

MAR 07 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT TO
ESTABLISH THE HAWAII STATE FELLOWS PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, civil servants are vital to the efficacy of the
2 state government, but the State is facing a growing recruitment
3 and retention crisis in public employment; and
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5 WHEREAS, according to a December 2024 report from the
6 Department of Human Resources Development, the public employment
7 vacancy rate is currently twenty-four percent, with thirty-one
8 percent of state employees eligible to retire in the next five
9 years; and
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11 WHEREAS, fellowships and similar training programs offer a
12 potential solution to fill this gap, offering young workers and
13 state employers the opportunity of a trial run while investing
14 in local workforce development; and
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16 WHEREAS, research demonstrates that fellowships increase
17 internal retention rates, reducing long-term hiring and training
18 costs; and
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20 WHEREAS, fellowships also cultivate a more skilled
21 workforce by offering young employees diverse, hands-on learning
22 opportunities and facilitating the passing of institutional
23 knowledge through new professional relationships between mentors
24 and mentees; now, therefore,
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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
27 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
28 that the Department of Human Resources Development is requested
29 to establish the Hawaii State Fellows Program to match talented
30 applicants with full-time, paid fellowship roles in various
31 state agencies for a period of ten to eleven months to attract
32 and retain government workers in the State; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Program is requested to
35 include:
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- (1) Full-time, paid employment opportunities for eligible applicants to work on a broad range of public policy issues and projects within various state agencies for a period of ten to eleven months;
- (2) Career and leadership skills development trainings, workshops, and seminars;
- (3) A mentorship program structure; and
- (4) Feedback and evaluation mechanisms to allow fellows, participating state agencies, and other stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the Program in achieving its goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human Resources Development is requested to coordinate with state agencies to:

- (1) Establish full-time, paid fellowship roles to be offered through the Program that offer professional development and hands-on experience in state governance;
- (2) Establish administrative policies and procedures for the implementation of the Program and the integration of fellowship roles into the state government workflow;
- (3) Promote the Program; and
- (4) Recruit eligible applicants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human Resources Development is requested to:

- (1) Establish Program eligibility qualifications that include, at minimum:
 - (A) Completion of a bachelor's degree by September 1 of the fellowship year;



1 (B) A cumulative undergraduate grade point average of
2 2.5 or higher or a grade point average of 2.5 or
3 higher in the last sixty semester units or ninety
4 quarter units;

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6 (C) Be twenty years of age or older by September 1 of
7 the fellowship year;

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9 (D) Be capable and prepared for full-time employment;
10 and

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12 (E) Be authorized to work in the United States for
13 the duration of the fellowship program;

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15 provided that an applicant who is not a United States
16 citizen shall provide proof of appropriate immigration
17 status; provided further that an applicant that
18 requires a F-1 or J-1 work visa, or any work permit
19 requiring participation in the E-Verify employment
20 eligibility verification system, shall not be eligible
21 for the program;

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23 (2) Establish Program application requirements that
24 include, at minimum:

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26 (A) A completed online application;

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28 (B) A personal statement or policy statement that
29 addresses the applicant's commitment to serving
30 the State;

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32 (C) A resume;

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34 (D) The names of three individuals who will serve as
35 references;

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37 (E) A minimum of two letters of recommendation; and

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39 (F) Transcripts from each college and university
40 attended; and

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42 (3) Give preference to eligible applicants that have:



(A) Pre-existing ties to the State; or

(B) Demonstrated commitment to long-term leadership
in the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of Human Resources
Development is requested to submit a report on the status of the
Hawaii State Fellows Program and its findings and
recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
Legislature no later than twenty prior to the convening of the
Regular Session of 2026, including:

(1) The number of fellows that applied and are
participating in the Program;

(2) Key accomplishments of the Program; and

(3) The budget and expenditures of the Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Resources
Development.

OFFERED BY: 

