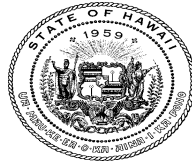


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GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G KUNSTMAN  
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HAWAII WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

**Date:** Friday, May 8, 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:

**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

**Donovan Dela Cruz**, Hawaii State Senator, WDC Assistant Vice Chair

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

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

**Dion Dizon**, Director, UH West Oahu Center for Labor Education and Research

**Carla Kurokawa**, Employment and Training Manager, Alu Like, Inc.

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

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

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

**Lea Dias**, Administrator, Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Division  
**Thomas Chock**, (Designee\_Director.of.Department.of.Business?Economic.Development.and.Tourism) Program Specialist, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism  
**David Rodriguez** (Designee\_Director.of.Department.of.Labor.and.Industrial.Relations), Equal Opportunity Officer, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

- Guests & Staff:

**Bennette Misalucha**, Executive Director (ED), WDC  
**Jeanne Ohta**, Employment Specialist, WDC  
**Margaret Miura**, Program Specialist, WDC  
**Tyrone Apolinar**, Program Specialist, WDC  
**Lei Ann Green**, Workforce Development Division (WDD)  
**Ryan Mandado**, Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE)  
**Leelynn Brady**  
**Charles Miller**

- Excused:

**Rona Fukumoto**, President & CEO, Lanakila Pacific  
**Derek Kanehira**, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Alexander & Baldwin  
**Amber Akana**, Union Representative, Seafarers International Union of North America  
**Pane Meatoga III**, Deputy Political Director, Operating Engineers Local 3

- I. [Video 00:25:04] The meeting was called to order by Chair Keith DeMello at 9:31 am. Following roll call, Chair DeMello confirmed that 10 board members were present, exceeding the 5 members required for quorum.

Thomas Chock signed into the meeting at 9:51am.  
State Senator Donovan Dela Cruz signed into the meeting at 10:13 am and signed off at 10:13 am.

- II. [Video 00:31:02] The Executive Committee (EC) minutes from January 22, 2026, were approved without changes at 9:37 am.

- III. [Video 00:31:11] Legislative updates by Chair Keith DeMello

- a. Bills of Interest

- i. HB 1859 HD1 did not advance in the Senate.
- ii. HB 2315 HD1 has successfully passed the legislature and was sent to the Governor for consideration.
- iii. HB 2383 HD1 did not advance.

- b. Governor's Messages

- i. All individuals listed in the Governor's Messages (presented in the agenda) were confirmed by the Senate.
- ii. [Video 00:39:10] Chair DeMello highlighted the coordinated efforts between WDC—led by Chair DeMello and Tui Scanlan—and the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), including the Director and Deputy Director, to outline the process and expectations for legislative matters during the legislative sessions.

IV. [Video 00:41:18] Certification of the Kauai American Job Center (AJC).

- a. [Video 00:42:06] At 9:48 am, ED Bennette Misalucha provided an overview of the certification process and shared an update on the submitted Corrective Action Plan."
- b. [Video 00:43:56] At 9:51 am, Chair DeMello called for a motion to approve the recommendation to extend the provisional certification of the Kauai AJC through December 31, 2026.

Dion Dizon made the first motion, followed by a second from Lea Dias. With no Executive Committee members indicating opposition, Chair DeMello proceeded with a voice vote. All members present voted 'Aye,' and the motion carried.

V. [Video 00:45:26] Restructuring of Employer Engagement Committee and Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee.

- a. [Video 00:46:18] At 9:52 am, ED Bennette Misalucha discussed the importance of restructuring the Employer Engagement Committee and the proposal to rename the Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee to the Education and Career Pathways Committee.
- b. [Video 00:50:17] At 9:56 am, Chair DeMello opened the meeting for questions or testimony.
- c. [Video 00:50:32] At 9:57 am, Chair DeMello called for a motion to approve the proposed amendment to Article VI, 'Committees,' Section 6.3, changing the name of the Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee to the Education and Career Pathways Committee.

Sean Nakamura made the first motion, followed by a second from Dion Dizon. With no Executive Committee members indicating opposition, Chair DeMello proceeded with a voice vote. All members present voted 'Aye,' and the motion carried.

VI. [Video 00:27:20] Fiscal Reports were deferred to the next Executive Council meeting, scheduled for July 30, 2026.

VII. [Video 00:27:55] Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and Title II Annual Performance Report: Program Year 2024 (PY 2024).

[Video 00:28:34] At 9:59 am, Jeanne Ohta presented the PY 2024 WIOA results.

VIII. [Video 00:43:12] Executive Director's Report

[Video 00:43:33] At 10:14 am, ED Bennette Misalucha delivered a presentation on the First Quarter 2026 events and activities, as well as the priorities for the Second and Third Quarters.

IX. [Video 00:49:24] Renewal of Executive Director's Contract

- a. [Video 00:49:38] At 10:20 am, Chair DeMello excused ED Bennette Misalucha and WDC staff, to include Jeanne Ohta, Margaret Miura, and Tyrone Apolinar, from the meeting while the Executive Committee deliberated on the contract renewal.
- b. [Video 00:58:12] Following the departure of staff from the Zoom meeting, Chair DeMello provided background regarding the discussion of personnel matters by the Workforce Development Council. Chair DeMello noted that in prior years personnel matters were discussed in executive session; however, after consultation with the Office of Information Practices, the Council was advised that such discussions must now be conducted in public session for public boards and commissions.

The Chair stated that he had consulted with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) regarding applicable requirements and confirmed that the necessary administrative paperwork and processes are underway. He also outlined the anticipated timeline:

- May 8, 2026 – Executive Committee discussion and recommendation
- May 21, 2026 – Full Workforce Development Council consideration and action
- By May 30, 2026 – Submission of required paperwork and board minutes to DLIR Human Resources

He clarified that the agenda item pertained solely to renewal of the Executive Director's employment contract and not the formal annual performance evaluation. He noted that under the Council's bylaws, the next Executive Director evaluation is scheduled for the first quarter of 2027. The prior evaluation was completed in Fall 2025.

Chair DeMello then presented the following recommendation: Recommend renewal of the Executive Director's employment contract for a four-year term, subject to annual performance review requirements and completion of all applicable administrative processes.

Chair DeMello spoke in support of the recommendation, citing stability and continuity of leadership, alignment with multi-year strategic initiatives, retention of institutional knowledge, reduced administrative disruption, and continued accountability through annual reviews.

[Video 00:55:44] David Rodriguez of DLIR noted that DLIR administrative procedures require annual approval and stated that a four-year contract structure does not align with current departmental processes.

[Video 00:58:12] Chair DeMello entertained a motion to approve the Executive Director's contract to four years.

Carla Kurokawa made the first motion, followed by a second from Cherly Cross.

Chair DeMello then reviewed who the voting members would be according to Section 6.4 of the Bylaws. Those voting members would be committee chair, vice chair, assistant vice chair, and chairs or vice chairs of the standing committees.

[Video 00:59:43] Assistant Vice Chair Senator Donovan Dela Cruz expressed support for the recommendation prior to the vote.

[Video 01:00:03] Chair DeMello held a roll call vote. The following members voted "Aye": Trang Malone (Executive Committee Vice Chair), Carey Miyashiro (Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee Chair), Gina Woo Anonuevo (Employer Engagement Committee Chair), Sean Nakamura (Performance Management and Finance Committee Chair), Thomas Chock (Special Projects Vice Chair), Carla Kurokawa (Youth Services Committee Chair). Motion passed unanimously.

X. [Video 01:02:58] Next Meeting

Tentatively scheduled for August 14, 2026, at 9:30 am – 10:30 am.

XI. [Video 01:03:31} Adjournment

Meet adjourned at 10:34 am.