

OahuWDB

From: Nicole Madrid <madridnicole2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 11:12 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Written Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to share how the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) directly changed my life, and to urge you to protect its funding for the thousands of families who rely on it.

I have always had the motivation to pursue a career in the medical field. However, because of the high cost of living and the overwhelming cost of tuition, I always backed down and felt discouraged. I knew that if I went back to college, I would be stuck with a massive debt that would take me a long time to pay off. As a mother of two, I needed to make a choice that would truly benefit my family's future, not burden us with financial strain.

For a long time, I wanted to avoid state or government assistance. But with the help of WIOA, I gained my confidence again. Knowing that I had access to these services meant there was one less bill I had to worry about.

Because of WIOA, I am currently attending Hawaii Medical College to become a Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA). This program is allowing me to get my foot in the door so I can better serve my community and advance in my career. WIOA made it possible for me to pursue my dream in healthcare industry without sacrificing my family's stability. I am just one of thousands of families relying on WIOA to better our lives. Please stand with us during this critical time and ensure these vital, life-changing services remain available for our community.

Sincerely,
Janelle Madrid
Ewa Beach, HI
(808)393-1406

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

OahuWDB

From: Jaren <jarenjacobvaldez@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 11:18 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Hi, this is Jaren Jacob Valdez that is in the youth program. And that I support the program because its helping me get my GED.

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

From: Tee <teefarriot@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 11:44 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Thida Farriot letter

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On behalf of American Job Center - Work Hawai'i Program,

My name is Thida, and I'm an electrician apprentice. I am writing because I need to emphasize how impactful this program has been. Being able to afford school isn't easy, especially early in our apprenticeship where the pay is low. We struggle and budget to survive meeting the bare minimum. There is no opportunity to save, as the cost of living is through the roof and many of us have had a pay cut just to start the apprenticeship. Having this program has alleviated the stress of affording tuition. We are able to focus on work and school, without scrambling on how we can afford books. Please consider how impactful this program has been to students, it's truly been a necessity that has helped many of us get by.

Thank you,
Thida Farriot

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thida Farriot'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Thida' written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name 'Farriot'.

OahuWDB

From: Jax Dittman <samjap0707@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 11:55 AM
To: OahuWDB
Cc: Shahbaz, Kalima
Subject: Written Testimony- WIOA program

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To the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

My name is Jackson Dittman, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunities the WIOA program has given me. Choosing to pursue a career in healthcare through the Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) program at Hawaii Medical College has been one of the most rewarding decisions of my life, and I truly would not have been able to begin this journey without WIOA's support.

When I started the program, paying tuition was one of my biggest concerns. WIOA removed that burden and allowed me to focus on what mattered most, learning, growing, and preparing a career dedicated to serving others. Instead of worrying about how I would afford school, I was able to dedicate my time and energy to becoming the best healthcare professional I could be.

Throughout my education, I have gained valuable knowledge and hands-on skills in medical terminology, phlebotomy, EKGs, patient care, infection control, medical billing, administrative procedures, and clinical practices. More importantly, the program has given me the confidence to care for patients with compassion, professionalism, and respect. Every class and every clinical skill I have learned brings me one step closer to making a positive impact on the lives of patients and helping address the growing need for healthcare professionals in Hawai'i.

WIOA does far more than provide financial assistance—it gives people hope. It opens doors that might otherwise remain closed, allowing individuals to pursue careers, improve their lives, support their families, and give back to their communities. I am living proof of the difference this program can make, and I know there are countless others whose lives have also been changed because someone believed enough to invest in their future.

Unfortunately, due to funding shortages, my WIOA assistance ended early after only about \$3,700 was awarded, even though I had been hoping and planning for the full \$10,000 in tuition assistance. As a result, I was left with a large unpaid tuition balance,

and I am currently unable to continue my education in the Certified Medical Assistant program. It has been heartbreaking to come this far and work so hard, only to have my education placed on hold because the funding was exhausted before I could complete the program. My hope is not only to finish my education, but also that future students will continue to have access to the same life-changing opportunities that WIOA gave me. I respectfully ask the Board to continue supporting and strengthening this program so that others can achieve their educational and career goals just as I have been fortunate to begin.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony and for your continued commitment to helping individuals build brighter futures. Your support changes lives, strengthens our workforce, and makes a lasting difference throughout our community.

Mahalo,

Jax Dittman

Born in Hong Kong. Built on purpose. Becoming more every day.

Grateful heart. Big dreams. Uncommon path.

Email: samjap0707@hotmail.com

Phone: 813-695-9312

“From survival to significance—every step matters.”

OahuWDB

From: Dayna Lapina <dlapina@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 12:28 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Urgent Testimony in Support of Reinstating Workforce Development Funding

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Dear Members of the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

Aloha,

I am writing to you today to strongly urge the reinstatement and continuation of critical workforce development funding, particularly supporting programs coordinated through the American Job Center (AJC) Hawaii.

Our community relies heavily on these funding avenues to access essential, short-term vocational training—such as the Pharmacy Technician program—which serves as a vital pipeline into high-demand healthcare careers. When funding ceases, it creates an immediate barrier for residents striving to upskill, gain financial independence, and contribute to Oahu's economy.

Securing futures through steady workforce development is not just an investment in individual students, but a direct investment in the stability of our entire community's workforce infrastructure. Without this crucial financial support, many applicants are left with limited options, and our local employers face a shortage of qualified, trained professionals.

We respectfully ask the Board to consider the deep, lasting impact that sustaining and reinforcing these funds has on our community members seeking a better future. Thank you for your time, leadership, and continued dedication to empowering Oahu's workforce.

Sincerely,

Dayna Lapina, First To Work, Educational Specialist

Leeward Community College
Office of Continuing Education & Workforce Development
96-045 Ala Ike, Rm CE 101
Pearl City, HI 96782
808-455-0500
www.ocewd.org

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Testimony in Full Support of the City and County of Honolulu WorkHawaii Program

Aloha Chair Christopher Lum Lee and Members of the O‘ahu Workforce Development Board,

My name is William Castillo, and I serve as the Senior Workforce Coordinator and Associate Professor for the Office of Workforce Development at Leeward Community College. I am pleased to submit this testimony in strong support of the City and County of Honolulu's WorkHawaii Program as it seeks to continue providing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services to the residents of O‘ahu.

Leeward Community College has had the privilege of partnering with WorkHawaii over many years to provide education, workforce training, and career pathways that lead to meaningful employment. Throughout our partnership, the WorkHawaii team has consistently demonstrated professionalism, responsiveness, and an unwavering commitment to helping individuals overcome barriers to employment and achieve long-term success.

WorkHawaii has been an outstanding partner in connecting participants with training opportunities that align with Hawai‘i's workforce needs. Their staff works collaboratively with our team to ensure participants are supported throughout their educational journey, from enrollment through completion and into employment. Communication is timely, challenges are addressed collaboratively, and the shared focus has always remained on achieving the best possible outcomes for participants.

Our partnership has enabled many individuals to earn industry-recognized credentials, develop new skills, and pursue careers that improve their economic stability and quality of life. The WorkHawaii staff demonstrates a genuine commitment to participant success by providing individualized guidance, maintaining strong relationships with training providers, and ensuring participants receive the resources necessary to complete their training programs successfully.

From an institutional perspective, WorkHawaii has consistently been a reliable and engaged partner. Their willingness to collaborate on program development, coordinate participant services, and respond to changing workforce needs has strengthened our collective ability to serve the community effectively. We value their professionalism, integrity, and dedication to continuous improvement.

As Hawai‘i continues to face evolving workforce challenges, strong partnerships between workforce agencies, education providers, employers, and community organizations are more important than ever. WorkHawaii has proven itself to be a trusted leader in fostering these partnerships and delivering high-quality workforce development services that positively impact both individuals and employers across O‘ahu.

For these reasons, Leeward Community College's Office of Workforce Development offers its full support for the continued selection of the City and County of Honolulu's WorkHawaii Program to administer the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs. We are confident that WorkHawaii will continue to serve the residents of O‘ahu with excellence and remain an invaluable partner in developing Hawai‘i's workforce.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William Castillo

William Castillo

Senior Workforce Coordinator / Associate Professor

Office of Workforce Development

Leeward Community College

OahuWDB

From: Keanu <papaiahoopii89@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 12:32 PM
To: OahuWDB

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

July 1, 2026

To whom it may concern,

I am a current student enrolled in the program at the city and county school for youth and young adults. My experience so far is very different from what I am used to. I can see myself getting my diploma in a shorter amount of time than a traditional schooling environment. My parents made me come to this school because of my health and absence at the traditional school. The staff gives me helpful tips to pass my exams and catch up on class work. I'm normally always sick. My teachers and counselors are super supportive to my goals and they encourage me to do better and to also show up when sometimes I don't want to.

I just recently learned how school can get me ready for a job or career. That I can't wait to be in to make money. This program has taught me independence and self discipline. With skills like that there's only forward motion to get out of school and get into a job and work.

Thank you,
Keanu Papaia-Hoopii

July 2, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for Work Hawai'i Youth Program and its mission to empower O'ahu's youth and young adults by helping them achieve their educational and employment goals. The program has assisted youths with tuition assistance, hands on training, provide high school equivalency preparation, case management, internship, paid workforce training programs to build resumes, and connect with our local employers.

I have had the opportunity to interact with staff, and they have consistently been professional, supportive, dedicated, and committed to the youth. Staff developed sincere relationships to motivate and support the youth. The youth trusted staff and strived to be their best.

Work Hawai'i has been a resource for youths to become positive citizens and leaders in our community. The program has been a primary resource for youths to achieve their education goals without the Department of Education. I strongly encourage Work Hawai'i to receive the needed funding to operate their services for the youth and the communities.

Sincerely,



Duane Omori

OahuWDB

From: Melia Abreu <melia7@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 12:57 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Testimony in Support of WorkHawaii

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Aloha Chair and Members of the Workforce Development Board,

My name is Dr. Melia Abreu, and I serve as the Program Manager for Continuing Education at Honolulu Community College.

I am pleased to offer my support for the City and County of Honolulu's WorkHawaii Program. Honolulu Community College has a longstanding history of partnership with WorkHawaii in providing workforce training opportunities for the residents of O'ahu. Since joining HonCC, I have been working to renew and strengthen that partnership, and I offer this testimony based on both the institution's established history with WorkHawaii and my own experience engaging with their team through that renewal process.

From the outset of our conversations, I have found the WorkHawaii staff to be professional, collaborative, and genuinely committed to connecting community members with meaningful workforce opportunities. They have been collaborative in helping us identify how our Continuing Education programs can align with participant needs and funding pathways, and they have communicated clearly throughout our discussions.

The history between Honolulu Community College and WorkHawaii reflects a partnership built on shared values — expanding access to industry-recognized credentials, supporting career advancement, and serving O'ahu's residents and employers. As we work to formalize the next chapter of that relationship, I am confident in WorkHawaii's capacity and commitment to continue delivering high-quality WIOA services for our community.

I look forward to the continued growth of this partnership and appreciate the opportunity to speak to WorkHawaii's professionalism and dedication to the workforce development mission we share.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony and please add me to your mailing list.

Respectfully,
Melia Abreu, EdD, PMP, LSSBB, OCM
Program Manager, Continuing Education
Honolulu Community College



www.honolulu.hawaii.edu

Melia Abreu, EdD, PMP, LSSBB, OCM
Program Manager, Continuing Education
PCATT/Continuing Education
874 Dillingham Blvd, Bdg 2, Suite 502
Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: 808-845-9407
Schedule Time: <https://scheduler.zoom.us/melia-abreu>
Registration Office: 808-845-9296

Follow Honolulu CC:



Liona Nelson-Kapoi/Kaleo Nelson-Kapoi

Student

American Job Center-Work Hawaii

(808)788-9660

Kaleodavenport@gmail.com

July 02, 2026

Im writing this letter of testimony in Support of continued and future funding for the above mentioned program and others like it island wide.

Aloha (OWDB),

My name is Kaleo Nelson-Kapoi, and I am a 12th grade/student at the American Job center-Work Hawaii program in Honolulu. I am writing to you today to strongly support the fight to continue funding for our program and school , which directly impacts the daily lives, education, and futures of students across our state.

As a 42 year old man that had his high school opportunity cut short a mere credit of graduating and never having either the time or money to go back and earn my diploma, programs like American Job center-Work Hawaii has allowed me to have both of this and more by providing a supportive classroom environment in person and online. I wouldn't be able to continue thriving in school if tuition wasn't covered for books/school apps(Essential Education) and official tests.The Work-Hawaii Adult high school Equivalence program has put a little more hope in my life that I can still succeed and continue to strive forward for bigger and better things...It's never too late.

I would like to see this fight won for all, so students now and in the future have a safe place to go when and if they need help with furthering their learning and education.

"I respectfully ask your administration to support initiatives that increase funding for American Job center-Work Hawaii and address the systemic issues we face.

As the next generation of leaders in Hawai'i, students rely on your office to advocate for our health, safety, and educational equity. Thank you for your time, your dedication to our Adults and keiki, and the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kaleo Nelson-Kapoi

Kaleo Nelson-Kapoi

American Job Center-Work Hawaii (Adult High School)program

July 2, 2026

To the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

My name is Katrina and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the WIOA program and respectfully ask that you continue funding this life-changing resource.

Moving to the United States from another country was both exciting and overwhelming. Like many immigrants, I had to start over. I had to learn a new system, adapt to a different culture, and figure out how to build a future from the ground up. WIOA became one of the biggest reasons I was able to do that successfully.

Through WIOA, I was given the opportunity to complete my Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training, with the program covering the cost of my education. This wasn't just financial assistance—it was an investment in my future. In my home country, opportunities like this simply weren't available to me. Education often depended on whether you could afford it. For the first time, I experienced what true equity looks like: not just treating everyone the same, but giving people the support they need to succeed based on their circumstances.

More than helping me earn a certification, WIOA completely changed the way I think about my career. Before, I thought getting a job was the goal. Now, I understand that building a career is about continuous learning, growth, and creating opportunities for yourself. WIOA showed me that there is always room to grow, improve, and pursue something greater.

Because of this program, I now have a career path with opportunities for advancement, stability, and purpose. Instead of just finding a job, I found a profession where I can continue learning while making a positive difference in people's lives.

I also believe that the impact of WIOA extends far beyond the individual participant. When one person is given the opportunity to build a career, that success reaches their family as well. We become examples to our children, siblings, relatives, and friends that education, hard work, and setting career goals truly matter. Families become stronger, more financially stable, and better equipped to contribute positively to their communities.

I truly believe in the saying, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." Financial assistance alone can provide temporary relief, but education and career training create lasting opportunities. WIOA doesn't just help people today—it gives them the skills, confidence, and independence to support themselves for years to come. That creates a ripple effect where participants can eventually give back, mentor others, and strengthen the communities around them.

I hope future participants will have the same opportunity that I was fortunate enough to receive. WIOA gave me more than financial support—it gave me confidence, direction, hope, and a future that I can continue building.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony and for your continued commitment to serving our community.

Respectfully,



KATRINA TALAG PAAT

Dell Manini
Dellm10@aol.com
85-1299 Kaneilio Street Waianae, HI 96792
Phone: (808) 381-2032

July 2, 2026

Oahu Workforce Development

Subject: Testimony in Support of WIOA Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program

To the Members of the Oahu Workforce Development Board:

I am writing to urge the continued funding and support for the WIOA Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs on our island. As a former Youth case manager, I have witnessed firsthand how these federally-funded programs change the trajectory of lives, serving as a vital safety net for our community.

Supporting the WIOA Youth Program:

These programs fulfill a critical need for young people who have strayed away from high school. Through caring and dedicated staff, participants find the passion to start again. It is incredibly satisfying to witness the thrill of a student graduating with a high school diploma or GED. I have seen the pure joy of family members surrounding graduates whom they had previously given up on, now filled with belief in the youth and in the WIOA Youth Program's ability to turn lives around.

Supporting the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs:

Equally vital are the [WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker](#) services. I know firsthand how a divorced mother who gave up a career to rear her children can suddenly be faced with the daunting task of finding training and employment. For these individuals, these programs offer the essential skills training, job counseling, and resources needed for a fresh start.

Conclusion

The Oahu Workforce Development Board and its subject departments provide an essential service to the people of Oahu. I plead with you to keep these programs fully funded and operational. The community, and the vulnerable individuals who depend on the caring staff who run them, desperately need these services to thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

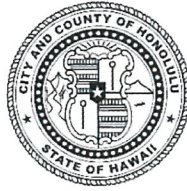
Dell Manini

Dell Manini, Community Services Specialist III
WorkHawaii, Team WorkHawaii

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA PĀKA A ME NĀ HANA HO'ONANEA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

1000 ULU'ŌHIA STREET, SUITE 309 • KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707
PHONE: (808) 768-3003 • FAX: (808) 768-3053 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov/parks

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



LAURA H. THIELEN
DIRECTOR
PO'O

KĒHAULANI R. PU'U
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

July 2, 2026

Oahu Workforce Development Board
oahuwdb@honolulu.gov

Subject: Testimony in Support of the American Job Center Hawai'i Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Service Provider Contract Extension

Dear Members of the Oahu Workforce Development Board:

The City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of the conditional extension of the American Job Center Hawai'i (WIOA) Service Provider contract.

The Department has partnered with the American Job Center Hawai'i on workforce development initiatives, recruitment efforts, employment workshops, and hiring events. Throughout our partnership, the American Job Center Hawai'i has consistently demonstrated exceptional professionalism, responsiveness, and an unwavering commitment to serving both job seekers and employers.

The American Job Center Hawai'i plays a vital role in strengthening Hawai'i and its workforce by providing career counseling, skills assessments, certification training opportunities, GED preparation, interview preparation, job placement assistance, and other workforce development services. These programs help individuals obtain meaningful employment while supporting employers in meeting critical workforce needs.

As a public employer serving the residents of O'ahu, the Department of Parks and Recreation recognizes the importance of strong workforce partnerships. The American Job Center Hawai'i has been an outstanding partner by assisting with recruitment activities, connecting qualified candidates with employment opportunities, and supporting initiatives that benefit both the public sector and the community at large. Their staff consistently provides outstanding customer service and works collaboratively to ensure successful outcomes.

The Department also recognizes the broader impact the American Job Center Hawai'i has throughout our community. Their services assist individuals from diverse

backgrounds, including those entering the workforce for the first time, changing careers, seeking additional training, or overcoming barriers to employment. Their commitment to helping individuals achieve self-sufficiency ultimately strengthens families, employers, and our local economy.

Maintaining continuity of these services is critical. Any interruption in the delivery of WIOA-funded workforce development services could affect job seekers, employers, government agencies, educational partners, and community organizations that rely on the expertise and support provided by the American Job Center Hawai'i. Approval of the conditional extension will help ensure these important services continue without interruption while longer-term contractual matters are resolved.

Based on our positive partnership and firsthand experience, the Department of Parks and Recreation respectfully urges the Oahu Workforce Development Board to approve the conditional 60-day extension of the American Job Center Hawaii's WIOA Service Provider contract. The American Job Center Hawaii has demonstrated a strong commitment to workforce development and continues to be a trusted and valued partner in serving the people of Oahu.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Thielen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Laura H. Thielen
Director

OahuWDB

From: S. R-S <scott.rosesmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 5:04 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Testimony in Support of Conditional Extension of WIOA Service Provider

Categories: Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Aloha,

My name is Dr. Scott Rose-Smith. I am a service-disabled 20-year U.S. Air Force veteran and a former WIOA participant here on Oahu. I am writing to ask the Board to approve the conditional extension of the current WIOA service provider.

When I transitioned out of federal contracting work, WIOA gave me two things I needed at the same time: training funding and career support. The training funding meant I did not have to choose between paying for a credential and paying my bills while I worked toward my next role. The career support meant I was not navigating that transition alone. I had someone helping me think through how my military and federal experience translated into civilian opportunity, and how to position myself for what came next.

That support is not just helping me find a job. It is helping me build a foundation. I went on to found RYZUP Consulting, a veteran-owned practice here on Oahu that now helps other veterans and service members understand their VA and military benefits. I would not be in a position to give back to this community the way I do now without the runway WIOA gave me when I needed it.

I understand the Board is weighing a short conditional extension while questions about the provider get resolved. I am not in a position to speak to the administrative or contractual details behind that decision. What I can speak to is the outcome. This program worked for me. It gave me the tools and the support to move forward instead of stalling out, and it did so at a point in my life when that mattered most.

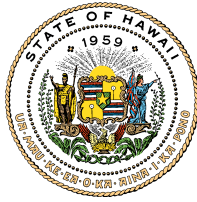
Oahu has thousands of transitioning veterans and career changers who need exactly what WIOA provided me. I respectfully ask the Board to approve the extension so this program can continue serving them without interruption.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Dr. Scott Rose-Smith, PhD

Email: scott.rosesmith@gmail.com



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

MCKINLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS - FARRINGTON
1564 N King Street U101
Honolulu, HI 96817
Telephone: (808) 829-1399 Fax: (808) 832-3598

July 2, 2026

Oahu Workforce Development Board
715 S King St #211
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Letter of Support for the WorkHawaii Youth & Adult Services and McKinley Community School for Adults Partnership

Dear Members of the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

I am writing on behalf of McKinley Community School for Adults (MCSA) to express our support for continuation of the collaborative partnership between the WorkHawaii Youth and Adult Programs and MCSA. This partnership represents a vital investment in our community's future by providing young adults aged 14–24 and those 18 years or older with the critical education, training, and workforce preparation skills necessary to launch successful, long-term careers. By uniting the specialized strengths of these programs, this partnership creates a seamless pipeline of support for Honolulu's youth and adults:

- **WorkHawaii Youth & Adult Programs** brings invaluable expertise in comprehensive case management, job placement services, and individualized career counseling and ensuring that participants have a clear plan and roadmap to success. In addition, this program offers hands-on occupational skills training and leadership development, allowing young people to give back to their communities through workforce opportunities and career development.
- **McKinley Community School for Adults** provides the essential academic foundation, offering foundational literacy, technical instruction, and credential preparation crucial for long-term career development.

Bridging the gap between education and sustainable employment requires a holistic, hands-on approach. Our deep historical ties reflect this commitment: since 1995, McKinley Community School has successfully partnered with the City and County of Honolulu to provide educational and workforce activities for non-high school graduates ages 16–24 and adults. Furthermore, since 2000, we have successfully administered Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes for the Youth & Adult Programs, the Workforce Development Certificate (WDC) program, Adult Secondary Education

(ASE) classes, the Career Foundations Certificate program, as well as the High School Equivalency (HSE) credential program to provide individuals a “second chance” in gaining valuable skills.

The continued collaborative partnership will empower vulnerable youth and adult learners with the tools to overcome barriers fostering equity and driving economic growth across Oahu. We urge the Oahu Workforce Development Board to support this collaborative endeavor that positively impacts the lives of students and opportunities to achieve long-term financial independence and contribute meaningfully to our local community. Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued leadership in shaping our community’s economic vitality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michele', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michele Fukumoto

Vice Principal, McKinley Community School for Adults



July 2, 2026

To: Christopher K. Lum Lee, Chair Oahu Workforce Development Board (OWDB) 715 South King Street, Suite 211 Honolulu, HI 96813 **Via Email:** OahuWDB@honolulu.gov

Subject: Testimony in Support of Agenda Item IV – Conditional Extension of the Current Service Provider

Dear Chair Lum Lee and Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Pacific Center for Advanced Technology Training (PCATT), I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed 60-day conditional extension of the current service provider for the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs.

PCATT is a consortium of the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCC) dedicated to developing and providing leadership and training in advanced technology applications. Our technology training programs are designed to be highly adaptable and useful across any sector, ensuring that Hawai'i's workforce remains competitive in an increasingly digital economy.

Through our valuable partnership with the American Job Center (AJC), we have seen firsthand the profound impact that Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding has on individuals in our community. Many of our students do not qualify for traditional financial aid or other funding sources. They rely heavily on the tuition support provided through WIOA and the AJC to upskill or reskill during challenging economic times, giving them the exact tools they need to successfully reenter the workforce.

A gap or disruption in service provider operations would create significant hardships for these students, potentially delaying their educational progress and employment opportunities. Approving this temporary extension of up to 60 days will ensure continuity of care and stable tuition assistance for these vulnerable students while the competitive procurement process is finalized.

We urge the Board to vote in favor of this conditional extension to safeguard the educational and career pathways of our shared students. Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued dedication to workforce development on Oahu.

Sincerely,

Elza Terseglav
PCATT Program Manager
Pacific Center for Advanced Technology Training
808-845-9296

OahuWDB

From: Sean Michel <smichel@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Friday, July 3, 2026 8:24 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Impact Testimony: How WorkHawaii Empowered My KCC Rad Tech Journey
Categories: Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Dear Funding Committee -

I am writing to share how the American Job Center - WorkHawaii program completely transformed my educational journey and to advocate for its continued funding. As a student in the rigorous KCC Radiologic Technology program, the comprehensive support I received from WorkHawaii has been the single most critical factor in my academic success.

American Job Center - WorkHawaii (specifically Kalia McGee) eliminated the steep financial barriers that prevent many students from completing their degrees. In my first year in the Radiologic Technology program, WorkHawaii fully covered my:

- **Tuition costs**
- **Required textbooks**
- **Essential clinical supplies**

Because these heavy financial burdens were lifted, I did not have to split my energy between working long hours and handling a demanding medical curriculum. Instead, I was given the invaluable opportunity to focus 100% of my time and energy on my studies, laboratory work, and clinical rotations.

Beyond the financial assistance, the structural support provided by Kalia McGee and the WorkHawaii staff was exceptional. Our monthly check-ins kept me accountable, motivated, and emotionally supported. Knowing that a dedicated team was proactively monitoring my progress and ready to step in with additional resources gave me immense peace of mind.

WorkHawaii does not just fund students; they actively invest in the future healthcare workforce of our community. Cutting or reducing funding for this program would directly impact local students who rely on this lifeline to enter high-demand career fields. I strongly urge you to secure and expand funding for WorkHawaii next year so they can continue changing lives just as they changed mine.

Sincerely,

Sean Michel
808.987.1436
smichel@hawaii.edu

KCC Radiologic Technology Student

OahuWDB

From: Miggy <mmikichi@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 3, 2026 10:31 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Work Hawaii Youth Services Testimony

Categories: Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Aloha,

I am writing to share my experience with Work Hawaii Youth Services my granddaughter participated in.

After graduated from high school, my granddaughter attended Honolulu Community College, but dropped out after a short time, feeling overwhelmed. When she signed up to attend the Work Hawaii Youth Services Program, it was as if she found a safe harbor after being lost in a stormy sea.

All the personnel at the Work Hawaii Service Center are warm and friendly. My granddaughter worked with a case manager to create a plan for future employment. She successfully finished two professional development programs : Retail Operations and Office Administration and Technology. She is now actively searching employment of her interests.

When the high school teacher who recommended my granddaughter to look into the Work Hawaii Youth Service programs asked for my opinion, I highly recommended for her students.

Work Hawaii Youth Services is an indispensable part of Oahu Workforce Development.

Sincerely,

Miggy Mikichi

Kaneohe, Hawaii
808-652-2805



Letter of Support for WorkHawaii

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Hoapili Trucking LLC dba Professional Driving Academy, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for WorkHawaii and its continued efforts to help individuals gain meaningful employment through workforce development and training opportunities.

We appreciate WorkHawaii's commitment to connecting job seekers with quality training programs that lead to sustainable careers. Through our partnership, we have had the opportunity to provide Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training to participants seeking careers in the transportation industry. These opportunities help address Hawaii's workforce needs while providing individuals with valuable skills and long-term employment potential.

Professional Driving Academy remains committed to delivering high-quality CDL training and working collaboratively with WorkHawaii to support student success. We value the shared goal of preparing participants for successful careers and strengthening Hawaii's workforce.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with WorkHawaii and supporting its mission to create pathways to employment for the people of Hawaii.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Hoapili', is positioned above the printed name.

Richard Hoapili

Owner

Hoapili Trucking LLC dba Professional Driving Academy

808-479-8107

Richhoapili1@gmail.com



July 03, 2026

Dear O'ahu Workforce Development Board Team,

Aloha Beauty Academy is so very grateful to be in partnership with O'ahu Workforce Development. For supporting workforce development opportunities that empower individuals through education and career training.

Our graduates have used the skills learned through our workshops to launch small businesses, become licensed professionals, and continue serving the people of Hawai'i with confidence and excellence. While giving back to their communities through quality services, mentorship, and entrepreneurship.

The success stories reflect the lasting impact that workforce education has on individuals, families, and our local economy. One in particular if I may share is Ms. O. Salavea. She is a 2025 graduate. She currently holds her job in the medical field while recently opening her own business and shop in town. She continues to learn and grow in this industry while continuing to build her skills to serve her community with excellence.

We are honored to partner with organizations that invest in the future of Hawai'i's workforce. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to helping even more students build successful careers and strengthen our communities.

With utmost gratitude,

Vanessa K Rivera Lau

Founder & Executive Administrator

Aloha Beauty Academy

OahuWDB

From: Yvonne Liu <liuy33@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Saturday, July 4, 2026 6:50 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Funding for American Job Center

Categories: Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Aloha,

My name is Yvonne Liu and I am a graduating student of the KCC Radiologic Technology Program. If it weren't for America Job Center - WorkHawai'i program, I would not be able to afford this program. They helped guide me, pay for my tuition and books. I believe it is necessary for them to be given continued and more funding to help support future classes.

As you know, healthcare in Hawai'i is not very accessible and there is a high demand for healthcare workers. Not only is America Job Center-Work Hawai'i program important for people that seek a meaningful career in healthcare, but it is also very important for our ohana and community as a whole.

Please continue funding and consider an increase in funding for this program. I am so thankful to be given support by them through this journey. I am able to graduate and pursue an important career in healthcare because of them.

Mahalo and have a blessed Fourth of July Weekend,
Yvonne

Letter of Appreciation

Elena Mateo Tadena
94-246 Leoku Street Apt E-109
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797
elenatadena59@gmail.com | 808-352-2433
July 4, 2026

Oahu Workforce Development Board
715 South King Street, Suite 211
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for the invaluable career guidance and support I received from the Oahu WorkLinks program. In particular, I want to recognize my former counselor, Mr. Kalia McGee, whose personalized advice, resources, and unwavering support were truly transformative during a pivotal moment in my professional life.

When my dream of moving to the United States came true, I eagerly grabbed the opportunity—even though it meant leaving behind my established career as an Agriculturist in the Philippines. Like many immigrants, I found the transition period to be incredibly difficult. Navigating a career change, searching for a good-paying job, and figuring out my new professional trajectory felt completely overwhelming and uncertain.

In June 2004, I sought assistance from the Oahu WorkLinks (OWL) program at the HCAP Makalapa employment services office. From the very beginning, I was met with a structured and empathetic approach. Mr. McGee and the team helped me identify my core strengths, align my interests with actionable goals, and expand my perspective on potential industries. Through the program, I gained a clear understanding of my career path, successfully redesigned my resume, and learned effective networking strategies. Ultimately, I was given the incredible opportunity to attend the Office Administration and Technology (OAT) Program at the Employment Training Center.

The guidance and resources I received allowed me to reclaim my confidence and pursue opportunities I previously thought were entirely out of reach. After completing the OAT program, I successfully secured several roles in both the private and government sectors. In 2007, I began working with the Department of Community Services, and in 2014, I transferred to the Department of Transportation Services, where I proudly serve today as a Personnel Clerk II.

I highly recommend WorkHawaii's programs to anyone seeking clarity, direction, and professional growth—especially fellow immigrants facing the daunting task of rebuilding their careers.

Thank you once again for your expertise, dedication, and for continuing to provide these vital, **no-cost services** that truly level up people's lives.

Sincerely,

Elena Tadena
Participant

Signed by:

6093DE55A3CC496...

HAWAII DENTAL ASSISTING ACADEMY LLC
1425 DILLINGHAM BLVD. SUITE 301
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817
TEL: (808) 428-4747, (808) 841-4322
www.hdaacademy.com
mercieuy@hdaacademy.com



July 05, 2026

To the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the American Job Center as they participate in the procurement process for the **WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program**. As the **Dental Assisting Director** of the **Hawaii Dental Assisting Academy**, I have had the opportunity to work closely with the American Job Center for several years and have witnessed the meaningful impact their services provide to our adult and youth students.

Our students who seek financial assistance through the American Job Center have benefited tremendously. The tuition support offered through AJC enables individuals to enroll in our Dental Assisting Program, gain essential hands-on skills, and pursue a sustainable career pathway in the healthcare field. This partnership expands access to education and creates life-changing opportunities for students who may not otherwise be able to afford career training.

The American Job Center's work continues to strengthen our community by:

- Helping individuals gain industry-recognized skills and credentials
- Supporting dislocated workers in transitioning to new career pathways
- Empowering youth with career readiness and training opportunities
- Providing tuition assistance for our students to access dental assisting education
- Reducing barriers to employment through comprehensive supportive services

Currently, we have a significant number of students awaiting approval from the American Job Center—students who genuinely deserve access to tuition assistance grants. Their aspirations to improve their lives through education, skill development, and professional growth must be supported. Ensuring they receive this assistance is essential to helping them build stable, meaningful futures.

We strongly believe the American Job Center is well-equipped to continue delivering WIOA Title I services with excellence. Their experience, infrastructures, and commitment to community partnerships make them an invaluable asset to Hawai'i's workforce development system.

We fully support their application and encourage their continued role in serving our community.

Very Respectfully,



Recoverable Signature

X 

MERCIE UY

Dental Administrator/Director

Signed by: 3d626ee2-57a6-4126-9201-bffd1533fd76

<https://hdaacademy.com/>



Written Testimony for the O‘ahu Workforce Development Board

Full Board Meeting - July 7, 2026

Agenda Item IV: Conditional Extension of the Current Service Provider

Aloha Chair Lum Lee and Members of the O‘ahu Workforce Development Board,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the proposed conditional extension of the current service provider for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs.

My name is Nathaniel Pak, and I serve as Director of Workforce Development at Re-use Hawai‘i. Re-use Hawai‘i is a nonprofit employment social enterprise that combines material salvage, reuse, waste reduction, job training, paid work experience, and employment pathways for individuals who may face barriers to employment, including people returning from incarceration, young adults, and others seeking a stronger path into the workforce. We provide second chances for people and materials.

I am writing in support of maintaining continuity of American Job Center-WorkHawai‘i services during this transition period.

I have worked with the staff at WorkHawai‘i/American Job Center since 2021. During that time, Re-use Hawai‘i and our employees have participated in several WorkHawai‘i programs, including the WEX Youth Program, On-the-Job Training Program, QUEST Internship Program, and Rent to Work Program. More than 20 individuals have worked with Re-use Hawai‘i through these programs.

Our experience has been extremely positive. WorkHawai‘i staff have been helpful, responsive, and solution-oriented in finding practical workforce pathways for the individuals we serve. Their support has not been limited to one program or one type of participant. They have helped us create WEX placements for youth and young adults, including young adults with disabilities. They have supported OJT opportunities for second-chance hires, including individuals re-entering from incarceration and treatment. They helped make QUEST internships available for individuals participating in furlough programs. They have also provided guidance and support as we have worked to create advancement pathways within our organization, including incumbent worker OJT support and pathways from WEX participation into OJT opportunities.

WorkHawai‘i has also supported our broader workforce development efforts. They have provided labor market analysis and support for grant applications, offered career guidance for young adults in our transitional employment program, and supported our participation in career fairs and hiring events. In addition, they helped us navigate a difficult relationship with furlough programs in order to create a path for OJT participation for furloughed individuals.

These examples matter because workforce development does not happen through systems, funding streams, or compliance structures alone. At the ground level, it happens through actual person-to-person relationships developed over time among WorkHawai‘i staff, participants, employers, service providers, and community partners. Those relationships create the trust, communication, follow-through, and practical problem-solving needed to help individuals move from referral to placement, from placement to retention, and from entry-level opportunity to advancement. WorkHawai‘i has helped create that bridge between public workforce resources and the real people and organizations working directly with job seekers and employers.

Continuity is especially important for participants who are already facing instability. A disruption in workforce services can mean delayed referrals, missed training opportunities, interruptions in employer engagement, and added confusion for people who are already working hard to build trust in systems that may not have worked well for them in the past. It can also make it more difficult for community partners and employers to plan responsibly.

We recognize that the Board has procurement responsibilities and that transitions may be necessary. At the same time, we respectfully encourage the Board to protect continuity of service while that process moves forward. A limited conditional extension, not to exceed 60 days, appears to be a reasonable way to avoid unnecessary disruption while new contracts are finalized.

We also respectfully suggest that, before moving forward with longer-term changes to the workforce service system, the Board consider additional outreach to employers, service providers, training partners, and participants who work directly with these programs. Re-use Hawai'i became aware of this meeting and opportunity for testimony through our partnership network rather than direct communication from the Board. We believe more proactive engagement would help ensure that future decisions are informed by the practical experience of those using, delivering, and relying on these services.

We also encourage the Board to continue strengthening the role of community-based partners, employment social enterprises, training providers, and employers in the broader WIOA system. Hawai'i's workforce challenges require more than isolated programs. They require coordinated pathways that connect people to paid work, training, supportive services, advancement opportunities, and long-term employment.

Mahalo to the Board, WorkHawai'i, and all partners working to strengthen workforce services on O'ahu. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and respectfully support the conditional extension to maintain service continuity during this transition.

Mahalo,

Nathaniel Pak
Director of Workforce Development
Re-use Hawai'i



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Waipahu Community School for Adults
Windward Campus
730 Iliaina Street
Kailua, Hawaii 96734
Telephone: 808-307-1455 Fax: 808-254-7958

Matt Wong
Vice Principal
Waipahu Community School For Adults, Windward Campus
730 Iliaina St.
Kailua, HI 96734
matt.wong@k12.hi.us
(808) 307-1454

July 5, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Matt Wong, and I am Vice Principal of Waipahu Community School for Adults, Windward Campus. I am writing in strong support of the Work Hawai'i Youth Program and our ongoing partnership with the American Job Center.

This partnership has had a meaningful and positive impact on the students we serve. Many of our students come to us needing more than academic instruction alone. Through our partnership, students benefit from coordinated support, encouragement, workforce preparation, and clear pathways toward employment, postsecondary training, and long-term stability. The Work Hawai'i Youth Program has helped provide that bridge.

Through our collaboration, many youth have received their high school equivalency credential, as well as access to services that strengthen both their academic and career readiness. The program has supported students in building employability skills, understanding workplace expectations, exploring career pathways, and remaining connected to education while preparing for life beyond the classroom. This kind of wraparound support is especially important for young adults who may be navigating barriers related to attendance, confidence, transportation, family responsibilities, prior school experiences, or uncertainty about their future.

At WCSA Windward, we have seen how the partnership helps students stay engaged and make progress toward meaningful goals. When students are connected to both education and workforce supports, they are more likely to see the value of completing their high school equivalency, improving their basic skills, earning credentials, and taking the next step toward employment or training. The Work Hawai'i Youth Program reinforces the message that our students are capable, employable, and worthy of investment.

We are grateful for the professionalism, communication, and commitment demonstrated by the AJC and Work Hawai'i Youth Program staff. Their work strengthens our ability to serve students holistically and helps ensure

that young people are not only working toward a diploma or credential, but also toward economic opportunity and self-sufficiency.

I respectfully ask the O'ahu Workforce Development Board to continue supporting the Work Hawai'i Youth Program and the partnerships that make this work possible. These services are important to our student population and play a valuable role in helping young adults move forward with purpose, confidence, and practical support.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued commitment to serving Hawai'i's youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Wong", written in a cursive style.

Matt Wong
Vice Principal
Waipahu Community School For Adults, Windward Campus

OahuWDB

From: Paul Chen <pchen@fhb.com>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 6:17 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Re: Testimony for Work Hawaii Youth Program

Categories: Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Dear Members of the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

I am honored to recommend the continuation of the Work Hawaii Youth Program for the tremendous positive impact it has on the students it serves and the broader community.

As Vice President & Talent Acquisition Manager at First Hawaiian Bank, a member of SHRM Hawaii's Workforce Development Committee, and a volunteer with Junior Achievement Hawaii, I have had the privilege of partnering with the Work Hawaii Youth Program to provide career exploration and career readiness training for students pursuing their GED. Through this partnership, I have witnessed firsthand the meaningful difference the program makes in the lives of young people who are working to overcome obstacles and create brighter futures for themselves.

Many of these students are still discovering their career interests, strengths, and goals. Without programs like Work Hawaii Youth, there would be limited resources available to guide and support them on their educational and career journeys. The program provides critical opportunities for students to develop workplace skills, gain exposure to career pathways, build confidence, and prepare for future employment.

One of the program's greatest strengths is its dedicated team of counselors and staff. Their genuine commitment to each student's success is evident in the relationships they build and the encouragement they provide. They take the time to understand each individual's circumstances and help them navigate challenges while developing the skills and mindset needed to become job ready. Their mentorship and unwavering support are often key factors in helping students stay engaged, complete their goals, and take the next steps toward meaningful careers.

Our partnership has allowed students to gain valuable knowledge about workplace expectations, career planning, interviewing, communication, and professional development. It has been rewarding to see students grow in confidence and begin to envision possibilities for their futures that they may not have previously considered.

The Work Hawaii Youth Program is making a lasting investment in Hawaii's future workforce by equipping young people with the tools, support, and opportunities they need to succeed. I strongly support this program and commend its dedicated staff for the life-changing work they do every day.

With warm Aloha,

Paul Chen

Paul Chen | Vice President & Talent Acquisition Manager
Human Resources Group

999 Bishop Street, Honolulu, HI 96813 | P (808)525-6248 | F (808)525-5798 | pchen@fhh.com



Testimony in Support of the City and County of Honolulu WorkHawai'i Program

Aloha Chair Christopher Lum Lee and Members of the O'ahu Workforce Development Board,

My name is Dr. Maria-Elena D. Diaz, and I serve as the Director for Windward Community College's Office of Career and Community Education. I am pleased to submit this testimony in support of the City and County of Honolulu's WorkHawai'i Program and its continued role in helping O'ahu residents access workforce development training, supportive services, and pathways into employment.

I have a long relationship with WorkHawai'i from my time with the Workforce Development Council (2018-2019), and in my current position. I had the opportunity to review WorkHawaii's management of WIOA programs during my time at WDC and their evaluations were exemplary. At WCC, we had the opportunity to work with the Youth Program right before the pandemic struck (Fall 2019) and found the staff committed to their students, passionate about their work, and reliable partners. Since then I have reached out to AJC many times to secure information and resources, and we've participated in job fairs and other activities.

WorkHawaii administrators and staff were supportive to our efforts to restart our on-campus CNA program last year, providing assistance in recruiting students for our pilot cohort. For Fall 2026, we are working together with the Adult Program Manager to secure funding for a new cohort of Certified Nurse Aide students.

Through their involvement in WIOA Title I programs, WorkHawaii has provided a reliable resource for the public, their students, AJC Partners, and employer partners. They have played an instrumental role in strengthening the work accomplished in the American Job Center, and are dedicated to the mission of connecting island residents to workforce opportunities that support upward mobility.

WorkHawai'i is an important partner in helping training providers like Windward Community College serve students more effectively. Their staff have been responsive, professional, and collaborative as we work to connect our students with available services. WorkHawai'i helps strengthen the connection between education, workforce preparation, and employment.

For these reasons, I offer my support for the continued selection of the City and County of Honolulu's WorkHawai'i Program to provide workforce development services to the residents of O'ahu. I look forward to continuing this partnership in support of our students, our workforce development programs, and Hawai'i's workforce needs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely, Maria-Elena Diaz, PhD
Director, OCCE, Windward Community College

OahuWDB

From: Yamada, Darci
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 8:12 AM
To: OahuWDB
Cc: Beasant, Anna; Bergan, Janice
Subject: Written Testimony for Oahu Workforce Development Board

Categories: Testimony

Written Testimony for Oahu Workforce Development Board

Meeting Date: Tuesday, July 7, 2026

Subject: Written Testimony – American Job Center Hawaii - WorkHawaii

Submitted by:

- Name: Darci Yamada
- Organization: City and County of Honolulu
- Email: darci.yamada@honolulu.gov

Written Testimony

Dear Chair and Members of the Board,

The dedicated and service-oriented team at the American Job Center Hawaii and WorkHawaii demonstrates a strong commitment to workforce development and community service. Their collaboration with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) Talent Acquisition and Outreach team has directly supported successful recruitment efforts by providing interview facilities for expedited hiring events, as well as essential equipment for on-site skills testing.

The effectiveness of these events is enhanced by exposing candidates to a comprehensive network of wraparound services. Individuals participating in the expedited interview process can be seamlessly introduced to workforce development resources, including training programs, career counseling, and supportive services that help address barriers to employment. This holistic approach ensures that all participants derive value from engagement, regardless of hiring outcomes.

WorkHawaii has also partnered with DHR to deliver critical technological support at job fairs, improving both efficiency and accessibility for job seekers. Their ability to convene partners and integrate services underscores the strength of this collaboration. Through their extensive network and strategic introductions to industry partners, they have been instrumental in expanding partnerships and advancing efforts to fill critical vacancies.

Thank you for your time,
Darci Yamada



DARCI YAMADA

Talent Acquisition and Outreach

 (808) 768-8561

 (808) 764-7615

 darci.yamada@honolulu.gov

 www.honolulu.gov/career

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



KEITH DEMELLO
CHAIRPERSON

BENNETTE 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) 586-8630 Web: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>

TESTIMONY OF KEITH DeMELLO
CHAIR, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
IN SUPPORT OF A 60-DAY EXTENSION OF THE WORK HAWAI'I CONTRACT

Aloha Chair and Members of the O'ahu Workforce Development Board:

I write in strong support of extending the current **Work Hawai'i** contract for an additional **60 days** while the O'ahu Workforce Development Board completes its procurement process for a new contract.

Continuity of service to participants is among the highest of priorities. Workforce services are not abstract programs on paper. They are real supports for real people: individuals who are seeking employment, training, stability, and a pathway forward. No client should be denied access to needed workforce services because of administrative delay or contracting gaps.

For those reasons, I respectfully urge the O'ahu Workforce Development Board (OWDB) to take immediate action to prevent any further disruption. A short-term extension would provide the stability necessary to ensure uninterrupted services while allowing the OWDB to complete the contract process in an orderly and responsible manner.

The Workforce Development Council recognizes that procurement and contracting decisions are within the purview of the local board. At the same time, we believe it is both reasonable and necessary to underscore the seriousness of the current situation. Every effort should be made to avoid an interruption of service that places clients, staff, and providers in this position.

A 60-day extension is, in our view, a practical and responsible bridge that protects participants while preserving the Board's ability to complete its procurement obligations. We urge the O'ahu Workforce Development Board to act swiftly and decisively in the best interests of the individuals and communities it serves.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith DeMello
Chair
Workforce Development Council

July 4, 2026

Oahu Workforce Development Board
715 South King St.
Suite 211
Honolulu HI 96813
E-Mail: OahuWDB@honolulu.gov

Aloha Oahu Workforce Development Board Members:

My name is Vickie Punua-McGinnis and my grandson, Izayah McGinnis, has been a participant in the WorkHawaii Youth Services Program at the American Job Center Hawaii (AJCH) since March 4, 2026.

Izayah has been making progress in the program because of the skill of the case managers, Yvette, Jay and Mr. B. Izayah continues to attend the HISET classes and participate in the discussions because he feels seen and heard by the case managers. Their counseling appointments with him have helped him to set achievable goals and he looks forward to being in class every week. The schedule of three days a week from 9 am to 12 pm is also helpful because Izayah doesn't really like mornings. Overall, I believe that the WorkHawaii Youth services program is meeting the needs of my grandson, Izayah, and other students like him.

I really hope that the WorkHawaii Youth Services Program is able to continue running this HISET program and Job readiness curriculum because their presence and youth building skills are changing the futures of many young people in our community.

Mahalo,



Vickie Punua-McGinnis
45-081 Waikalua Rd
Kaneohe HI 96744
E-mail: vpmcginnis@gmail.com

July 4, 2026

Oahu Workforce Development Board
715 South King St.
Suite 211
Honolulu HI 96813
E-Mail: OahuWDB@honolulu.gov

Aloha Oahu Workforce Development Board Members:

My name is Izayah "Maka" McGinnis and I have been a participant in the WorkHawaii Youth Services Program at the American Job Center Hawaii (AJCH) since March 4, 2026. I like this program because I am able to work on getting my High School diploma by working on the HISET certification 3 days a week from 9 am to 12 pm, I also like my case managers, Ms. Yvette, Mr. Jazon, and Mr. B who help me to understand the rules and also encourage me to set reasonable goals for myself. They have really helped me to see how the rules I have to follow can help me when I start working a job. I also like knowing that there may be other job training opportunities like construction in the future. I really hope that the WorkHawaii Youth Services Program is able to continue this training because they have been encouraging and very real.

Thank you,

Izayah Maka McGinnis

Izayah "Maka" McGinnis
45-081 Waikalua Rd
Kaneohe HI 96744
E-mail: Maka80757@gmail.com

**Testimony to the O‘ahu Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – July 7, 2026**

Agenda Item IV: Conditional Extension of the Current Service Provider



Aloha Chair Lum Lee and Members of the Board,

Thank you for the chance to weigh in on the proposed conditional extension of the current provider serving WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs.

My name is Michaela Savage. I'm the Director of Administration at Re-use Hawai'i, a nonprofit employment social enterprise. Our model blends material salvage and reuse with job training, paid work experience, and employment pathways for people who face real barriers to finding work, such as those returning from incarceration, young adults, and others trying to get a firmer foothold in the workforce. In short, we give both people and materials a second chance.

I'm submitting this testimony because I believe it's important to preserve continuity in American Job Center-WorkHawai'i services through this transition.

Our organization has partnered with WorkHawai'i and the American Job Center since 2021. In that time, our team and participants have taken part in a range of WorkHawai'i offerings — the WEX Youth Program, On-the-Job Training, QUEST Internships, and Rent to Work. Altogether, more than 20 people connected to Re-use Hawai'i have come through these programs.

That partnership has been a strong one. WorkHawai'i's team has consistently been responsive and creative in identifying workable paths into employment for the people we serve, and their help hasn't been confined to a single program or participant type. They've helped set up WEX placements for youth and young adults, including those with disabilities. They've backed OJT slots for second-chance hires re-entering from incarceration or treatment programs. They opened the door to QUEST internships for people seeking skills in other types of industries. And they've worked with us to build internal advancement routes — including incumbent-worker OJT support and progression from WEX into OJT.

Their support has extended well beyond direct placements. WorkHawai'i has supplied labor market data and helped with grant applications, offered career coaching for young adults in our transitional employment track, and stood alongside us at career fairs and hiring events. They also helped us work through a complicated situation involving furlough programs so that furloughed individuals could still access OJT.

This track record matters because workforce development isn't something that lives in funding formulas or compliance paperwork — it happens through relationships built over time between WorkHawai'i staff, participants, employers, providers, and community partners. Those relationships are what generate the trust and follow-through needed to move someone from referral to placement, from placement to a lasting job, and from an entry-level role to something more. WorkHawai'i has been the connective tissue linking public workforce resources to the actual people and organizations doing this work on the ground.

Keeping that continuity matters most for participants already dealing with instability in their lives. Any interruption in services risks delayed referrals, lost training slots, gaps in employer relationships, and added uncertainty for people who are already working hard to trust systems

that haven't always served them well. It also makes it harder for employers and community partners to plan ahead.

We understand the Board has procurement obligations to meet and that some transition is inevitable. Even so, we'd ask that continuity of service be protected while that process plays out. A short conditional extension — no more than 60 days — seems like a sensible way to prevent unnecessary disruption while new agreements are put in place.

We'd also encourage the Board, before making any longer-term changes to how workforce services are delivered, to reach out further to the employers, providers, training partners, and participants who interact with these programs day to day. Re-use Hawai'i learned about this meeting through our network of partners rather than a direct notice from the Board, and we think broader, more proactive outreach would help ensure future decisions reflect the on-the-ground experience of the people actually using and delivering these services.

More broadly, we hope the Board keeps building up the role that community-based partners, employment social enterprises, training providers, and employers play within the WIOA system. The workforce challenges Hawai'i faces call for more than standalone programs — they call for connected pathways that lead people to paid work, training, support services, room to advance, and lasting employment.

Thank you to the Board, to WorkHawai'i, and to everyone working to strengthen workforce services on O'ahu. We're grateful for the chance to submit this testimony and we support the conditional extension as a way to keep services running smoothly through this transition.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Michaela Savage, Director of Administration
Re-use Hawai'i

OahuWDB

From: Ashton Cudjoe <ashton@hmi.edu>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 11:49 AM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Testimony in Support of WorkHawaii and WIOA Title I Programs

Categories: Testimony

CAUTION: Email received from an **EXTERNAL** sender. Please confirm the content is safe prior to opening attachments or links.

Chair Christopher Lum Lee and Members of the Oahu Workforce Development Board,

My name is Ashton Cudjoe, and I serve as President and CEO of Hawaii Medical College. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of WorkHawaii and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs.

My connection to workforce development began long before I became a training provider. In the early 2000s, after losing my job and spending a brief period on unemployment, I participated in an On-the-Job Training (OJT) program. That opportunity gave me the experience and direction I needed to rebuild my career. Looking back today, I can honestly say that without that opportunity, I would not be where I am today, and Hawaii Medical College may never have existed.

Since founding Hawaii Medical College, I have had the privilege of seeing these programs change the lives of countless others. One example that has always stayed with me occurred in 2008 following the closure of Aloha Airlines. Hawaii Medical College trained more than 40 former Aloha Airlines employees for careers in allied health. Many of those individuals went on to secure employment with organizations such as The Queen's Health Systems, Kaiser Permanente, Hawai'i Pacific Health, as well as numerous physician offices and community clinics throughout the state. What began as a devastating job loss became an opportunity to begin a new career serving our community.

Over the years, WIOA-funded workforce programs have continued to provide life-changing opportunities for many of our students. These programs help individuals gain meaningful employment, achieve greater financial stability, and build brighter futures for themselves and their families.

Our experience working with the WorkHawaii team has been consistently positive. We have worked closely with many of their counselors and staff over the years, and I have always been impressed by their professionalism, responsiveness, and genuine commitment to helping participants succeed. They work incredibly hard to serve our community, and we continue to strengthen our partnership because our missions are closely aligned. Together, we are committed to providing training that leads to employment, career advancement, and long-term economic opportunity.

Today, Hawai'i continues to face significant shortages of healthcare professionals across many occupations. Workforce development programs like WIOA play a vital role in helping residents prepare for these in-demand careers while strengthening our state's healthcare system. Investing in workforce development is not simply an investment in individuals; it is an investment in Hawai'i's future.

On behalf of Hawaii Medical College, I respectfully express my strong support for the continued work of WorkHawaii and the WIOA Title I programs. I appreciate the dedication of the Board and the WorkHawaii staff, and I encourage your continued support of these important initiatives.

Thanks for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Ashton Cudjoe
President & CEO
Hawaii Medical College

Ashton Cudjoe

President & CEO

Hawaii Medical College
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OahuWDB

From: Michael John Joaquin <michaelmariel.joaquin08@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 3:01 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Testimony

Categories: Testimony

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July 06, 2026

American Job Center - Work Hawaii
680 Iwilei Rd. #700, Honolulu, HI., 96817

Statement of Testimony for Tuition Funding

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to respectfully request financial support for my tuition at Leeward Community College where I studied a comprehensive Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) training. My goal is to become a Commercial Driver License (CDL) driver. Also, it's my dream. And this funding will play a major role in helping me get there.

Education has always been my top priority. Throughout my academic journey, I have worked hard to maintain a strong academic. I have also participated in work relates which taught me leadership and responsibility.

Unfortunately, paying for college is a major challenge for me and my family right now. I am the only one supporting my family and paying for my father's medical bills. Receiving this tuition funding would lift a heavy financial weight from my shoulders. It would allow me to focus on my classes instead of worrying about how to pay for them.

I am fully committed to my education and ready to work hard. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and for considering my application.

Sincerely,

Michael John Joaquin
michaelmariel.joaquin08@gmail.com

808-494-1959

OahuWDB

From: Mr. David Makilan <david@hahoko.org>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 3:49 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Testimony in Support of American Job Center–WorkHawai‘i Services

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Aloha Chair and Members of the O‘ahu Workforce Development Board,

My name is David Makilan, Executive Director of He Ala Hou O Ke Ola (HAHOKO), a Honolulu-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to helping individuals experiencing homelessness, reentering the community after incarceration, and overcoming substance use disorders and mental health challenges.

I am writing in strong support of the American Job Center–WorkHawai‘i and the workforce development services they provide through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

As a small local nonprofit, HAHOKO has greatly benefited from our partnership with the American Job Center. Their team has consistently gone above and beyond to support our organization and the individuals we serve. Through programs such as the QUEST Internship Program, On-the-Job Training (OJT), internship opportunities, and ongoing mentorship and technical assistance, they have helped us build a stronger organization while creating meaningful employment opportunities for people who are rebuilding their lives.

The impact of this partnership has been remarkable. When HAHOKO first partnered with the American Job Center, our organization had only two employees. Today, we have grown to a team of fourteen employees. That growth has allowed us to expand our services and positively impact many more individuals throughout our community.

One example that demonstrates the value of these programs is the success of five HAHOKO participants who entered our organization with little to no experience working in the human services field. Through the QUEST Internship Program, they received hands-on training, mentorship, and the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the workplace. Upon successfully completing their internships, HAHOKO was able to hire each of them as permanent employees.

Following their employment, we were able to utilize the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program, which provided wage reimbursement and additional support during their training period. This funding allowed HAHOKO to invest in developing quality employees while helping our nonprofit stretch much-needed financial resources. Most importantly, all five individuals remain employed with HAHOKO today and continue serving our community. Their success is a testament to what is possible when workforce development programs invest in both employers and individuals seeking a second chance.

Beyond the funding and workforce programs, what has impressed us most is the professionalism, responsiveness, and genuine commitment of the American Job Center staff. They have always treated our organization with respect, worked collaboratively to identify solutions, and demonstrated a sincere desire to help employers and job seekers succeed.

For organizations like HAHOKO, these workforce development services are far more than employment programs. They create pathways to self-sufficiency, strengthen nonprofit organizations, and help individuals overcome barriers to employment while building a stronger workforce for Hawai‘i.

On behalf of HAHOKO, I extend my sincere gratitude to the American Job Center–WorkHawai‘i team for their continued partnership and unwavering support. I respectfully encourage the O‘ahu Workforce Development Board to continue investing in these valuable workforce development services so they may continue transforming lives, strengthening local organizations, and benefiting our community for years to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Respectfully,

David Makilan

Executive Director

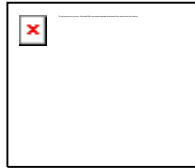
HE ALA HOU O KE OLA (HAHOKO)

(808) 807-7784

www.hahoko.org

He Ala Hou O Ke Ola Inc.

"A New Path Of Life"



David Makilan, Executive Director

Direct Cell: 808 807-7784

Office: 808 807-0770

531 Puuhale Road

Honolulu, Hi 96819

Website: hahoko.org

OahuWDB

From: Madison Morningstar <mmm35@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 3:49 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: Testimony

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Aloha, my name is Madison Morningstar. I am a current student with the AHI Allied Health Innovation Program. I am in the surgical technology program, and I was given WIOA to help with financial assistance for my program. Then we were notified that it was cut without us knowing and no prior knowledge besides a phone call the day that it would no longer be provided to me I didn't know how to proceed with the program and the most important part the financial part. I work full-time and I'm a full-time mom too two kids and this meant everything to me to be able to relieve the financial burden I would have without assistance. The WIOA was really helping me further along my education and hopeful career in the future. So I just want to help give a testimony to help other people and hopefully myself gain back our financial assistance with the WIOA program, because it really affected on how I proceed with the program, and I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to provide the payments for this program to continue on. It was a huge impact on my life and really has become a financial burden on me and my kids.

Mahalo,
Madison Morningstar

OahuWDB

From: Ian S. Jarrett <ijarrett@ibew1186.org>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 5:22 PM
To: OahuWDB
Subject: INVALUABLE ASSET

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Aloha,

Since the last quarter of last year, I have been in contact with Earl Kalani and the Hawaii Workforce Team at the City & County of Honolulu Department of Community Services.

Our connection began during the federal government shutdown, and learning about your available programs has highlighted what a valuable resource they are for struggling or displaced federal workers. While many employees remained hopeful for a swift resolution to the shutdown, many were grateful to learn about these work programs for themselves or for family members looking for new opportunities or career transitions.

These initiatives provide critical options that many in our community are not yet aware of. To ensure these programs remain effective, I believe it is essential that we continue to promote them to job seekers through consistent outreach.

Very respectfully,

Ian Jarrett

Business Representative

Unit 2 – IBEW Local Union 1186

Desk : 808-953-5170

Mobile/Text : 808-445-3558

Email ijarrett@ibew1186.org

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