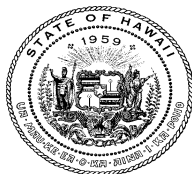


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G KUNSTMAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

BENNETTE MISALUCHA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 317  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
<https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>  
Phone: (808) 586-8815 / Fax: (808) 586-8822  
Email: [dlir.workforce.council@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.workforce.council@hawaii.gov)

HAWAII WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Minutes

**Date:** Thursday, April 2, 2026

**Time:** 9:30 am to 10:30 am

**In-Person Meeting Location:** Princess Ruth Ke'elikolani Building  
830 Punchbowl Street, Room 317  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**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/>

**Attendees:**

- Members Present:

**Pane Meatoga III**, Deputy Political Director, Operating Engineers Local 3, Present in the deliberations but was unable to cast a vote.

**Keith DeMello**, Workforce Development Council (WDC) Chair, Senior Vice President of Communication & External Affairs, Ulupono Initiative

**Trang Malone**, WDC Vice Chair, Manager, Workforce Initiatives, CVS Health

**Rona Fukumoto**, President & CEO, Lanakila Pacific

**Shelli Ihuri**, Director, Workforce Development, Hawaii Pacific Health

**Derek Kanehira**, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Alexander & Baldwin

**Sean Knox**, President, Hawaii Employment Services, Inc.

**Sean Nakamura**, Corporate Controller and Treasurer, TradeWind Group

**Amber Akana**, Union Representative, Seafarers International Union of North America

**Scott Collins**, Field Services Officer, MSC/Advocacy, Hawai'i Government Employees Association  
**Dion Dizon**, Director, UH West Oahu Center for Labor Education and Research  
**Carla Kurokawa**, Employment and Training Manager, Alu Like, Inc.  
**Rossella Guardascione**, Chair, Hawai'i County Workforce Development Board  
**Dan Kouchi**, Policy Advisor – Office of the Governor, State of Hawai'i  
**Andrew Garrett**, Representative, State House of Representatives  
**Benson Medina** (*Designee-Mayor of Hawaii County*), Director, County of Hawai'i Department of Research and Development  
**Jade Rojas-Letisi** (*Designee-Mayor of Maui County*), Director, County of Maui Office of Economic Development  
**Nalani Brun** (*Designee-Mayor of Kauai County*), Director, County of Kauai Office of Economic Development  
**David Rodriguez** (*Designee-Director of Department of Labor and Industrial Relations*), Equal Opportunity Officer, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
**Wanelle Kaneshiro** (*Designee-Superintendent of Hawai'i Department of Education*), Director, Workforce Development Branch, Hawai'i Department of Education  
**Thomas Chock**, (*Designee-Director of Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism*) Program Specialist, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism

- Guests & Staff:

**Bennette Misalucha**, Executive Director, WDC  
**Jeanne Ohta**, Employment Specialist, WDC  
**Margaret Miura**, Program Specialist, WDC  
**Tyrone Apolar**, Program Specialist, WDC  
**Jung Yun Ha**, Deputy Attorney General, Labor Division, State of Hawai'i  
**Maricar Pilotin-Freitas**, Administrator, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
**Carey Price**, Program Specialist, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
**Scott Wheeler**, Research Statistician, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
**Leelynn Brady**, Systems Advocacy Coordinator, Aloha Independent Living Hawai'i  
**Jason Benn**, WDC appointee  
**Doug Chang**, WDC appointee  
**Ashleigh Loa**, WDC appointee  
**Keala Monaco**, UH Community Colleges  
**Judy Oliveira**, UH Community Colleges  
**Jaimee Tabangay**, WDD  
**Lei Ana Green**, WDD  
**Faustino Dagdag**  
**Greenlee Ann M**  
**Chris Wiecking**  
**Linda Weiland**  
**Christine Beaulé**  
**Jayson**  
**Carol K**

- Excused:

**Donovan Dela Cruz**, WDC Assistant Vice Chair, Senator, Hawai'i State Senate

**Gina Woo Anonuevo**, Vice Chair and Chief Administrative Officer/Chief Human Resources Officer, First Hawaiian Bank

**Manu Bermudes**, Vice President of Human Resources, Hawai'i Gas

**Cheryl Cross**, Executive Search Consultant, Inkinen Executive Search

**Cary Miyashiro**, President, Quad D Solutions

**Tui Scanlan**, President, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 665

**Christopher Lum Lee**, President and CEO of TriSec, Inc. and CEO of Hawai'i Coffee Works

**Kehaulani Kukahiko** (*Kauai Mayor's Representative to WDC*), Manager of Education and Workforce Development for the Kauai Economic Development Board

**Leslie Wilkins**, Chair, President, Maui Economic Development Board

**Andrew T. Kawano**, Director, Department of Budget and Fiscal Services, City & County of Honolulu

**Lea Dias**, Administrator, Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Division

**Lui Hokoana** (*Designee-President of Hawai'i System*)

- I. [Video 00:09:54] The meeting was called to order by Keith DeMello, Workforce Development Council (WDC) Chair, at 9:40 am. Following roll call, Chair DeMello confirmed that 17 board members were present and 16 board members were needed for quorum. Chair DeMello recognized that Deputy Attorney General Kelly Ha was also present.

Thomas Chock signed into the meeting at 9:40 am and increased quorum to 18 board members.

Jade Roja-Letisi signed into the meeting at 9:41 am and increased quorum to 19 board members.

Pane Meatoga III signed on at 9:34 am but indicated he was at a Council hearing. There were now 20 board members present.

- II. [Video 00:11:51] Approval of the 2024-2028 Modified Workforce Development Unified State Plan (Plan)
  - [Video 00:12:35] At 9:42 am, Executive Director Bennette Misalucha, presented the highlights of the Plan.
  - [Video 00:24:04] At 9:52 am, Chair DeMello opened the meeting to questions.
    - Department of Labor and Industrial Relations designee David Rodriguez inquired about the plan to integrate Perkins V plan into the WIOA Plan. Executive Director Misalucha provided a historical context on the push from the national government to integrate the two plans for greater efficiency. She said that the efforts are underway to align and integrate the two plans and that the goal is to have that effort fully executed by 2028 which is when the next iteration of the workforce Plan is due. Director Misalucha pointed to the most recent effort by WDC to fund P20s intermediaries and career navigators. She asserted that details of these efforts can be found in the Plan.

- [Video 00:28:33] At 9:57 am, Chair DeMello opened the meeting to the public to ask questions or to testify.
  - Leelynn Brady, Systems Advocacy Coordinator, Aloha Independent Living Hawai'i proposed 2 amendments to the Plan:
    - 1) **“This includes individuals with diverse disabilities.”** To be included in Goal 4, Priority Tactic 1 in the rationale section on page 122, after the sentence: “Several population groups possess workforce potential but encounter structural barriers to participation.”
    - 2) **“This includes supporting remote and hybrid work for people with diverse disabilities.”** To be included in Goal 4, Priority 1, after the sentence: “WDC and workforce partners will support targeted outreach strategies for populations with barriers to employment.”

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha assured Chair DeMello that the amendments would be incorporated into the Plan.
  
- [Video 00:32:15] At 10:02 am, Chair DeMello entertained a motion to approve the Plan. Dion Dizon first motioned followed by a second motion from Sean Knox. Chair DeMello requested WDC staff to initiate a roll vote.
  
- [Video 00:37:44] At 10:06 am, motion to approve the plan was carried forward with 19 Yea 0 Nay votes. Because of a scheduling conflict dealing with work matters, Council member Pane Meatoga III had to be excused and was unable to cast a vote during the meeting.

III. [Video 00:37:56] Certification of the Local Boards was deferred to the next board meeting which is on May 21, 2026.

IV. [Video 00:38:56] Next Quarterly Board Meeting

Tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026, from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm.

V. [00:39:17] Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:09 am.