



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

April 1, 2026

To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair,
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2026
Time: 10:03 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 211, State Capitol

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

Re: H.B. 2468 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The DLIR **supports the intent** of this measure if it does not adversely impact the priorities identified in the Governor's Executive Supplemental Budget request and **recommends amendments**. The Department recommends the following:

1. Pg 3, lines 6-8 to read as follows: only reimburse an employer **for fifty per cent of** an intern's wages up to \$20 per hour to help defray the costs of training and supervising the intern.
2. Pg. 4, line 6: amending chapter to chapterss to include both chapters 387 and 388.
3. Pg 4, lines 16-18 to read as follows: (2) Ensure that interns are referred by the department to employers **or sponsors** and not directly by the employers, **sponsors, or trade organizations**,
4. Pg. 6, lines 2-8 to read as follows:
 - (3) Be currently enrolled:
 - (A) In a high school ; or
 - (B) In an accredited college or university; **or**
5. Pg. 11, lines 1-3: deleting (j) because only employers should be paying an intern's wages and an employer's payment of wages is addressed by the proposed amended language for page 3, lines 6-8 in #1.
6. Pg 11, lines 4-8 to read as follows: (j) Notwithstanding any contract entered into pursuant to subsection (i), all **employers** shall pay, supervise, and train interns

as set forth in subsection (h); provided that sponsors **or trade organizations** may receive reimbursement for administrative costs of ten per cent of interns' wages.

7. Pg. 11, line 10 delete "employer" from the definition of "Sponsor".
8. Section 4 of the bill, from page 17, line 16 to page 18, line 4 provides an appropriation for contracting with employers, apprenticeship programs, sponsors, and trade organizations. We suggest removing "apprenticeship programs" as the bill does not provide contracting with these programs.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to contribute to refining the language of Act 251 as the Hele Imua program has proved successful and has the potential to address the State's critical workforce shortages by creating a clear bridge from work-based training to employment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



SIERRA WHITESIDE
CHAIRPERSON

DAINTRY BARTOLDUS
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
'A'UNIKE MOKU'ĀPUNI NO KA NĀ KĀWAI KULA
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
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April 1, 2026

The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: HB2468 HD1 SD1, Relating to Internship Programs

The Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) **strongly supports HB2468 HD1 SD1** specifically the part which requires experience gained by an intern in a state internship program to be applied towards experience needed to meet minimum qualifications for civil service positions.

This measure represents a critical step toward building a sustainable workforce pipeline into state government. For many individuals, including people with disabilities, internships are not just learning opportunities, but the primary pathway to meaningful, competitive, and integrated employment.

Historically, individuals with disabilities have faced systemic barriers to entering civil service employment, even when they have demonstrated the ability to perform the work. By allowing internship experience to count toward minimum qualification requirements, this bill helps remove barriers that have excluded capable and qualified individuals from public sector careers.

We have seen firsthand the success of structured internship models, including programs such as Project SEARCH, participation in the Hele Imua internship program, and partnerships with university and public health workforce pathways. Through these efforts, SCDD has directly benefited from interns who have contributed meaningfully to our work while gaining valuable, real-world experience. These models demonstrate that when individuals are provided mentorship, hands-on opportunities, and supportive work environments, they succeed, and employers benefit from a more diverse, reliable, and committed workforce.

This measure is especially timely given the persistent vacancies across critical state positions, including social workers, case managers, and other human services roles. These positions are essential to supporting individuals with disabilities, kupuna, and families across Hawai‘i, yet remain difficult to recruit and retain. Creating structured internship pathways allows departments to build and evaluate their future workforce, improving recruitment and retention in high-need areas.

Through SCDD’s work with the Bridging Aging and Disability Networks (BADN) initiative, workforce development has consistently been identified as a shared priority across systems. Strengthening internship pathways helps build early interest in public service careers, increase exposure to disability and aging service systems, and support long-term workforce development across both government and community-based sectors.

The measure maintains important safeguards to ensure internships are meaningful, paid, and do not displace existing workers, while strengthening accountability through training plans, supervision, and evaluation. Hawai‘i has an opportunity to lead in developing a workforce system that is inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of our communities. HB2468 HD1 SD1 moves us meaningfully in that direction.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide supportive testimony for HB2468 HD1 SD1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator



JOSH GREEN, M. D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

BRENN A H. HASHIMOTO
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

BRIAN K. FURUTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
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WRITTEN ONLY

Statement of
BRENN A H. HASHIMOTO
Director, Department of Human Resources Development

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Wednesday, April 1, 2026
10:03 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
HB2468 HD1 SD1, RELATING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee:

The Department of Human Resources Development (HRD) **supports** HB2468 HD1 SD1 with amendments.

The purpose of this measure is to expand and strengthen the State's internship and workforce development programs, improve coordination between agencies, and better align internship experience with future employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors.

HRD offers three amendments to clarify how experience is applied and to ensure the department has the resources needed to implement the measure.

HRD appreciates the amendments made to HD1 that address concerns raised in our prior testimony. In particular, the revised language relating to minimum qualification determinations so that the Director of Human Resources Development may apply internship experience toward meeting minimum qualification requirements, rather than automatically applying the experience.

This change preserved the evaluative discretion necessary under Chapter 76, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, to ensure that experience credited toward civil service minimum qualifications is relevant in scope and level to the position being filled. The amendment

aligns the bill with established merit principles and existing qualification review practices.

With regard to accepting internship experience, the SD1 changes “may” to “shall.” This raises a concern, as not all internship experience is relevant to the duties or minimum qualification requirements of a position. Similarity in level and scope does not ensure relevance. To address this, and to provide clarity in application, we offer the following amendment:

- Page 16, lines 13-17, replace the current language with:

“The director of human resources development shall apply experience gained by an intern participating in the program toward meeting minimum qualification requirements under chapter 76 only when the experience is both: (1) directly relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the civil service position; and (2) consistent with the stated minimum qualification requirements for the position.”

HRD also notes that examiners within the Employee Staffing Division already evaluate relevant internship experience when reviewing applicant qualifications, provided the experience is not part of and credited toward academic coursework and is directly related to the duties of the position being filled. The Committee’s amendment allows this practice to continue while strengthening workforce development pathways.

HB2468 HD1 SD1 assigns several responsibilities to HRD relating to the implementation of the State internship and workforce development program.

The measure requires HRD to help ensure that experience gained through the internship program assists participants in qualifying for vacant positions of a similar level and scope within State government. The bill also requires HRD to recognize relevant internship experience as meeting part of the minimum qualification requirements for civil service employment and to develop standardized guidelines that align internship duties with civil service qualification standards. In addition, the measure requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to provide HRD with intern-specific information so that HRD may assist interns in pursuing future State employment opportunities.

These provisions position HRD as the entity responsible for evaluating internship experience against civil service minimum qualification standards and ensuring that internship duties align with the stated qualification requirements.

Because the bill expands HRD’s operational role, the Department respectfully requests that the HD1 include language that appropriates funds and positions to HRD to support implementation. These resources would allow HRD to develop standardized qualification alignment guidelines, evaluate internship experience for civil service purposes, and assist internship participants and supervisors in transitioning into State employment. We understand and acknowledge that some managers and/or

departments have difficult navigating the civil service recruitment and selection processes and we believe that HRD, given adequate resources, can greatly assist with advising, assisting, and facilitating these processes.

While the bill includes an appropriation for staffing and operational support, the appropriation language directs these funds to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. To ensure effective implementation and consistency with Chapter 76, we respectfully recommend the amendments below:

- Page 14, line 1:
Amend to clarify that HRD's expanded responsibilities are subject to available resources:

"The department of human resources development shall, subject to available appropriations:"

- Page 18, line 11:
Insert language as follows:

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of labor and industrial relations, provided that of the sum appropriated in subsection (3), \$190,632, including two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions, is allocated to the department of human resources development to support activities to effectuate this Act.

HRD is available to answer any questions or provide further information as needed.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
April 1, 2026 at 10:03 a.m.

By

Debora Halbert

Vice President for Academic Strategy
University of Hawai'i System

HB 2468 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports HB 2468 HD1 SD1 – Relating to Internship Programs. Paid internships are a research-backed, proven talent development strategy. UH appreciates the State's commitment to meeting persistent workforce shortages and partnering with education providers and the business community to create opportunities for our local youth to find meaningful careers here at home. Coupled with the State's economic reality that many small businesses across the islands lack sufficient capital or capacity to develop their own internship programs, charging the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) with assisting them to develop and run effective, well-designed programs is an excellent strategy. UH looks forward to working with the department, as well as trade organizations, state agencies, and industry partners in the private sector on this program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 04/01/2026

Time: 10:03 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: WAM

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2468, SD1, RELATING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS.

Purpose of Bill: Amends the private sector On-the-Job Training Work Experience Program to allow the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to contract with employers and trade organizations or apprenticeship program sponsors without regard to chapters 103D and 103F, HRS; establish that an intern may become an apprentice in a registered apprenticeship program under certain conditions; require employers to pay \$20 per hour for a maximum of forty hours per week for all interns; require sponsors to contribute 50% of each intern's wages; requires sponsors to pay, supervise, and train interns; and allow sponsors to be reimbursed for administrative costs of 10% of interns' wages. Amends the State Internship and Workforce Development Program to require experience gained by interns to be applied towards the experience needed to meet minimum qualifications for civil service positions; require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and Department of Human Resources Development to develop guidelines for participation in the program; transfer certain program responsibilities from DLIR to DHRD. Appropriates funds. Effective 1/1/2077. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2468, HD 1, SD 1, which enables the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to enter into contracts with trade organizations for support with the on-the-job training program and enables internship experience within State departments, agencies, and programs to be applied towards the minimum qualification requirements for positions similar to which the participant interned.

The Department appreciates the support for paid student internships in both the private and public sectors and is committed to partnering with DLIR to continue to facilitate internships for high school students. The internship program increases access to work-based learning opportunities for Department high school students statewide. This aligns with the Department's mission to prepare students for college, career, and citizenship; encourages students to consider a career with local industries and employers; and facilitates strong public-private partnerships, leading to a stronger sense of community and a shared responsibility over

education, workforce development, and a sustainable economy.

The Department also appreciates the consideration for internship experience within the public sector to be applied towards the minimum qualification requirements for positions similar to which the participant interned. This will enable state agencies to hire interns, including graduating high school students, as permanent employees and encourage interns to transition to state employment.

The Department defers to DLIR regarding the implementation of the amendments to the on-the-job training work experience program as outlined in Section 2.

The Department defers to DLIR and the Department of Human Resources Development regarding the implementation of the amendments to the state internship and workforce development program outlined in Section 3.

The Department thanks the Legislature for its continued support of our work-based learning initiatives and our goal for all students to be globally competitive and locally committed. Preparing our students for the current and emerging workforce here at home will not only address our workforce needs, but will also lead to a thriving Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

HB-2468-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 2:52:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2468 HB RELATING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS.

JOB READINESS AND INCREASE WORKFORCE IN SPECIFIC CAREERS