STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2173

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2198
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Labor and Technology, to which was referred S.B. No. 2198 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to study the establishment of a Hawai'i Workforce Excellence Award Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Your Committee finds that promoting a diverse marketplace is fundamental to the State's goals of fostering workforce development and sustainable economic growth. A successfully diverse economy includes manual skills and craftwork, which are often overlooked due to social stigmas. France formulated a unique solution to this issue through the *Meilleur Ouvrier de France* competition, which preserves and celebrates French heritage and craftsmanship by awarding titles in dozens of crafts, including woodworking and floristry. Honoring and preserving high standards of craftsmanship, skill, and professionalism in various manual trades is a valuable initiative to meet broader economic goals, as demonstrated by the success of the *Meilleur Ouvrier de France* competition. This measure examines how the State may develop a similar program by requesting the Department of Labor

and Industrial Relations to study the establishment of a Hawaii Workforce Excellence Award Program.

Your Committee has amended this measure by inserting an effective date of January 1, 2077, to encourage further discussion.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Labor and Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2198, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2198, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Labor and Technology,

BRANDON J.C. ELEFANTE, Chair

The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Labor and Technology
LBT

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 2198	LBT, WAM	2·6·26

☐ The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.

If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

☐ Pass, unamended 2312 ☑ Pass, with amendments 2311 ☐ Hold 2310 ☐ Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C. (C)	✓			
LAMOSAO, Rachele (VC)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les	✓			
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y.	✓			
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
TOTAL	5	0	0	0

Recommendation: ☑ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature: [signature]

Distribution: Original — File with Committee Report; Yellow — Committee; Pink — Drafting Agency

*Only one measure per Record of Votes

Revised: 01/02/26