's Program ID effective July 1, 2024. The Budget authorized seven full-time positions, (four program positions under WDC, and three fiscal positions under the Administrative Services Office) assigned the federal program funds to the restored Program ID and appropriated general funds to supplement available federal resources.

By the first quarter of 2025, the Council had reached a point of operational stability, bolstered by the hiring of two highly capable and committed team members. Their contributions have been instrumental in advancing the Council's initiatives through the first and second quarters of the year.

The progress achieved over the past year is a testament to the steadfast support of Council Chair Ken Loui, the engagement of WDC members, the partnership with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and the robust community engagement with workforce development partners. The accomplishments outlined in this report reflect the power of cross-sector collaboration, shared purpose, and an unwavering commitment to expanding workforce and economic opportunities across the state.

At the same time, the Council acknowledges the ongoing challenges that must be addressed including uncertainty in federal funding across all government agencies, shifting economic conditions, persistent workforce readiness gaps, and the need to ensure equitable access to workforce services, especially for individuals facing systemic barriers to employment. These challenges demand continued innovation, accountability, and partnership.

Looking ahead, the Workforce Development Council remains committed to close collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations—particularly the Workforce Development Division—to align strategies, uphold federal mandates, and implement responsive workforce solutions that serve both employers and job seekers.

The Council expresses its gratitude to all who contributed to this year's progress. With unified vision and sustained effort, Hawai'i is well-positioned to build a stronger, more resilient

workforce that can continue to learn, work, thrive, and yes, belong.

MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

A. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE UNIFIED PLAN

Our most significant accomplishment this year has been the work to implement the Hawai'i State Unified Plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Plan document was approved in June 2024 and immediately following its approval, we mobilized efforts in collaboration with community organizations, philanthropic partners, and state agencies to begin building the necessary systems for success. This process required extensive coordination, stakeholder engagement, and a strong commitment to alignment.

WDC's role in the implementation of the Plan is mandated in WIOA, which stipulates the first function of the WDC is to *“develop, modify and implement the State Unified Plan”*.

In December 2024, WDC hosted the “Synergy Summit I,” bringing together approximately 60 core partners for an in-depth exploration of the Unified Plan. The Plan is organized around four strategic pillars, each supported by a Pillar Catalyst Team composed of leaders from across sectors. Between January and June 2025, these teams met regularly to identify potential initiatives aligned with their respective pillars.

Building on the momentum of the first summit, WDC convened Workforce Synergy Summit II on July 9, 2025, at Honolulu Community College campus, gathering nearly 100 stakeholders from across Hawai'i's workforce, education, and business communities. This second summit served as a dynamic forum to review the progress of the Pillar Catalyst Teams, refine proposed initiatives, and foster cross-sector collaboration to ensure alignment with the State Unified Plan's four strategic pillars.. The strong turnout and active engagement underscored a shared commitment to advancing Hawai'i's workforce priorities and building a more connected and resilient workforce ecosystem.

One major part of the agenda was a preview of Hawai'i's "North Star" for workforce development, which is envisioned to be transformational. The development process was supported by a grant from the National Governors Association. This guiding vision, now called the Hawaii Generational Commitment, was previewed and received positive feedback from attendees. The Generational Commitment is planned to be officially unveiled in September 2025 to coincide with Workforce Development Month, setting the stage for the next phase of transformative action in workforce alignment across the state.

B. STRONG BOARD GOVERNANCE

Ongoing

We continue to conduct a comprehensive gap analysis of WDC board membership and committee structures, identifying key sectors for targeted recruitment and refining committee roles to enhance alignment with strategic goals. Throughout this past year, we continued to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Labor for technical assistance to support our governance efforts.

Last year, we held the first joint training session for state and local workforce boards. Throughout the year, training modules were held by a contractor, Safal Partners, and these sessions were aimed at deepening understanding and improving oversight of the system.

As a result, our committees are active and purposeful, and state board engagement remains strong. This past June, we held our new Members Orientation session with about ten new members present. We hope to institutionalize the on-boarding process for new members.

Currently, we still have some vacancies on the board: three vacancies in the private sector, and one vacancy for labor. We have identified the sectors which need to be represented, and efforts are underway to fill these open positions.

During the past year, we held roundtable discussions for every Committee, to discern the core functions of each committee. This was a productive exercise as it brought each Committee

leadership into an understanding of the core goals, and the expectations on direction and performance. Currently, there is also some movement on Committee assignments. With some Committee chairs transitioning out of WDC, it will give us an opportunity to re-evaluate the direction and composition of each committee. We hope to host a Board retreat during the Fall to solidify these plans.

Over-all, we expect to build on this foundation, consistently review to ensure our committees remain relevant and further strengthen our governance capacity.

C. EVALUATING THE DELINEATIONS OF ROLES

Following the reinstatement of WDC's program ID in the FY2026 Supplemental Budget, the Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations convened an ad hoc task force to review relevant documents and clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the Workforce Development Council (WDC) and the Workforce Development Division (WDD). This task force is composed of the Deputy Director, the Administrative Services Officer, the Administrator for the Workforce Development Division and the Executive Director for the Workforce Development Council. This review process is nearing completion. Like the model used in the State of Idaho between the State Board (or Council) and its labor agency, we anticipate that a memorandum of understanding will be needed to formalize the delineation of duties.

D. STRENGTHENING LOCAL BOARD COLLABORATION

Ongoing

In 2024, we initiated regular monthly meetings with the Executive Directors of each local area, recognizing this as a valuable platform to strengthen collaboration, enhance communication, and ensure strategic alignment with state goals. These meetings have fostered a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities, while also promoting the exchange of best practices across local areas.

Building on this momentum, our long-term vision is to cultivate high-performing local workforce boards and service delivery systems that can effectively respond to evolving

economic conditions and the unique needs of their communities.

To advance this vision, we launched, in March 2025, a monthly coordination meeting that brings together all local areas to discuss performance metrics, operational challenges, and opportunities for improvement. These sessions are attended not only by local area staff but also by service providers and other key partners, creating a comprehensive forum for dialogue, problem-solving, and the alignment of strategies to improve outcomes for jobseekers and employers alike.

E. WDC AS A SECTOR CONVENER

Ongoing

Healthcare:

In February 2024, WDC helped organize a statewide Long-Term Care Summit that brought together nearly 100 healthcare leaders and stakeholders to tackle pressing workforce issues. As chair of the Workforce Committee, WDC supported the Department of Health in shaping its Master Plan for long-term care, focusing on solutions to critical challenges such as staffing shortages, training needs, and recruitment pipelines. The summit emphasized the need for a united approach to strengthen Hawai'i's healthcare workforce and better prepare for the growing demands of an aging population.

Transportation:

In 2024, WDC began convening partners to launch a transportation sector partnership aimed at building career pathways in maritime, aviation, and commercial driver's license (CDL) training—starting as early as high school. With funding from WIOA Program Year (PY) 2022 Unexpended Funds, the University of Hawai'i Workforce Development Division, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i, established the state's first Transportation Sector Partnership in 2025. Led by the Deputy Director of the Department of Transportation, the partnership held its first meeting in mid-2025 to set priorities and address workforce gaps. A second gathering in Fall 2025 will focus on expanding training programs, engaging employers, and creating long-term solutions for Hawai'i's transportation industry.

F. EXPANDING ACCESS TO AMERICAN JOB CENTERS

Ongoing

The American Job Centers (AJCs) remain underutilized, and the Workforce Development Council (WDC) has made it a priority to increase their visibility and accessibility to the public. To address this challenge, WDC funded a statewide awareness campaign that was launched on June 30, 2025, and is scheduled to run through September 2025. This campaign, supported by PY 2022 Unexpended Funds, is designed to educate jobseekers, employers, and community partners about the valuable services AJCs provide—from career counseling and job placement assistance to training programs and employer support.

The campaign was developed following a recommendation from the Special Projects Committee, which identified the need to raise awareness and ensure that these critical workforce resources do not go unnoticed or underused. To maximize outreach, the campaign spans multiple platforms, including social media, television, radio, print publications, and community-based outreach efforts. By taking a multi-channel approach, the campaign aims to reach diverse audiences across all islands and highlight the AJCs as a key resource for both jobseekers and businesses.

G. ADMINISTRATION OF WIOA PY 2022 UNEXPENDED FUNDS

A significant milestone for WDC in 2025 is the administration of six projects funded by the WIOA Program Year 2022 unexpended funds. These projects were carefully vetted by a task force composed of the DLIR Deputy Director, the WDD Administrator, the ASO Administrator, and the WDC Executive Director. Their collective expertise and oversight ensured that the selected initiatives align with the State Unified Plan and address critical workforce priorities.

While managing these projects represents a new area of responsibility for WDC, we are actively building internal expertise—particularly in procurement, project oversight, and fiscal accountability—and remain committed to seeking technical assistance and training to ensure the

highest standards of implementation.

The six projects currently underway are:

1. Research to Improve Hawai'i's WIOA Workforce Systems
2. Professional Public Relations Services to Increase Awareness of the American Job Centers (AJCs) in Hawai'i
3. Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7–12) through Work-Based Learning Intermediary Support
4. Building Community College Workforce Capacity
5. Expanding Sector Partnerships into New High-Growth Industries
6. Fiscal and Budget Process Training for Pertinent Employees

Together, these projects represent a strong investment in research, community engagement, training capacity, and sector alignment, laying the foundation for long-term workforce improvements statewide.

H. EVENTS, CONFERENCES AND RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Another key milestone in 2025 has been WDC's active sponsorship and organization of events designed to engage stakeholders, share insights, and celebrate the workforce community. The 2026 Future of Work Conference, held in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i, is now in its second year and was deemed a resounding success as gleaned by more than 300 attendees. This conference brought together thought leaders, industry experts, and policymakers to explore emerging workforce trends and strategies to prepare Hawai'i for the jobs of tomorrow.

WDC also convened two major events—Synergy Summit I in December 2024 and Synergy Summit II on July 9, 2025—each serving as dynamic platforms for stakeholders to align efforts around the State Unified Plan and its four strategic pillars.

To foster ongoing dialogue, WDC hosted several webinars, including two widely attended

economic forecast sessions featuring economist Dr. Paul Brewbaker and Dr. Seth Colby, which provided valuable perspectives on Hawai'i's economic outlook and its implications for workforce development.

Recognizing the contributions of workforce professionals, WDC sponsored the Workforce Development Heroes awards, which celebrate the dedication and innovation of individuals and organizations that build strong career pathways for jobseekers and workers across the state. This recognition aligns with Workforce Development Month, formally declared by the Governor each September, which highlights the vital role workforce programs play in strengthening Hawai'i's economy and communities.

In addition, WDC created learning opportunities by inviting other states and local workforce boards to share their best practices. These sessions included presentations from the Las Vegas Workforce Development Board, the Eugene, Oregon Workforce Development Board, as well as the State Workforce Boards of Illinois and Delaware. These peer-to-peer exchanges have been invaluable in helping Hawai'i identify innovative approaches and proven strategies to improve the effectiveness of its own workforce programs.

WDC also engaged with the National Youth Council, focusing on strategies to support incarcerated youth and their reintegration into the workforce.

In July 2022, WDC co-sponsored a pilot project for Hele Imua interns, in partnership with SHERM and First Hawaiian Bank, which offered a four-week webinar series designed to teach essential soft skills and practical workplace skills, ensuring that interns are better equipped to transition into meaningful employment opportunities.

I. WDC as the Voice of Workforce Development

Another notable milestone has been WDC's growing role as a trusted voice on workforce development issues, both within Hawai'i and on national platforms. The Council has been

invited to speak at several high-profile events, reflecting the value of its insights and leadership in addressing workforce challenges and opportunities.

In 2024, WDC participated in the SHERM Conference (Society for Human Resource Management), a premier gathering for HR professionals and business leaders focused on talent management, workforce strategies, and organizational development. The topic was on the state of workforce in Hawaii and the State Unified Plan.

WDC was also featured at the Hawai'i Talent Summit, sponsored by the Hawai'i Employers Council, where we discussed the disruption in the labor eco-system and the need to act now, in view of current trends in Hawai'i's labor market.

On the global stage, WDC contributed to a worldwide women's webinar organized by Bayer International, highlighting workforce equity and opportunities for women in emerging industries.

Additionally, during both 2024 and 2025 Hawai'i on the Hill events in Washington, D.C., WDC was invited to deliver workforce insights and provide opening remarks on the state of Hawai'i's labor conditions and the Unified Plan, showcasing the Council's role as a connector as well as an advocate.

CURRENT CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEM

A. Uncertainty in WIOA funding

One of the most pressing challenges facing Hawai'i's workforce system is the uncertainty surrounding federal funding for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These funds are a critical lifeline, supporting programs that provide training, upskilling, and employment services for jobseekers and businesses across the state. However, fluctuations in federal budgets, shifting national priorities, and potential policy changes create instability that is

largely beyond Hawai'i's control. This uncertainty makes it difficult to plan long-term initiatives, invest in innovative programs, or ensure consistent services to communities that need them most.

While Hawai'i cannot fully control federal funding allocations, the state can take strategic steps to reduce the impact of these uncertainties:

1. **Diversifying Funding Sources:**

Leveraging partnerships with local businesses, philanthropic organizations, and other state agencies can help build alternative funding streams to support critical programs. For example, public-private partnerships can fill gaps where federal dollars fall short.

2. **Maximizing Existing Resources:**

By improving efficiency, such as aligning workforce efforts across agencies, sharing data, and streamlining services, Hawai'i can ensure every WIOA dollar stretches as far as possible.

3. **Building Resilient Systems:**

Investing in long-term strategies, such as sector partnerships, career pathway development, and digital upskilling initiatives, ensures that workforce programs remain relevant and effective even when federal resources fluctuate.

While the uncertainty of WIOA funds is an external factor, Hawai'i's resilience will depend on its ability to adapt, innovate, and collaborate. By building a workforce ecosystem that is both agile and community-driven, the state can weather funding challenges while continuing to prepare its people for the jobs of the future.

B. Limited Resources

One of the significant challenges facing the Workforce Development Council (WDC) is the constraint of limited resources. With only a handful of personnel, the capacity to fully address the breadth of workforce development priorities, ranging from policy alignment to sector partnerships to operational mandates, is stretched thin.

Additionally, WDC's funding streams are limited, which affects its ability to scale innovative programs, provide robust technical assistance, and carry out strategic initiatives that require sustained investment.

This limitation is further magnified by the complexity of the workforce ecosystem. As WDC is tasked with serving as a convenor, policy driver, and strategic leader, the demand for research, coordination, and stakeholder engagement continues to grow, requiring more staff and financial flexibility than currently available.

Potential Solutions:

While these resource constraints are challenging, several strategies can help mitigate their impact:

- 1. Leveraging Partnerships:**

By collaborating more closely with state agencies, local workforce boards, educational institutions, and the private sector, WDC can extend its reach and amplify its impact without overextending its staff. Partnerships can also lead to shared funding opportunities or in-kind support.

- 2. Pursuing Additional Funding Streams:**

WDC can explore federal discretionary grants, philanthropic partnerships, and public-private collaborations to supplement its base funding. Proactively identifying opportunities for competitive funding can strengthen the council's financial stability.

- 3. Prioritizing High-Impact Initiatives:**

With limited resources, it is critical to focus on initiatives that offer the greatest potential for systemic change—such as modernizing the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), fostering sector partnerships, and supporting the State Unified Plan priorities.

- 4. Investing in Staff Development:**

Ensuring that the current team is well-trained and empowered allows WDC to maximize the value of each staff member's expertise. Cross-training and skill development can increase efficiency and reduce operational bottlenecks.

5. Utilizing Technology and Data:

Streamlining processes through technology, such as enhancing HIRENET’s capabilities and adopting modern digital collaboration tools, can free up staff time for more strategic work.

Despite these challenges, WDC’s ability to innovate and adapt will be key to sustaining its role as a catalyst for workforce development. With careful prioritization and stronger collaboration, the council can continue to lead with impact even within its current resource limitations.

C. Educating all Board members on WIOA

We recognize the ongoing need to continue educating all board members—both at the state and local levels—on the core principles, requirements, and opportunities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). A well-informed board is essential for making sound policy and funding decisions that strengthen workforce outcomes statewide.

To achieve this, we plan to organize webinars and learning sessions featuring organizations and programs that have successfully implemented WIOA. These sessions will provide board members with practical insights, real-world examples, and best practices that can be applied in Hawai‘i.

The goal is to create a stronger, more knowledgeable board that can fully understand the workforce system's complexities and make informed, strategic decisions. The more board members understand the core business—ranging from WIOA performance metrics to sector strategies and funding streams—the better equipped they will be to guide efforts that truly benefit jobseekers, employers, and the broader community.

D. County of Kauai: Absence of a Local Workforce Board

A unique and pressing challenge is the absence of a local workforce development board in the County of Kauai. As previously discussed in council meetings, the Workforce Development Division (WDD) has been managing operations on the island, stepping in to fill the gap. Under

WIOA, when no local board is established, the State Board is expected to function as the local board. However, our current board has not yet been adequately trained or structured to perform this dual role.

We have sought technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to better understand the responsibilities and processes required for the State Board to act in this capacity. Despite the valiant efforts of WDD staff, Kauai has struggled with underperformance in workforce outcomes, a challenge that underscores the urgent need for a more sustainable governance and operational model.

Possible Solutions:

- 1. Establish a Local Advisory Board for Kauai**

Work with county leadership and community stakeholders to formally establish a local board. This would provide Kauai with a dedicated body focused on its unique workforce needs. This ad hoc group may even become the nucleus of a future local Kauai board.

- 2. State Board Training and Capacity Building**

Until a local board is created, the State Board must receive comprehensive training to effectively fulfill its role as a local board. This includes understanding local plan development, performance accountability, and funding oversight. Technical assistance from USDOL and peer learning from other states could accelerate this process.

- 3. Transition Kauai Operations to a Dedicated Service Provider:**

A possibility is to utilize Kauai's WIOA allocation to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a dedicated service provider. A contracted service provider could offer a focused, on-the-ground presence to coordinate with local employers, service providers, and educational institutions while increasing participant enrollment and program outcomes

- 4. Enhanced Partnerships with Community Organizations:**

Strengthen partnerships with Kauai's nonprofit organizations, industry groups, and educational partners to create innovative training and employment programs tailored to local needs.

5. Targeted Use of Funds:

Leverage discretionary or recaptured WIOA funds to invest in Kauai-specific workforce initiatives, such as sector partnerships or high-demand training programs, to address gaps and improve performance outcomes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

A. Strong Alignment with Community Efforts

With the implementation of the State Unified Plan, Hawai'i's workforce community has come together in new and meaningful ways—uniting government, business, education, and nonprofits around a shared vision for economic growth and opportunity. These collective efforts highlight the importance of working together as partners rather than operating in silos, ensuring that every initiative is strengthened by the expertise and commitment of all stakeholders.

This shared responsibility extends across every island and every sector, with a focus on building a workforce that reflects the strengths, values, and aspirations of the community. By aligning resources and leveraging partnerships, we can address both immediate workforce challenges and the long-term needs of Hawai'i's economy.

As we strive to achieve the state's "North Star"—the Generational Commitment—this work is not just about programs or policies but about creating a legacy of opportunity for future generations. Together, we are laying the foundation for a workforce system that is resilient, inclusive, and capable of adapting to the challenges of tomorrow.

B. Championing Operational Excellence

As the delineation of roles between the Workforce Development Council (WDC) and the

Workforce Development Division (WDD) becomes clearer, it has become evident that a stronger focus on WIOA operations is essential. Compliance is a cornerstone of WIOA, and building a robust system to support and sustain compliance efforts is a top priority.

Last year, with the generous support of the U.S. Department of Labor, the State benefited from technical assistance provided by SAFEL Partners, a team of expert trainers with years of experience. This technical assistance included comprehensive training on critical areas such as fiscal management, board governance, and operational best practices—equipping our teams with the knowledge and tools necessary to strengthen our workforce system.

Moving forward, we recognize the need for personnel with deep expertise in WIOA operations, compliance requirements, and fiscal accountability. Developing this capacity within our team will ensure that we not only meet federal and state standards but also operate efficiently and effectively to deliver high-quality outcomes for Hawai'i's workforce.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Optimization

One key area of operational excellence that WDC is prioritizing is the optimization of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This system, which plays a critical role in connecting jobseekers with high-quality training programs, requires a comprehensive re-examination to ensure it meets both the needs of customers and the standards of service providers. Hawai'i is not alone in facing challenges with its ETPL; this is a common issue across many states. Recognizing this, WDC is committed to taking on this challenge as an opportunity for significant improvement.

Our vision is to transform the ETPL experience—from streamlining the customer journey for jobseekers to enhancing the way service providers interact with the system. This includes reviewing and updating protocols for approving, monitoring, and, when necessary, removing providers to maintain high standards of quality and accountability.

To identify best practices, WDC has engaged with other states, including Illinois and Delaware, both of which have demonstrated strong, user-friendly ETPL systems. These states have shared valuable insights into their processes and technology, which are guiding our approach. We are also evaluating the capabilities of HIRENET, Hawai'i's workforce data system, to determine how its ETPL functions can be improved or reconfigured to better serve our stakeholders.

Our aspiration is to position Hawai'i as one of the leading states in ETPL innovation—creating a system that is transparent, efficient, and trusted by both jobseekers and training providers. By adopting proven strategies and modernizing our processes, WDC aims to ensure that the ETPL becomes a true engine for workforce development success.

C. WDC as a Workforce Analyst: Producing Insightful Reports

One of the key functions of WDC under WIOA is to serve as an analyst, providing data-driven insights and research that inform decision-making. A major opportunity for growth lies in expanding WDC's capacity to produce regular analysis reports that highlight workforce trends, and sector-specific challenges. By framing the conversation with accurate and timely information, WDC can empower policymakers, local boards, and community leaders to make strategic and informed decisions that directly impact Hawai'i's workforce development system.

Such reports could also serve as a valuable resource for employers, educators, and training providers, by helping to identify skill gaps, anticipate future workforce needs, and align programs with the demands of Hawai'i's evolving economy.

In doing so, WDC would not only fulfill its role as a convener but also as a trusted source of knowledge and guidance for shaping long-term workforce policies.

In conclusion, while this year's accomplishments are commendable, there remain opportunities

for growth and improvement. The challenges encountered have offered valuable lessons and underscored areas where strategies and approaches can be further strengthened.

Moving forward, the focus will be on building upon successes, addressing areas of concern, and collaborating closely with DLIR, WDD, and other community stakeholders to effectively navigate future challenges.

After two years in this role, the Executive Director's commitment to the mission remains steadfast. There is a determined effort to deepen knowledge and expertise in WIOA to drive exceptional outcomes and to continue to forge partnerships in the community. With the steadfast support of the Council members, the path ahead is not only promising but also positioned for sustained growth and continued achievement of the Workforce Development Council.

**Plans for Executive
Director's
Performance Review
COMMITTEE
ACTION
REQUIRED**

**Next Meeting,
Announcements,
Public
Comments**

**The next Board Meeting is tentatively
scheduled for August 20, 2025 from 9:30
a.m. to 11:30 a.m. via zoom and 830
Punchbowl St., Room 310, Honolulu, HI
96817**

**The next Executive Committee meeting is
tentatively scheduled for October 22, 2025
from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. via zoom and
830 Punchbowl St., Room
317, Honolulu, HI 96817**

Adjournment