

FORTIETH DAY

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

The Senate of the Thirty-Second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2023, convened at 11:33 a.m. with the President in the Chair.

The Roll was called showing all Senators present, with the exception of Senators Ihara and Kidani who were excused.

The President announced that he had read and approved the Journal of the Thirty-Ninth Day.

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

The following messages from the Governor (Gov. Msg. Nos. 646 to 652 and 1103) were read by the Clerk and were disposed of as follows:

Gov. Msg. No. 646, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, the nomination of DEREK KANEHIRA, term to expire June 30, 2027, was referred to the Committee on Labor and Technology.

Gov. Msg. No. 647, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, the nomination of B. MANU BERMUDEZ, term to expire June 30, 2027, was referred to the Committee on Labor and Technology.

Gov. Msg. No. 648, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, the nomination of ROBERT LIETZKE, term to expire June 30, 2027, was referred to the Committee on Labor and Technology.

Gov. Msg. No. 649, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, the nomination of KELLY UEOKA, term to expire June 30, 2027, was referred to the Committee on Labor and Technology.

Gov. Msg. No. 650, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, the nomination of DION DIZON, term to expire June 30, 2027, was referred to the Committee on Labor and Technology.

Gov. Msg. No. 651, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, the nomination of CARLA KUOKAWA, term to expire June 30, 2026, was referred to the Committee on Labor and Technology.

Gov. Msg. No. 652, informing the Senate that on March 28, 2023, the Governor withdrew the nomination of JOANN INAMASU to the State Rehabilitation Council, under Gov. Msg. No. 554, from consideration by the Senate, was placed on file.

In compliance with Gov. Msg. No. 652, the nomination listed under Gov. Msg. No. 554 was returned.

Gov. Msg. No. 1103, informing the Senate that on March 28, 2023, the Governor signed into law House Bill No. 1514, H.D. 1, S.D. 1 as Act 3, entitled: "MAKING APPROPRIATIONS TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE LEGISLATURE, THE AUDITOR, THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU, THE OMBUDSMAN, AND THE ETHICS COMMISSION," was placed on file.

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications from the House (Hse. Com. Nos. 464 and 465) were read by the Clerk and were disposed of as follows:

Hse. Com. No. 464, informing the Senate that on March 28, 2023, the House disagreed to the amendments proposed by the Senate to the following House bills:

H.B. No. 141, H.D. 1 (S.D. 1);
H.B. No. 264 (S.D. 1);
H.B. No. 349, H.D. 2 (S.D. 1); and
H.B. No. 463 (S.D. 1),

was placed on file.

Hse. Com. No. 465, transmitting H.C.R. No. 139, H.D. 1, which was adopted by the House of Representatives on March 28, 2023, was placed on file.

By unanimous consent, H.C.R. No. 139, H.D. 1, entitled: "HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING HAWAII'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO INTRODUCE AND SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AMEND TITLE IV-A OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT TO ALLOW TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES FUNDS TO BE USED BY STATES TO BUILD TRANSITIONAL SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING," was deferred.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Senators Wakai and Lee, for the majority of the Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs and the majority of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts, presented a joint report (Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1432) recommending that S.C.R. No. 164 be adopted.

By unanimous consent, action on Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1432 and S.C.R. No. 164, entitled: "SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING THE UNITED STATES TO SUPPORT TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION, UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, AND INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION AND URGING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO GRANT TAIWAN MEMBERSHIP, OBSERVER, OR OTHER APPROPRIATE STATUS," was deferred until Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Senator Shimabukuro, for the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs, presented a report (Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1433) recommending that S.C.R. No. 191, as amended in S.D. 1, be adopted.

By unanimous consent, action on Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1433 and S.C.R. No. 191, S.D. 1, entitled: "SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIVE HAWAIIAN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY WORKING GROUP TO DISCUSS POLICIES AND LEGISLATION WITH RESPECT TO NATIVE HAWAIIAN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY," was deferred until Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Senator McKelvey, for the Committee on Government Operations, presented a report (Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1434) recommending that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN as Deputy Comptroller of the Department of Accounting and General Services, in accordance with Gov. Msg. No. 533.

In accordance with Senate Rule 37(6), action on Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1434 and Gov. Msg. No. 533 was deferred until Thursday, March 30, 2023.

**ORDER OF THE DAY
ADVISE AND CONSENT**

Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1428 (Gov. Msg. No. 512):

Senator San Buenaventura moved that Stand. Com. Rep. No. 1428 be received and placed on file, seconded by Senator Aquino and carried.

Senator San Buenaventura then moved that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of CATHERINE BETTS as Director of the Department of Human Services, term to expire at noon on December 7, 2026, seconded by Senator Aquino.

Senator San Buenaventura rose to speak in strong support of the nominee as follows:

“Colleagues, two years ago, I asked you to confirm Director Betts, and I mentioned her strong history of working as a deputy attorney general, Status of Women advisor, and her heart. Colleagues, I again ask you to join me and support her nomination to continue as director of the Department of Human Services.

“Cathy Betts has led the DHS through the waning days of the pandemic after Director Bhanot’s resignation. At a time when the public increasingly relied on the Department of Human Services for food, SNAP benefits, and health Medicaid benefits, Director Betts did not shirk from the huge responsibility, and led the agency well. During her term, Hawai‘i was the first in the country to implement pandemic EBT programs for schoolchildren who were not able to acquire school meals due to stay-at-home orders. Over 127,705 families were served. Hawai‘i’s Med-QUEST was the first in the country to implement Medicaid eligibility for COFA residents. As I said, it shows her heart.

“When the child-care industry was dying and did not look like there were enough child-care workers to be able to serve the working parents when they were able to get back to work, Director Betts again stepped up to the plate. She led DHS in distributing over \$165 million in federal child-care relief funds and child-care stabilization grants to prop up a child-care industry decimated during the stay-at-home orders. It is not easy to create a fair distribution process at a drop of a hat with spending deadlines, but Director Betts did so and provided child-care subsidies so that there will be a child-care workforce ready for parents eager to get back to work.

“There is more work to be done, and Director Betts, if confirmed, will step up to the challenge. During her tenure, DHS-attached agencies, like the Office of Youth Services, was heralded nationwide for having zero girls incarcerated for a period of almost three months. No one else in the country was able to achieve this feat. Department of Human Services has the biggest budget of all the state agencies because the agency affects every one of us, and Director Betts has stepped up to the plate, ran the agency well during crisis, and she deserves a reappointment, and I ask my colleagues to join me in confirming her nomination. Thank you.”

Senator Fevella rose to speak in strong support of the nominee as follows:

“Since my time in office, I’ve had some time working with Ms. Betts and the Department. Adult protective services, our community service branch—we needed to have some individuals, some people, place in in taking care of suspect of adult abuse. She supported the enforcement and the protections for kūpuna and valuable adult services that she provides—just her ongoing compassion. I got to meet with her. A lot of stuff, when we do these things, are confidential, but she assured me that the individual in my community was going to be taken care of, and he was. So, again, colleagues, one of the things that I

really, really like what she does in her efforts is the involvement of missing and murdered Native Hawaiian women and girls. Going forward, we’ve just got to continue to keep the momentum going. Colleagues, I ask you guys to join me in highly supporting G.M. 512, Cathy Betts. Thank you, Senate President.”

The motion was put by the Chair and carried on the following showing of Ayes and Noes:

Ayes, 23. Noes, none. Excused, 2 (Ihara, Kidani).

Senator San Buenaventura acknowledged Department of Human Services colleagues and other supporters of Director Catherine Betts. Present in the gallery were Cyndi Vallente, Joseph Campos, Cari Uesugi, Mimari Hall, Judy Mohr Peterson, Scott Morishige, Katherine Korenaga, Daisy Hartsfield, and Jennifer Muraoka; deputy attorneys general Lila King and James Walther; and attorney general Anne Lopez.

The Chair invited Director Betts to come down to the floor following the Senate’s adjournment for picture-taking.

Senator San Buenaventura noted that she had not introduced Director Betts. Senator San Buenaventura then introduced Director Catherine Betts, who was present in the gallery.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:42 a.m., on motion by Senator Wakai, seconded by Senator DeCoite and carried, the Senate adjourned until 11:30 a.m., Thursday, March 30, 2023.