

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 Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by  
2 adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read  
3 as follows:

4                               **"CHAPTER**

5                               **HAWAII STATE FELLOWS PROGRAM**

6       §   -1 **Definitions.** As used in this chapter:

7       "Department" means the department of human resources  
8 development.

9       "Program" means the Hawaii state fellows program.

10       "State agency" means the executive, legislative, or  
11 judicial branches of state government, including departments,  
12 offices, divisions, or other agencies within the executive,  
13 legislative, or judicial branches.

14       §   -2 **Hawaii state fellows program; established.** (a)

15 There is established within the department the Hawaii state  
16 fellows program to match talented applicants with full-time,  
17 paid fellowship roles in various state agencies for a period of



1 ten to eleven months to attract and retain government workers in  
2 the State.

3 (b) The program shall include but not be limited to the  
4 following:

5 (1) Full-time, paid employment opportunities for eligible  
6 applicants to work on a broad range of public policy  
7 issues and projects within various state agencies for  
8 a period of ten to eleven months;

9 (2) Career and leadership skills development trainings,  
10 workshops, and seminars;

11 (3) A mentorship program structure; and

12 (4) Feedback and evaluation mechanisms to allow fellows,  
13 participating state agencies, and other stakeholders  
14 to assess the effectiveness of the program in  
15 achieving its goals.

16 (c) The department shall coordinate with state agencies to:

17 (1) Establish full-time, paid fellowship roles to be  
18 offered through the program to provide professional  
19 development and hands-on experience in state  
20 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.

(d) The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 necessary for the purposes of this chapter.

**§ -3 Hawaii state fellows program; minimum qualifications; preference.** (a) To be eligible for the program, applicants shall meet the following minimum qualifications:

(1) Completed a bachelor's degree by September 1 of the calendar year in which the fellowship begins;

(2) Earned:

(A) A cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 2.5 or higher; or

(B) A grade point average of 2.5 or higher in the last sixty semester units or ninety quarter units;



(3) Be twenty years of age or older by September 1 of the calendar year in which the fellowship begins;

(4) Be capable and prepared for full-time employment; and

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

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

(b) To apply for the program, eligible applicants shall submit:

(1) A completed online application;

(2) A personal statement or policy statement that addresses the applicant's commitment to serving the State;

(3) A resume;

(4) The names of three individuals who will serve as references;

(5) A minimum of two letters of recommendation; and



1 (6) Transcripts from each college and university attended.

2 (c) The department shall give preference to eligible  
3 program applicants who have:

4 (1) A pre-existing connection to the State; or

5 (2) A demonstrated commitment to long-term leadership in  
6 the State."

7 SECTION 2. The department of human resources development  
8 shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations,  
9 including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later  
10 than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session  
11 of 2027 on the status and results of the Hawaii state fellows  
12 program, including:

13 (1) The number of fellows that applied and participated in  
14 the program;

15 (2) Key accomplishments of the program; and

16 (3) The budget and expenditures of the program.

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for  
20 the Hawaii state fellows program.



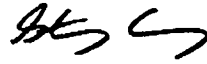
# S.B. NO. 2201

1       The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
2 human resources development for the purposes of this Act.

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

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INTRODUCED BY:





# S.B. NO. 2201

**Report Title:**

DHRD; Workforce Development; State Agencies; Employment; Hawaii State Fellows Program; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Hawaii State Fellows Program within the Department of Human Resources Development to match talented applicants with full-time, paid fellowship roles in various state agencies for a period of 10 to 11 months. Establishes minimum qualifications and procedures for eligible applicants to apply to the program. Gives preference to eligible program applicants who have a pre-existing connection to the State or a demonstrated commitment to long-term leadership in the State. Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to coordinate with state agencies to implement and promote the program. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates moneys.

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

