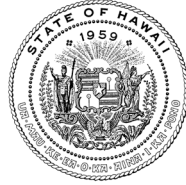


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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 27, 2026

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

Date: Friday, March 27, 2026
Time: 3:01 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 225, State Capitol

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

**Re: S.C.R. 5 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A HAWAII
WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE AWARD PROGRAM**

The **DLIR supports** this measure, which proposes that the Department research and make recommendations on establishing a Hawaii-based program like the Meilleur Ouvrier de France (MOF) in a cost-effective manner.

The DLIR believes that formally honoring and preserving high standards of craftsmanship, skill, and professionalism in various manual trades is an intriguing and valuable initiative. Established in 1924, the MOF recognized the best workers of the era with the title "Best Craftsman of France" and has since expanded to include awards in over 200 trades.

In the U.S., societal emphasis often leans toward college degrees and white-collar careers, which can overshadow the importance of skilled trades. A Hawaii-based program modeled after the MOF could elevate the prestige of these professions and promote career paths that do not require a four-year degree. This program would highlight the diverse opportunities within the skilled labor market and help attract younger individuals to apprenticeships and technical training programs.

One of the most significant benefits of a program like the MOF would be its potential to provide role models for younger generations. By showcasing workers who have achieved exceptional levels of mastery, the program could inspire youth to follow in their footsteps. These role models would help shift public perception of vocational and skilled trades, presenting them as prestigious and valuable career paths and encouraging more young people to pursue these fields.