

TESTIMONY BY DWIGHT TAKAMINE  
IN STRONG SUPPORT OF

LATE TESTIMONY

NOMINEE, PAUL RICHARDS  
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. Richards' confirmation to the Workforce Development Council (WDC) for a term to expire on June 30, 2014. Mr. Richards would fill a slot reserved for a member from a Native Hawaiian organization 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. 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 Hawai'i 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.

In summary, I urge you to confirm Mr. Richards as a member of the Workforce Development Council where he would continue to 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.