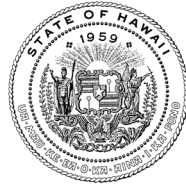


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

April 10, 2026

To: The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
The Honorable Rachele Lamosao, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Labor and Technology Committee

Date: Friday, April 10, 2026
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 225, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: G.M. 792, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, CHERYL CROSS, for a term to expire 06-30-2030.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations **supports** the confirmation of Cheryl Cross to the Workforce Development Council.

Ms. Cross brings extensive experience in strategic workforce development, talent acquisition, and multi-sector stakeholder engagement, with over 15 years of leadership in these areas. Her resume reflects a broad portfolio of accomplishments across both the public and private sectors, including service as an independent management consultant specializing in full-cycle HR, workforce development, talent management, and organizational improvement. She also previously served at Booz Allen Hamilton, where she supported high-level staffing and workforce initiatives for clients across the Indo-Pacific region, including military, intelligence, and technical operations..

Her deep background in workforce systems, change management, and stakeholder coordination aligns directly with the responsibilities of the Workforce Development Council, which relies on members capable of strengthening collaboration among employers, educators, labor organizations, and community partners. Ms. Cross's demonstrated commitment to improving workforce pathways and her experience advancing talent development across diverse sectors will greatly support the Council's mission to prepare Hawai'i's workforce for current and future economic needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 792.

DR. JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE BUTAY
DLIR DIRECTOR

WILLIAM KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

KEITH DEMELLO
CHAIRPERSON

BENNETTE E. MISALUCHA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 317, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8815 Web: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>

To: The Honorable Senator Brandon Elefante, Chair,
The Honorable Senator Rachele Lamosao, Vice-Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology

Date: Friday, April 10, 2026

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 225, State Capitol

From: Keith DeMello
Chair, Workforce Development Council

Re: GM 792: Gubernatorial Nominee, Cheryl Cross

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IN STRONG SUPPORT

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of the confirmation of Ms. Cheryl A. Cross to continue serving as a member of the Council.

Ms. Cross has been an active and highly valued member of the WDC, currently serving on the Executive Board and contributing meaningfully to the Council's work. During her first term, she demonstrated strong leadership as Chair of the Employer Engagement Committee and Vice Chair of the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, where she played a key role in strengthening partnerships with employers and advancing initiatives to support transitioning service members and veterans.

Ms. Cross has over 20 years of experience in human resources, talent acquisition, and workforce development, including executive search, training, and career transition services. As an Executive Search Consultant with Inkinen Executive Search, she has a deep understanding of Hawai'i's labor market and the challenges employers face in recruiting and retaining talent. Her work across both the public and private sectors, including past experience supporting Department of Defense initiatives and workforce pipelines, provides valuable insight into building strong, responsive talent systems.

In addition to her professional expertise, Ms. Cross has demonstrated a strong commitment to community

engagement and workforce advancement. She is a recognized speaker on workforce and career development topics and has actively contributed to initiatives that support emerging talent, veterans, and local workers seeking meaningful career pathways.

Ms. Cross's continued service will be particularly important as the State advances its Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Unified Plan and works toward the Generational Workforce Commitment, ensuring that all residents of Hawai'i have pathways to careers that enable them to learn, work, thrive, and belong in our State.

Her leadership, expertise, and dedication to strengthening Hawai'i's workforce system make her exceptionally well-qualified to continue serving on the Workforce Development Council.

For these reasons, the Workforce Development Council respectfully urges the Committee to confirm the appointment of Ms. Cheryl A. Cross.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully Submitted,

Keith DeMello
Chair
Workforce Development Council



April 7, 2026

The Honorable Ronald Kouchi, President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate:

I am pleased to support Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council. I have worked with Cheryl on workforce initiatives and have seen her consistently bring practical, employer-informed solutions to the table. Her commitment to strengthening talent pipelines across Hawai'i is clear and impactful.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roseann Freitas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roseann" and last name "Freitas" clearly legible.

Roseann Freitas

CEO

Building Industry Association of Hawai'i

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 1:02:44 PM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hawaii LECET	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Cheryl A. Cross for reappointment to the Hawaii Workforce Development Council

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology,

We submit this testimony in support of **Cheryl A. Cross** for her nomination to the **Hawaii Workforce Development Council (WDC)**. With over 20 years of experience as a senior HR and talent professional, Ms. Cross brings a sophisticated understanding of both the national defense landscape and Hawaii's unique local labor market. Her proven track record in military advocacy, strategic employer engagement, and local talent retention makes her an exceptional asset to the Council.

Military & Veteran Affairs

Ms. Cross has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to supporting service members and their families in their transition to the civilian workforce.

Employer Engagement

Ms. Cross has shown the ability to bridge the gap between complex organizational needs and workforce solutions, which has been a cornerstone of her career.

Local Hiring and Hawaii Talent Retention

Ms. Cross is a recognized Hawaii market specialist dedicated to keeping local residents employed and thriving within the Islands.

Cheryl Cross possesses the rare combination of high-level recruitment expertise and a "boots-on-the-ground" commitment to Hawaii's workforce. Her vision for data-driven workforce planning aligned with Hawaii's economic priorities will undoubtedly serve the Council and the people of Hawaii well.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer our testimony in support of GM792.

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 1:45:36 PM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leianne Pedro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am pleased to support Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council. I have worked with Cheryl on workforce initiatives and have seen her consistently bring practical, employer-informed solutions to the table. Her commitment to strengthening talent pipelines across Hawai'i is clear and impactful.

April 7, 2026

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President
And Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha Honorable Kikuchi:

I am pleased to submit this letter in strong support of Ms. Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawaii Workforce Development Council. Throughout her tenure, Cheryl has demonstrated exceptional leadership, insight, and dedication to advancing workforce opportunities across our state.

Her contributions in the areas of Military and Veteran Affairs have been particularly impactful. Cheryl has played a key role in supporting programs and panels that assist military service members in their transition to civilian employment and create meaningful opportunities for military spouses. Her efforts have strengthened the link between our statewide workforce system and Hawaii's military-connected communities.

Cheryl's commitment to employer engagement has also been instrumental in improving hiring practices, expanding local talent pipelines, and forging stronger partnerships with American Job Centers and state workforce programs. She brings a practical understanding of workforce needs and continually advocates for keeping Hawaii residents employed, while also encouraging the return of kama'āina who wish to work and live in the islands once again.

Cheryl Cross consistently goes above and beyond in her service to the Workforce Development Council. She is a resourceful, collaborative, and thoughtful leader whose contributions have advanced the goals of our state's workforce initiatives. I strongly support her reappointment for a second term and am confident she will continue to make meaningful contributions to Hawaii's economic and workforce future.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.



Manu Bermudes
Vice President, Human Resources

TESTIMONY ON GM 792

TO THE HONORABLE CHAIR BRANDON ELEFANTE, VICE CHAIR RACHELE LAMOSAO, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY:

I am writing to express my strong support for GM 792, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, Cheryl A. Cross, for a term to expire 06-30-2030.

As a Senior HR and Talent Professional with over 20 years of experience, Cheryl has helped many businesses and individuals navigate career transitions. Notably, her specialized work with the Department of Defense (DoD) and her authorship of the Amazon best seller "Civilian Mission", showcase her unique skill of being able to facilitate career transitions for military members.

In addition, Cheryl has professional expertise as a Prosci Certified Change Management Professional and as a Certified Master Trainer. Cheryl's technical qualifications are an asset to the Board and will help with labor market analyses and developing effective linkages with regional employers.

Beyond her professional accolades, Cheryl has an unwavering commitment to public service and community advocacy. Cheryl is the former President of the Organization of Women Leaders (OWL) Hawaii, and is a past recipient of their prestigious "Woman Leader of the Year" Award. Cheryl is also a former panelist for the Wahine Forum and is a tireless advocate for professional women in Hawaii. As a single mother, Cheryl offers a crucial perspective of the systemic barriers, such as childcare and cost-of-living challenges that many Hawaii residents face. Cheryl's presence on the Hawaii Workforce Development Council will help to ensure that workforce strategies remain relevant and beneficial for all residents in Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joy Kimura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joy" being more prominent.

Joy Kimura

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 5:12:02 PM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ananda Ferreira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council. In my experience serving alongside Cheryl on a nonprofit board and working with her on recruitment efforts, I've seen her consistently bring thoughtful, employer-informed solutions grounded in strong industry relationships and a deep understanding of Hawai'i's workforce needs. Her leadership and commitment to strengthening the state's talent pipeline continue to make a meaningful and lasting impact.

Ananda Ferreira, CEO

O'ahu Cemetery Association

O'ahu Cemetery & Crematory | O'ahu Mortuary

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 11:01:02 PM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Derek Kanehira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am pleased to endorse Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council. Having worked with her on employer engagement and workforce initiatives, I have seen her consistently contribute pragmatic, employer-informed solutions that strengthen connections between business needs, workforce talent, and state resources.

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/8/2026 10:31:26 AM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benjamin Ancheta Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly recommend your approval of Cheryl Cross for the Hawaii Workforce Development Council.

I have known Cheryl for almost a decade, and have worked closely with her for almost two years. Cheryl has continued to impress me with her commitment to making Hawaii a better place for working families, and her contributions in developing living wage jobs and a local workforce who can afford to continue working and living in Hawaii. Cheryl is a person of high integrity, and I cannot think of a better public servant for this committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin Ancheta, Jr.

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/8/2026 9:47:30 PM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Pang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

It is my pleasure to submit testimony in support of the re-confirmation of Cheryl Cross to a second term serving on the Hawaii Workforce Development Council. I have known Ms. Cross professionally for over 6 years. She is an active and invaluable contributor to a HR committee which we both serve on and to the Hawaii business community. Ms. Cross is a published author and subject matter expert working with military individuals transitioning to the civilian workforce. She has regularly presented to distinguished organizations such as the Society of Human Resource Professionals - Hawaii to share best practices in Military to Civilian career transitions. Ms. Cross is a respected professional at Inkinen & Associates, and executive recruiting firm based in Hawaii. I support the reconfirmation of Ms. Cross to a second term to the WDC.

Respectfully,

Bonnie Pang

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/9/2026 7:42:18 AM

Testimony for LBT on 4/10/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jon Paul Akeo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am pleased to support Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council. I have worked with Cheryl on workforce initiatives and have seen her consistently bring practical, employer-informed solutions to the table. Her commitment to strengthening talent pipelines across Hawai'i is clear and impactful.

April 9, 2026

Dear Senate Labor Committee Members:

I am pleased to support Cheryl Cross for a second term on the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council. I have worked with Cheryl on workforce initiatives and have seen her consistently bring practical, employer-informed solutions to the table. Her commitment to strengthening talent pipelines across Hawai'i is clear and impactful.

Sincerely,

Mislyn Alensonorin
Vice President, SHRM Hawaii Education Foundation

GM-792

Submitted on: 4/10/2026 10:49:16 AM

Testimony for LBT on 4/13/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trang Malone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am pleased to support Cheryl Cross's nomination based on our work together advancing military-to-civilian transitions and military spouse employment. I have personally seen Cheryl step in to ensure service members and military spouses are not just included in conversations, but actively supported—whether that meant convening employers, elevating lived military experience, or helping translate challenges into practical workforce solutions. Through panels, programs, and targeted Military and Veteran Affairs initiatives, Cheryl consistently brings the right voices into the room and turns those conversations into meaningful action that benefits both employers and job seekers. She is a leader in all things related to supporting the military community, with a steadfast focus on strengthening opportunities for the people of our state. Her leadership is thoughtful, collaborative, and demonstrably results-driven.