

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



MARIAN TSUJI
CHAIRPERSON

JAMES P. HARDWAY
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**STATE OF HAWAII
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

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January 25, 2012

To: The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Date: Monday, January 30, 2012

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: State Capitol, Conference Room 016

From: Marian Tsuji, Chairperson
Workforce Development Council

GM 566
**RE: ~~GM 565~~ – Paul Richards
Workforce Development Council**

The Workforce Development Council (“WDC”) supports the appointment of Mr. Paul Richards as a member of the WDC for a term to expire on 6/30/2014. Mr. Richards would fill a slot reserved for a member from a Native Hawaiian Organization on the WDC.

The WDC is an attached agency to the DLIR 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. Paul Richards was selected to the council based on his work as Executive Director of the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC). The role of the NHEC is to assess, evaluate, coordinate, report and make recommendations’ on the effectiveness of existing education programs for Native Hawaiians, the state of present Native Hawaiian education efforts, and improvements that may be made to existing programs, policies and procedures to improve the educational attainment of Native Hawaiians. Mr. Richards will be invaluable in ensuring the existing state workforce development infrastructure provides meaningful access and services to native Hawaiians. 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 Hawaii to receive the bulk of federal funding for the State’s primary job training and placement activities. Mr. Richards’ extensive experience will be vital to those efforts. The WDC is in strong support of Mr. Richards’ appointment and urges this committee to approve his nomination.

Thank you for this time to provide testimony for Mr. Paul Richards.