



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

March 12, 2024

To: The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair,
The Honorable Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Labor & Government Operations

Date: Tuesday, March 12, 2024
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 309, State Capitol

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

Re: S.B. 2286 SD2 RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The **DLIR supports** this measure as long as it does not adversely impact priorities identified in the Executive Supplemental Budget Request for FY2025. SB2286 SD2 creates a new section in Chapter 394, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to authorize state-funded internships in the private sector to support the job training needs of Hawaii's youth and support Hawaii's economy.

II. CURRENT LAW

Act 251, SLH 1969, established Chapter 394 and was enacted to support the training needs of the State's economy by "increasing trained local labor." Act 251 envisioned the DLIR assisting Hawaii's workforce to obtain suitable employment by supporting training needs and thereby supporting Hawaii's economy.

The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) includes a major focus on providing work experience or internships for youth in a planned, structured, time-limited learning experience that takes place in a workplace within the private or public sector (20 CFR § 680.180).

20 CFR Part 680 Subpart F Work-Based Training outlines the requirements of On-the-Job training (OJT), which includes a contractual arrangement for the provision of occupational training between a sponsor and an employer wherein the sponsor provides reimbursement "for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and supervision related to the training."

III. COMMENTS ON THE SENATE BILL

The DLIR supports this measure that seeks to provide state funding for work-based training via OJT contracts between the department and employers or registered apprenticeship program sponsors in the private sector for youth. State support to bolster WIOA supported work-based training comports with the intent of Chapter 394 HRS to support the local workforce and sustain Hawaii's economy.

The proposed new section of Chapter 394 outlines the details of a State-supported program that comports with the WIOA work-based training while including Hawaii specific elements the DLIR believes will enable it to operate a program that protects the interest of the department, employers or apprenticeship sponsors, and participants.

The department suggests the new subsections (h) and (i) (Pg. 8, line 5 to Pg. 9, line 3) are unnecessary as the DLIR already collaborates with the Department of Human Resources (DHRD) and furnishes the information required by subsection (i) for State public section internships. Moreover, these provisions are ill-fitting for this proposal that establishes a State-funded private sector internship program for employers outside the jurisdiction of DHRD.

The DLIR also notes that it prefers the language (eighteen years of age or older) in the introduced version of (f)(1) (Pg. 5, line 5) and that Chapter 94 already authorizes the department to undertake Chapter 91 rulemaking.



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

Date: 03/12/2024

Time: 09:30 AM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Labor & Government
Operations

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2286, SD2 RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS.

Purpose of Bill: Permits and appropriates moneys for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to enter into contracts with eligible employers or registered apprenticeship programs in the private sector to provide on-the-job training to eligible interns. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Provides that the State shall be the responsible employer for purposes of workers' compensation coverage when a student or recent graduate performs paid or unpaid work for a private or public employer as part of a school-approved, workbased learning program. Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to collaborate with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations for certain portions of the program. Specifies that workers' compensation coverage for a recent graduate shall lapse on the last day of February of the graduating year for fall semester graduates and on 7/31 of the graduating year for spring semester graduates. Declares that the appropriation exceeds the state general fund expenditure ceiling for 2024-2025. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on SB 2286, SD 2, which permits the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to fund internships in the private sector and provides workers' compensation coverage for recent high school graduates participating in Department- and University of Hawaii-sponsored work-based learning programs.

The Department supports Section 5, which addresses workers' compensation for recent high school graduates participating in Department-sponsored work-based learning opportunities. The Department offers new graduates support as they transition to their post-high school plans, which may include postsecondary

education, vocational training, the military, and/or employment. Summer training and internships are an extension of students' Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study that develop the skills needed to succeed in the workforce. Planning and preparation for these internships take place during the school year. Without workers' compensation coverage for new graduates, employers may be discouraged from hosting these young adults as interns since the employer may incur the liability.

Over the last five years, the Department has not incurred workers' compensation costs for students participating in Department-sponsored work-based learning programs. We anticipate that the workers' compensation program included in the Governor's executive budget request will cover the costs related to this measure.

The Department defers to the DLIR with regards to the implementation of the on-the-job training work experience program outlined in Section 2.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's support of our work-based learning initiatives. The Department's goal is for all students to be globally competitive, having the skills to build a successful career anywhere in the world, and locally committed, choosing to live, work, and grow here in Hawaii. Preparing our students for the current and future workforce here at home will not only address our workforce needs but will also lead to a thriving Hawaii.

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



**Testimony to the House Committee on Labor and Government Operations
Tuesday, March 12, 2024; 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 309
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2286, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS.

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 2286, Senate Draft 2, RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would authorize and appropriate funds for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to enter into contracts with eligible employers or registered apprenticeship programs in the private sector to provide on-the-job training to eligible interns and public high school students.

This bill would take effect on July 1, 2050.

The State of Hawaii is experiencing a severe shortage of health care professionals in the workforce, especially in rural areas. Recent studies note that the current shortage of physicians is at 20% of the total full-time equivalent positions throughout the State. The shortage is especially severe in the fields of primary care, infectious diseases, colorectal surgery, pathology, general surgery, pulmonology, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, family medicine, cardiothoracic surgery, rheumatology, cardiology, hematology/oncology, and pediatric subspecialties of endocrinology, cardiology, neurology, hematology/oncology, and gastroenterology.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 2286, Senate Draft 2
Tuesday, March 12, 2024; 9:30 a.m.
Page 2

The same can be said for registered and practical nurses, community health workers, social workers, pharmacists, and other disciplines in the field of health care.

The HPCA believes this program would provide a needed service to our community by preparing students for meaningful employment, diversifying their learning opportunities, and promoting responsible citizenship. In addition, the program will facilitate partnerships between businesses and educators for the creation of mentoring ventures and other opportunities so that Hawaii's youth may gain the practical experience that will enable them to be productive members of our labor force. This is critical for the field of health care, especially in rural communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



March 8, 2024

Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair
Committee on Labor and Government Operations
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Legislature

Support for SB2286 SD2

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett and Members of the Committee on Labor and Government Relations,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our testimony in support of SB2286 SD2.

We are very supportive of opportunities to increase paid internships and would be grateful to work with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on this initiative. We work very closely with ClimbHI on tourism industry exposure and internships for high school students and would look forward to expanding those programs.

On behalf our 5,000 employees and their 20,000 family members, thank you for the opportunity to support SB2286 SD2.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Donoho, Administrative Director



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 12, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2286, SD2
RELATING TO EDUCATION

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice-Chair Garrett, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 2286, SD2, which permits and appropriates moneys for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to enter into contracts with eligible employers or registered apprenticeship programs in the private sector to provide on-the-job training to eligible interns, provides that the State shall be the responsible employer for purposes of workers' compensation coverage when a student or recent graduate performs paid or unpaid work for a private or public employer as part of a school-approved, work-based learning program, requires the Department of Human Resources Development to collaborate with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations for certain portions of the program, and specifies that workers' compensation coverage for a recent graduate shall lapse on the last day of February of the graduating year for fall semester graduates and on 7/31 of the graduating year for spring semester graduates.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are aging. The average age of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers exceeds 60 years old, and if they were in other professions would most likely be retired. Yet many of these farmers and ranchers are those who provide agricultural products to supermarkets, restaurants, hotels, farmers' markets, and the Farm to School program and truly make a difference in reducing imports.

Multigenerational commercial farms and ranches are facing the prospect of closure because succession plans do not exist. As these farmers and ranchers retire, their lands go out of agricultural production. There is an urgent need for interns or apprentices who are willing to not only work on these farms but also take over their operations.

This measure will incentivize and assist farms to train the next generation of new farmers interested in developing the skills and knowledge needed to be successful agriculture businesses.



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Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Labor and Government Relations

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 12, 2024
TIME: 9:30am
PLACE: Room 309

RE: SB2286 SD2 Relating to Internships

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett, and Members of the Committee,

Like many industries in our state the food industry is facing a shortage of workers. While there is a huge range of diverse jobs in this field, there are often not enough applicants with the necessary skills and experience that our food businesses need.

This program will help our local food companies, and other businesses, work directly with young people to help them develop the specific skills they need to thrive in their future careers. Expanding work based learning programs is a win for students as it provides valuable hands on learning and it's a win for businesses that get to engage these bright young people and help shape the workforce of tomorrow. This measure also promotes economic growth and job creation in our state.

We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Labor & Government Operations
Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

By

Debora Halbert, Vice President for Academic Strategy
University of Hawai'i System

SB 2286 SD2 – RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2286 SD2 relating to internships. The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports and appreciates the Senate's desire to expand work-based learning while helping Hawai'i's youth gain practical experience that will help them in their future careers. To the extent that this bill addresses college students, it is important to note that internships are indeed one of several nationally recognized "high impact practices" within higher education that tend to correlate with student success beyond graduation. When done well, internships help students build their self-confidence while acclimating to workplace culture and developing essential industry-based skills that will enhance their employability.

The University of Hawai'i's Strategic Plan 2023-2029 features an imperative calling on UH to "Meet Hawai'i's workforce needs of today and tomorrow." One of the stated objectives under this imperative is to partner more effectively with employers to "ensure the necessary preparation and support for students to succeed in their career," where UH will track its students' participation in internships as one of the metrics used to measure achievement of this objective. This bill would support the UH's ongoing efforts to expand work-based learning opportunities for its students while allowing them, in many cases, to simultaneously earn college credit.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure. While we support the bill, we defer to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations regarding the specific language describing the operational features of the internship program.



TESTIMONY OF DANIEL NĀHO'OPI'I
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 9:30 a.m.
In consideration of
SB 2286 SD 2
RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports SB2286 SD2. Encouraging Hawai'i's high school and college-age students to take advantage of the many career opportunities in the visitor industry is an important part of HTA's mission. Paid internships are a great way to support those pursuits.

HTA's 2022 Workforce Needs Assessment found that visitor industry businesses in Hawai'i were struggling to recruit workforce at all levels, with the difficulty increasing with the seniority of the role. Only 41% of the businesses surveyed offered an internship or apprenticeship program, highlighting the importance of this measure to help grow that number.

The paid internships contemplated in this measure will complement HTA's existing workforce programs at the high school and college levels and multiply the opportunities available to those considering a career in the visitor industry.

We respectfully defer to our colleagues at the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on matters of implementation, and thank the committee for this opportunity to support SB2286 SD2.

March 12, 2024

Committee on Labor and Government Relations
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair



Working together for Kapolei

Tuesday, March 12, 2024, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room #309 and Videoconference

RE: SB 2286 SD2, Relating to Internships

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett and members of the Committee,

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region and West O'ahu. The Chamber works on behalf of its members and the entire business community to improve the regional and State economic climate and help Kapolei businesses thrive. We are a member-driven, member-supported organization representing the interests of all types of business: small, medium or large, for profit or non-profit businesses or sole proprietorship.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **supports SB 2286 SD2**, which permits and appropriates moneys for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to enter into contracts with eligible employers or registered apprenticeship programs in the private sector to provide on-the-job training to eligible interns. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Provides that the State shall be the responsible employer for purposes of workers' compensation coverage when a student or recent graduate performs paid or unpaid work for a private or public employer as part of a school-approved, work-based learning program.

Investing in our future workforce is a priority for the Kapolei Chamber to keep pace with the growth in our region. Providing a work-based learning experience has proven to strengthen our talent pipeline. Many of our businesses, especially our small businesses, would like the opportunity to offer a mentoring and work-based learning experience for our future workforce, but simply do not have the resources and capacity to do so. **Providing access to DLIR's registered apprenticeship programs would provide the support needed for these small and medium size businesses to pursue having an internship program.**

Kapolei Chamber of Commerce has established itself as a *Career Hub* that generates, supports, connects, documents and reports the programmatic efforts to assist schools in delivering world-class programs that improve student achievement, increase post-secondary attendance, and generate a vibrant workforce. The Kapolei Chamber does this in partnership with the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu, the Hawai'i State Dept. of Education and our private and charter schools in West O'ahu. In 2018, the Chamber pioneered student career exploration in the State by holding the 1st multi-school student career expo. We now bring over 1300 9th grade students from five (5) West O'ahu high schools onto the campus at UH West O'ahu to interact and explore careers by interacting with over 70 employers as they select their career academies.

Career exploration is only the launching point and work-based learning is the continuum needed to strengthen our pipeline from K-12 to post-secondary and into our workforce. The Kapolei Chamber is also dedicated working with our education partners in West O'ahu to **address curricular and outreach gaps in the workforce pipeline by advocating and supporting internship and mentoring opportunities for our students with West O'ahu employers** among industry sectors including healthcare, innovative technology and the professional trades.

As our small businesses face challenges with staffing shortages and inflationary impacts, having the opportunity to apply for DLIR's apprenticeship program will provide the needed resources for our businesses and is a solid investment in our future. It will **provide the support needed for increased participation in work-based learning and will provide the needed investment into our future**. These collaborative learning experiences will help nurture and sustain our future workforce, bringing a brighter horizon for all.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Best,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

Testimony to the House Committee on Labor and Government Operations

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Conference Room 309 & via Videoconference

LATE

RE: SB2286 SD2 Relating to Internships

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports SB2286 SD2**, which promotes workforce development by establishing an on-the-job training work experience program. This measure also permits and appropriates moneys for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to enter into contracts with eligible employers or registered apprenticeship programs in the private sector to provide on-the-job training to eligible interns, while providing that the State shall be the responsible employer for purposes of workers' compensation coverage when a student or recent graduate performs paid or unpaid work for a private or public employer as part of a school-approved, work-based learning program.

The Chamber supports this measure's purpose and intent and appreciates the amendments applied to the previous version of this measure. State-funded private-sector internships, as supported through this measure, would provide additional opportunities for interns to gain practical work experience and prepare for their future careers while fostering public-private collaboration and promoting economic growth. This measure would also perpetuate effective partnerships between Hawaii public schools and Hawaii employers, strengthening the local talent pipeline and supporting workforce retention. If passed, this will help bridge the gap between the education system and the job market.

The Chamber has collaborated through a working group consisting of private sector leaders, education non-profits such as HawaiiKidsCAN, DOE, Kamehameha Schools, and other community groups to identify the best way to advance work-based-learning and career pathways for high school students while also supporting employers workforce needs. Without critical assistance to support work-based learning experiences, many employers, especially small- to medium sized companies, may lack the resources necessary to hire and sustain student interns.

At the Chamber, our Education and Workforce Development Department brings together leaders of in-demand industries and educators to address our workforce shortage while strengthening our local talent pipeline. Advancing work-based-learning through internship opportunities, such as the one provided in this bill, is unanimously identified as a positive. However, we need more private-sector partnership at the table to employ prospective qualified interns. The incentives offered in this bill will increase the capacity for companies and create a "win-win" for our future workforce of students.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii firmly considers this initiative an investment in Hawaii's future. We are committed to supporting employers and their employees who are willing to invest in the development of our students and are confident this grant program will help to create a brighter future for our state.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 309
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 AT 9:30 A.M.**

To The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair
The Honorable Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Labor & Government Operations

SUPPORT SB2286 SD2 RELATING TO INTERNSHIPS

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like to offer testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB2286 SD2.**

The Chamber agrees that expanding state-funded internships to include private-sector positions will benefit the State by promoting economic growth, fostering public-private collaborations, and supporting job creation. State-funded private-sector internships will also create additional opportunities for interns to gain practical work experience and prepare for their future careers.

This bill will incentivize more of Hawaii's small and medium sized businesses to offer work-based learning opportunities through internships. This helps our students learn in-demand skills and diversifies the pool of employees for local employers. These work-based learning experiences are critical for the economic future of our state as we prepare our young people for the in-demand careers of the future.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT SB2286 SD2.**

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

LATE

Testimony of Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO, Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Committee on Labor and Government Operations
Tuesday, March 11, 2024
Senate Bill 2286 SD2: Relating to Internships
Position: SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Matayoshi Members of the Committee,

As the state's oldest and largest private sector tourism organization representing 700 members, nearly 50,000 hotel rooms, and 40,000 lodging workers, HLTA is committed to addressing the critical issue of workforce development in Hawai'i. As such, we express our full support for the advancement of Senate Bill 2286 SD2.

SB 2286 SD2, which permits and appropriates funds for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to enter into contracts with eligible employers or registered apprenticeship programs in the private sector, aligns with our mission to provide job training opportunities for our youth. Workforce development remains a key priority for the tourism industry, and HLTA has been at the forefront, implementing various initiatives to support this cause.

HLTA has successfully launched programs such as the Generational Mentoring Program, the Ho'oilina Scholarship in partnership with various key stakeholders, and most recently the Visitor Industry High School Internship (VIHSI) program in collaboration with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, the Department of Education, DLIR, and the support from the Legislature.

During the 2022 legislative session, funds were generously provided to DLIR for the purpose of providing paid internships. HLTA assisted in bringing in our largest economic sector, the hospitality industry, with DLIR and the educational systems involved. However, we encountered challenges in accessing the funds for internships designated for placement in private sector organizations. Ultimately, it became apparent that participating students would be limited to placements exclusively within government agencies and offices.

To get the ball rolling, and prove that the program could work, we partnered with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, to fund a pilot group of high school interns through private dollars, placing them in HLTA member companies representing hotels, airlines, and ground transportation companies. We worked directly with the Department of Education's office of the Superintendent to ensure that all appropriate memorandum of agreements and processes were put into place with the participating schools and companies. This initiative provided invaluable experiences for the aspiring youth that were selected to take part in the program.

SB 2286 SD2 presents a pivotal opportunity to build upon the success of our visitor industry internship program and extend its impact across the broader industry as well as all other sectors. Enabling internships in private sector companies will enhance the overall effectiveness of our efforts to provide paid internships for local students at both high school and collegiate levels. It is imperative that our youth gain exposure to the diverse working environments offered by businesses on all fronts, beyond government offices.

We eagerly anticipate discussions on this measure and extend our full support for its progression through the legislative process. Mahalo for providing us with the opportunity to share our testimony and contribute to the advancement of workforce development in Hawai'i.