

MAR 16 2026

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL TO RECOMMEND TO THE GOVERNOR, FOR INCLUSION IN THE STATE UNIFIED PLAN, A COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE STRATEGY TO ENSURE THAT ALL PEOPLE OF THE STATE HAVE A PATHWAY TO A CAREER THAT ENABLES THEM TO LEARN, WORK, AND THRIVE IN THE STATE AND CONTRIBUTE TO A VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY GROUNDED IN COMMUNITY VALUES BY 2045.

1           WHEREAS, the State is at a critical demographic and  
2 economic crossroads due to its high cost of living and limited  
3 employment opportunities; and  
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5           WHEREAS, the results of the 2025 Holomua Collective  
6 Affordability Survey, which polled over three thousand two  
7 hundred local working residents, exemplify the widening gap  
8 between local wages and the cost of living; and  
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10           WHEREAS, the survey found that seventy-five percent of  
11 respondents said they will, or were unsure if they will,  
12 relocate to a less expensive state in the coming years due to  
13 increasing economic pressures, and that thirty-three percent of  
14 respondents preparing to leave plan to relocate within five  
15 years; and  
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17           WHEREAS, in 2023, the Asset Limited, Income Constrained,  
18 Employed (ALICE) household survival budget for a family of four  
19 in the State was \$110,112, and forty-five percent of households  
20 fell below that threshold; and  
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22           WHEREAS, in addition to the significant portion of working  
23 individuals and families currently struggling economically, the  
24 State's youth face a precarious future; and  
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26           WHEREAS, the Hawaii Workforce Funders Collaborative reports  
27 that nearly thirty percent of the approximately one hundred  
28 seventy thousand young residents projected to enter the State's  
29 workforce over the next decade will lack viable opportunities to  
30 build a sustainable career in the State; and  
31



1 WHEREAS, to prevent a permanent loss of local talent, the  
2 State must bridge the gap between education and employment by  
3 investing in robust career counseling infrastructure and  
4 work-based learning opportunities that connect students to  
5 high-quality, local employment opportunities in the State; and  
6

7 WHEREAS, efforts by multiple state departments and  
8 agencies, nonprofit partners, and labor organizations have made,  
9 and continue to make, significant foundational progress in  
10 increasing workforce development opportunities for local working  
11 residents, including through the adoption of the State Unified  
12 Plan by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and the  
13 Workforce Development Council; and  
14

15 WHEREAS, this collaborative framework has begun to bring  
16 together education, industry, labor, and social services to  
17 connect federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014)  
18 funding with state resources; and  
19

20 WHEREAS, achieving the vision of a resilient, inclusive  
21 economy, however, requires transitioning from a temporary  
22 collaborative effort in workforce development to a long-term  
23 comprehensive statewide strategy and goal; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, successful models in states such as Idaho, Maine,  
26 Minnesota, and Virginia demonstrate that comprehensive workforce  
27 strategies anchored by a common, statewide goal are essential  
28 for long-term alignment and accountability; and  
29

30 WHEREAS, by establishing clear metrics and a  
31 whole-of-government approach, these states have integrated  
32 funding streams and established momentum through data  
33 collection, sharing, and analysis; and  
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35 WHEREAS, despite considerable effort and growth over the  
36 past decade, the State's workforce development landscape lacks a  
37 common long-term strategy; and  
38

39 WHEREAS, the establishment of a common long-term strategy  
40 can provide the framework, funding, and motivation for all  
41 stakeholders to move in concert toward a shared definition of



1 success, and will improve the State's talent pipelines in  
2 high-demand, high-wage occupations; now, therefore,

3  
4 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,  
6 that the Workforce Development Council is requested to recommend  
7 to the Governor, for inclusion in the State Unified Plan, a  
8 comprehensive statewide workforce strategy to ensure that all  
9 people of the State have a pathway to a career that enables them  
10 to learn, work, and thrive in the State and contribute to a  
11 vibrant local economy grounded in community values by 2045; and  
12

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the comprehensive statewide  
14 workforce strategy is requested to:

- 15  
16 (1) Serve as a long-term framework to unify state and  
17 county workforce efforts under a common goal with  
18 aligned priorities; and  
19  
20 (2) Be incorporated into, and guide, each State Unified  
21 Plan and any modification thereof, regardless of the  
22 applicable planning period; and  
23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the comprehensive statewide  
25 workforce strategy is requested to include, at a minimum,  
26 specific plans to achieve, and metrics to evaluate, progress in  
27 the following areas:

- 28  
29 (1) Increasing work-based learning infrastructure and  
30 access, with focus on summer youth internship  
31 programs;  
32  
33 (2) Increasing economic resilience and opportunity;  
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35 (3) Reducing underemployment and improving job quality;  
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37 (4) Expanding living-wage employment opportunities;  
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39 (5) Expanding industry-led sectoral partnerships; and  
40  
41 (6) Increasing job retention; and  
42



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Workforce Development  
2 Council is requested to be responsible for facilitating the  
3 alignment of workforce development efforts and programs  
4 administered by state departments and agencies to achieve the  
5 goals established in the State Unified Plan and recommended  
6 comprehensive statewide workforce strategy; and  
7

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all state departments and  
9 agencies are requested to assist the Workforce Development  
10 Council by providing data and information necessary to support  
11 periodic evaluation of the comprehensive statewide workforce  
12 strategy, to the extent permitted by law; and  
13

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
15 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; Executive Director of  
16 the Workforce Development Council; Comptroller; Chairperson of  
17 the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Attorney General;  
18 Director of Finance; Director of Business, Economic Development,  
19 and Tourism; Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Adjutant  
20 General; Chairperson of the Board of Education; Superintendent  
21 of Education; Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission;  
22 Director of Health; Director of Human Resources Development;  
23 Director of Human Services; Director of Labor and Industrial  
24 Relations; Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural  
25 Resources; Director of Law Enforcement; Director of Corrections  
26 and Rehabilitation; Director of Taxation; Director of  
27 Transportation; and President of the University of Hawaii  
28 System.  
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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right, positioned above a solid horizontal line.