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TESTIMONY BY DWIGHT TAKAMINE
IN STRONG SUPPORT OF

LATE TESTIMONY

NOMINEE, JEFF THOMPSON
AS A MEMBER OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Monday, January 30, 2012
10:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I testify in support of Mr. Thompson's confirmation to the Workforce Development Council (WDC) for a term to expire on June 30, 2015. Mr. Thompson would fill a slot reserved for a private sector member on the Council.

The WDC is an attached agency to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and is responsible for advising the Governor and Legislature on workforce development to support economic development and employment opportunities for all. The WDC is also the State Workforce Investment Board for purposes of the federal Workforce Investment Act ("WIA") of 1998. The WDC assists the Governor in developing and updating comprehensive five-year strategic workforce investment plans and oversees workforce (public) investment activities in the state.

Mr. Thompson joins the council with vast experience in the construction industry. Mr. Thompson's presence would benefit the WDC in attempting to resolve long-term workforce issues related to one of Hawaii's largest employment bases and economic drivers - construction. His assistance is greatly needed in helping to identify the barriers associated with better preparing and positioning of local labor to fill positions such as project manager that are traditionally filled by imported labor from the mainland. As noted in the material submitted by the Governor and the appointee, his myriad of experience makes him a vital asset to the WDC.

In this critical year, the WDC will be preparing the 5-year state plan on the use of federal Workforce Investment Activities (WIA) monies. This WIA plan is a requirement in order for Hawai'i to receive the bulk of federal funding for the State's primary job training and placement activities. Mr. Thompson's extensive experience will be vital to those efforts.

In summary, I urge you to confirm Mr. Thompson as a member of the Workforce Development Council where he would be a valuable asset to the Council and hence ultimately to the entire state.

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