

JAN 21 2026

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the *Meilleur Ouvrier*  
2 *de France*, meaning "best craftsperson of France", is a historic  
3 competition established in 1924 to recognize and revitalize  
4 traditional craftsmanship in France. The competition preserves  
5 and expands artisans' knowledge by fostering competition and  
6 publicly elevating craftsmanship. The *Meilleur Ouvrier de*  
7 *France* showcases France's unique culture through a diverse  
8 display of traditional professions in over two hundred  
9 categories, including florists, chefs, and carpenters.

10 The legislature notes that those vying for the *Meilleur*  
11 *Ouvrier de France* title are judged against a standard of  
12 perfection, rather than against each other, allowing for  
13 multiple or no awardees. Winners of the competition are hosted  
14 by the French President at the Elysee Palace, where they are  
15 awarded a medal and state diploma. *Meilleur Ouvrier de France*  
16 titles are awarded for life, christening winners as custodians



1 of their trade and tasking them with the preservation and  
2 generational sharing of their knowledge.

3 The legislature further finds that Hawaii also has a rich  
4 history of fine craftsmanship and is home to a wide variety of  
5 tradespersons. The legislature recognizes preserving cultural  
6 knowledge and promoting alternative career paths to diversify  
7 the economy as key priorities for the State.

8 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the  
9 department of labor and industrial relations to study the  
10 establishment of a workforce excellence award program for  
11 craftspersons to demonstrate the State's dedication to  
12 preserving its significant cultural history and promote future  
13 participation in potentially dwindling trades.

14 SECTION 2. (a) The department of labor and industrial  
15 relations shall conduct a study, with industry input, on the  
16 establishment of a workforce excellence award program  
17 recognizing craftspersons in the State, under which nominations  
18 are collected from the public and annual awards are presented by  
19 the governor at a historically significant venue.

20 (b) The department of labor and industrial relations shall  
21 research, assess, and make recommendations on:



8 (c) The department of labor and industrial relations shall  
9 submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including  
10 any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than  
11 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of  
12 2027.

13 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
15 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to  
16 conduct a study on the establishment of a Hawaii workforce  
17 excellence award program.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
19 labor and industrial relations for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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INTRODUCED BY: Stacy



S.B. NO. 2198

**Report Title:**

DLIR; Hawaii Workforce Excellence Award Program; Study; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to study the establishment of a Hawaii Workforce Excellence Award Program. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

