

JOSH GREEN, M. D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



BRENNA H. HASHIMOTO  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

RYAN YAMANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**  
**KA 'OIHANA HO'OMŌHALA LIMAHANA**  
235 S. BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

Statement of  
**BRENNA H. HASHIMOTO**  
Director, Department of Human Resources Development

Before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY**  
Friday, February 2, 2024  
3:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
**SB3296, RELATING TO REMOTE WORK**

Chairs Aquino and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and the members of the committees.

The Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) is in **support** of SB3296.

The purpose of the bill is to require DHRD to 1) conduct a statewide remote work study; 2) review any recent remote work studies done by the counties; 3) develop and administer a remote work program; and 4) submit the study to the Legislature prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025; and 5) appropriate funds.

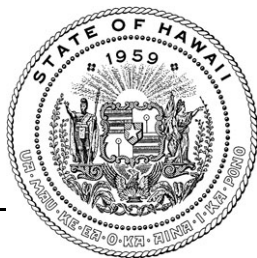
DHRD concurs with this measure and recognizes the importance of a strong remote work infrastructure to increase affordability and provide for a more modern and flexible work future. DHRD supports the purpose of the bill and appreciates the request for appropriations and position to provide the necessary support to conduct the study.

We offer the following comments and suggested amendments to this measure:

1. It would be difficult for DHRD to obtain accurate data for the study as DHRD does not have jurisdiction over the private sector and other sectors of government. As such, DHRD suggests that the study be limited to the Executive Branch departments under DHRD's jurisdiction.
2. Suggest clarifying the language on page 14, line 10 to:

*“(d) The study and remote work program shall be applicable to state employees in the Executive Branch departments that are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Human Resources.”*

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



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**  
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI  
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
DIRECTOR

**DANE K. WICKER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804  
Web site: [dbedt.hawaii.gov](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov)

Telephone: (808) 586-2355  
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
Director  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY  
AND  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

Friday, February 2, 2024  
3:00PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room #224

In consideration of  
**SB3296**  
**RELATING TO TELEWORK.**

Chairs Aquino and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and members of the Committees. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) provides the following **comments** on SB3296 that requires the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) to conduct a remote work study, review recent remote work studies done by the counties, develop and administer a remote work program, and submit the study to the legislature prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025.

The remote work study in the measure calls for coordination with the Hawaii Broadband and Digital Equity Office (Office) of DBEDT to analyze the condition of the existing broadband infrastructure and to identify resources needed to support remote work in the state. The Office looks forward to working with DHRD in the study to develop a remote work program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## Testimony in Support of SB 3296

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

I represent the Hawai'i Workforce Funders Collaborative (HWFC), a coalition of philanthropic foundations committed to creating equitable pathways to good jobs for all learners and job seekers in Hawai'i. Our focus is on fostering collaborative solutions to address the real challenges faced by workers in our state

SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work, aims to identify state jobs suitable for remote work and strategically connect them with workers in areas of Hawai'i where job opportunities are scarce, yet housing is more affordable. This bill is designed to address the critical issues of regional disparities in job availability, housing affordability, and the need for economic sustainability across our state.

There are three main components to this bill:

- (1) identifying state jobs that are good candidates for remote work;
- (2) identifying areas of the state where housing is relatively affordable but good-paying jobs are not readily available; and
- (3) pairing the remote jobs with Hawai'i workers in those lower cost areas.

Doing this will address issues of affordability, help keep local families in Hawaii, and strengthen community ties.

We at HWFC support SB 3296 for several reasons:

- **Data-Driven Approach:** As of December 2023, the disparity in job opening-to-seeker ratios between Honolulu County and the Neighbor Islands is significant. While Honolulu County has 1.54 active job openings for every job seeker, the Neighbor Islands range between 0.45 and 0.55. This discrepancy underscores the need for innovative solutions like remote work.
- **Equitable Opportunity:** Remote work opportunities, as facilitated by this bill, can create equitable employment opportunities across the islands, allowing Neighbor Island residents to access jobs in more urban areas like O'ahu without the need for costly and disruptive relocation.
- **State Leadership in Workplace Culture:** By adopting remote work practices, state government can lead by example, demonstrating to other employers the potential of the Neighbor Island workforce to meet many of the workforce shortages across the state. This shift can result in a more diverse and representative state government workforce, better reflecting the communities it serves.

SB 3296 aligns with HWFC's vision of a diversified, equitable, and sustainable workforce in Hawai'i. By passing this bill, we can take a significant step toward addressing the long-standing challenges of workforce development and community stability in our state.

We urge the committee to support SB 3296, recognizing its potential to positively transform Hawai'i's workforce and communities.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Stevens".

Matt Stevens

Executive Director

Hawai'i Workforce Funders Collaborative



Housing Hawai'i's Future  
PO Box 3043  
Honolulu, HI 96802-3043

February 2, 2024

TO: Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey and members of the Hawai'i State Senate Labor and Technology and Government Operations Committees  
RE: SB 3296

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Sterling Higa, and I serve as executive director of Housing Hawai'i's Future, a nonprofit creating opportunities for Hawai'i's next generation by ending the workforce housing shortage.

**On behalf of Housing Hawai'i's Future, I write in support of SB 3296, requiring the Department of Human Resources to study remote work and develop a remote work program.**

Transportation accounts for ~15% of a household budget, and it is often the second largest expense after housing.

**To reduce transportation costs, we can either (1) locate housing near job centers or (2) locate job centers near housing.**

Remote work offers an opportunity to shift job centers to rural areas where housing is less expensive. This is equivalent to a pay increase for workers (who spend less on housing and transportation). It also boosts quality of life by reducing commute time.

This study will help the state to pursue the second strategy. While we should also continue building housing near job centers, this measure is an important step to addressing the problem of long commutes.

**Please support SB 3296!**

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sterling Higa".

Sterling Higa  
Executive Director  
Housing Hawai'i's Future  
[sterling@hawaiisfuture.org](mailto:sterling@hawaiisfuture.org)  
+1 (808) 782-7868

**hawaiisfuture.org**

**SB-3296**

Submitted on: 2/1/2024 11:26:42 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/2/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shana Wailana Kukila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: SB3296 Relating to Telework

POSITION: Support

Amendment requested:

Page 12, line 10:

Instead of the state DHRD "consider" what counties have done with regards to telework, please think of changing it to: "the state *shall* actively engage with the counties in partnership with the state to provide telework opportunities to all islands for current and prospective government employees."

In this list that DHRD is required to do on Page 12, there should be added to the tasks,

"DHRD should integrate the needs of the disabled community into any workforce development plan, including and especially telework opportunities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and 504 of Rehabilitation Act. Equal access to government employment for the disabled in our community. The disabled population in Hawaii should be considered as a key component of any workforce development plan by the State of Hawaii, and DHRD shall comply with these federal mandates. Telework is an option for the disabled, and DHRD must review and emulate best practices for employment of the disabled and imbed those practices in all their employment and hiring activities and plans."

These amendments can be reworded for clarity, but the point is that residents need more advocacy at DHRD, and these amendments will more actively engage more residents and their respective counties in determining their own telework policies as well as having these policies align with the state. It also provides the counties with more input the DHRD on what their own workforce needs are on every island across the state, above and beyond the issues of telework and as a means to better plan an overall workforce infrastructure development strategy for the state. Not all islands are the same, even within the same county (Maui/Moloka'i/Lana'i), therefore, their needs and their strengths, as well as their general lifestyles, are different.

There are many qualified government employment candidates on the neighbor islands, and DHRD must do more to provide greater access to government employment to a greater amount

of the residents beyond Oahu's urban core. Telework is one option that should be considered, and employees should be trusted by state leadership to do the work that they are tasked to do with integrity and pride, no matter where they live and work, or how they are able to do that work. If doctors contracted with the state can be trusted to provide telehealth with patients from their home offices, and state contracted attorneys are able to take their work home with them and still charge the state for hours worked, then government office workers who are tasked with filing and other duties and others doing non-public facing positions should be afforded that trust, too.

Thank you for this bill and for reading my testimony today.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Shana W. Kukila

Hilo, HI



**OUR MISSION**

To support and advance public policies that make Hawai'i affordable for all working families.

**OUR VISION**

Collaborative, sustainable, and evidence-based public policies that create a diverse and sustainable Hawai'i economy, an abundance of quality job opportunities, and a future where all working families living in Hawai'i can thrive.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Jason Fujimoto  
Meli James, *Board Chair*  
Micah Kāne  
Brandon Kurisu  
Mike Mohr  
Brad Nicolai  
Mike Pietsch

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Josh Feldman  
Brittany Heyd  
Alicia Moy  
Ed Schultz

Josh Wisch  
*President & Executive Director*

827 Fort Street Mall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

+1 (808) 909-3843  
info@holomuacollaborative.org

HolomuaCollaborative.org

**LATE**

**Committee:** Senate Committee on Labor and Technology  
Senate Committee on Government Operations  
**Bill Number:** SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work  
**Hearing Date and Time:** February 2, 2024 at 3:00pm (Room 224)  
**Re:** Testimony of Holomua Collaborative in support

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committees:

We write in support of SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work. There are three main components to this bill:

- (1) identifying state government jobs in the executive branch that are good candidates for remote work;
- (2) identifying areas of the state where housing is relatively affordable but good-paying jobs are not readily available; and
- (3) pairing the remote state government jobs with Hawai'i workers in these lower cost areas.

We believe this bill is an important step towards recruiting and retaining state workers while simultaneously addressing issues of affordability that will help keep local families in Hawai'i, strengthening community ties.

Improving State Worker Recruitment and Retention

Not all state government jobs can be done remotely. But for those that can, the option of remote work is an important recruitment and retention tool that could benefit the state. The Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) recently reported that nearly 4,000 of 17,000 civil service positions in the state executive branch were vacant as of November 2022<sup>1</sup>, not including the University of Hawai'i system or the Department of Education. And as recently as January 2024 "more than 1 in 4 civil service positions in state government was vacant last month, a statistic that is spurring complaints from the public about eroding levels of service."<sup>2</sup>

We have state government jobs we need to fill. While departments are correctly working to become more competitive based on wages and benefits, remote work has been shown to be a recruitment and retention tool that attracts workers and costs the state less than some other options.

<sup>1</sup> DHRD's 2022 State of Hawai'i Act 57, SLH 2019 Vacancy Report to the Thirty-Second State Legislature 2023 Regular Session submitted December 2022 (<https://dhrd.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Act-57-Vacancy-Report-Transmittal-Report-OCR-part-1-signed-1.pdf>).

<sup>2</sup> "Where are the workers? Last month 27% of state government civil service positions were vacant," Civil Beat, January 9, 2024, by Kevin Dayton (<https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/01/where-are-the-workers-last-month-27-of-state-government-civil-service-positions-were-vacant/>).



As a promising example, the State of Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission ("PUC") has seen encouraging indicators of success with its hybrid remote work program as a component of its efforts to foster a thriving work environment. In designing this program, which follows the State Telework Program Guidelines, the PUC noted that offering employees the option to telework not only supports their recruitment efforts as an attractive place to work, but also their employee retention and productivity by enhancing employee engagement and satisfaction. The PUC also consulted with the Hawai'i Government Employees Association ("HGEA") in developing its program. Some highlights of the PUC telework program so far:

- Productivity has remained steady and – in some areas – has improved;
- It has spurred improvements to provide meaningful performance assessments for all employees, regardless of telework status;
- According to a November 2023 employee survey conducted by a third-party vendor commissioned by the PUC, the agency has a very high level of employee engagement and satisfaction:
  - 75% of all participants report being satisfied working at the PUC;
  - 98% of participants value the option to telework;
  - 96% of participants cite the telework option as a factor in deciding to work for or remain at the PUC.

And importantly, the PUC currently has one of the lowest vacancy rates in all of state government (currently 4 vacancies of 67 positions).

#### Strengthening local communities

Helping to connect residents in more rural communities with state government jobs that can be done remotely also stands to provide economic benefits for local communities. While many of these areas have lower housing costs than more central and urban communities, they also don't have access to as many good paying jobs. This means it's more likely people living in those areas will leave for better-paying job prospects. But if we can help keep people in their local communities, it will strengthen those communities.

Local businesses in the community benefit from a more stable population base. Local civic organizations in the community benefit from more highly engaged residents. Local schools in the area benefit from a more robust and consistent student population. Local students graduating from their area schools are more likely to stay in, or return to, their communities if they know their employment prospects in those areas are greater. Local economies can be fortified and help to distribute economic strength across the state and beyond the major population centers.

#### Positive impact on the environment

According to a study reported on by the Washington Post, another benefit of remote work is that it slashes the carbon emissions of individual workers.<sup>3</sup> According to the

---

<sup>3</sup> "Working from home now has another powerful benefit," Washington Post, September 18, 2023, by Allyson Chiu (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2023/09/18/work-from-home-carbon-footprint/>)

study, “In an analysis of various work scenarios, people’s behaviors and sources of emissions, researchers found that switching from working onsite to working from home full time may reduce a person’s carbon footprint by more than 50 percent. Hybrid schedules where people work remotely for two to four days a week could also cut emissions by 11 to 29 percent[.]”

#### Reduced Transportation Costs

One way of reducing those emissions is through reducing how much people drive. According to the California Air Resources Board Project from 2023,<sup>4</sup> “[t]elecommuting can reduce how much people drive when employees no longer have to travel to and from work, reducing the number of vehicle trips and driving on the road.” This is especially impactful in Hawai‘i. Ulupono Initiative’s Vehicle Economy Study in 2021<sup>5</sup> showed that personal vehicles cost an additional \$16,200 per household per year (or, \$8,100 per vehicle per year), and that whether or not households owned cars, the public cost of sustaining a vehicle economy such as the one Hawai‘i currently sustains amounts to roughly \$15,000 per taxpayer per year (\$24,400 per household per year). For a state whose household median income is roughly \$80,000 per year, these costs amount to about 30 percent of household pre-tax income.

#### Overall Benefits

Other local companies and organizations are successfully using remote work to improve recruitment and retention while maintaining or improving their productivity. There are established policies and guidelines the state can turn to in building on the telework program it already has in place. What the State can gain from this is decreased vacancies in state government, which will result in improved operations for everything from benefits services to permitting applications and more. And in the process, it has the potential to keep local residents in their own communities, while lowering their cost of living.

Sincerely,



Josh Wisch  
President & Executive Director

---

<sup>4</sup> “Impacts of Telecommuting and Remote Services on Transportation, Land Use, and Climate Change,” from the California Air Resources Board (<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/sustainable-communities-program/project-solicitation/telecommuting-impacts>).

<sup>5</sup> “The Cost of the Vehicle Economy in Hawai‘i,” Ulupono Initiative (<https://ulupono.com/project-list/the-costs-of-the-vehicle-economy-in-hawaii/>).

**LATE**

Committee: Senate Committee on Labor and Technology  
Senate Committee on Government Operations

**Bill Number: SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work - SUPPORT**

Hearing Date and Time: February 2, 2024 at 3:00pm (Room 224)

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committees:

Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks! is in **support of SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work.**

We believe this bill is an important step towards recruiting and retaining state workers while simultaneously addressing issues of affordability that will help keep local families in Hawai'i, strengthening community ties.

The myriad vacancies in State government are highly problematic both for the general public that needs timely access to government services and benefits and to the non-profit health and human services sector that often partners with government. Procurement often happens at a snail's pace. Administrative rules can take years to be written. Wait times to access needed benefits and services are unacceptably slow for Hawaii families. Most often the reason for the pace is simply a lack of workers.

The State needs to attract and retain younger workers to take the place of those nearing retirement. Remote work is a desired work situation for many to eliminate long commutes, and allow for flexibility that many younger workers are seeking.

Hawaii Childrens' Action Network Speaks! began remote work at the start of COVID and our team of 12 has remained fully remote since. Productivity has remained steady and – in some areas of our work it has even improved. Several of my new hires in the last three years have indicated that they were specifically seeking remote opportunities.

I encourage you to pass this measure.

Sincerely,

Deborah Zysman  
Executive Director

**LATE**

**KOBAYASHI**  
GROUP

1288 Ala Moana Blvd. Suite 201  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
tel (808) 524-1508  
fax (808) 524-0766  
web kobayashi-group.com  
email info@kobayashi-group.com

February 1, 2024

Senate Committee on Labor and Technology  
Senate Committee on Government Operations

**RE: HEARING FEBRUARY 2, 2024; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3296,  
RELATING TO REMOTE WORK**

Dear Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work.

As a local developer deeply rooted in Hawai'i, we value the important steps toward strengthening community ties while finding innovative solutions for affordable housing available for the local residents across all demographics. As mentioned in the following three main components to this bill, we believe it is an important step towards recruiting and retaining state workers while simultaneously addressing issues of affordability that will help keep local families in in Hawai'i.

- (1) identifying state jobs that are good candidates for remote work;
- (2) identifying areas of the state where housing is relatively affordable but good-paying jobs are not readily available; and
- (3) pairing the remote jobs with Hawai'i workers in these lower cost areas.

We strongly support SB 3296 as it assists in helping keep local residents in their own communities, while providing accessibility to lower their cost of living.

Sincerely,



Alana Kobayashi Pakkala  
Manager + Executive Vice President

**LATE**

**SB-3296**

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 6:33:23 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/2/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Douglass Adams	Testifying for Dept of Research & Development, County of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee on Labor and Technology;  
and

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Government  
Operations:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB3296, which requires the Department of Human Resources Development to: (1) conduct a remote work study; (2) review any recent remote work studies done by the counties; (3) develop and administer a remote work program; and (4) submit the study to the Legislature prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025. Remote work opportunities offer stability for local communities, while helping develop quality jobs which support local families. Hawaii County, in coordination with the Lieutenant Governor's Connect Kakou initiative, the University of Hawaii, and the Broadband Strategy Office of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, continues its efforts to bring broadband connectivity to all homes and businesses on the island, further enhancing the viability of remote work opportunities.

We encourage the Committees to forward SB3296 with a POSITIVE recommendation for passage by the Senate.

very respectfully,

Douglass S Adams

Director, Department of Research and Development

County of Hawaii



**LATE**

**HAWAI'I COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**

**Testimony in Support of SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work**

From: Micah Kāne, Chief Executive Officer & President - Hawai'i Community Foundation

Re: Support for Remote Work

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) strongly supports Senate Bill 3296. SB 3296's effort to properly study and report on remote work is an important step for the long term good of both the community and government. Appropriate remote work opportunities can help the wellbeing of families and improve government's ability to recruit and retain workers.

These are key areas within HCF's CHANGE Framework under the "C" (Community and Economy) and "G" (Government and Civics) sectors.

C Sector - Data and experience shows us that commuting takes away from time with family and within the community where one lives, and is more impactful to ALICE families, as they most often are forced to reside at further distances from physical job centers. Everything from transportation cost to child care and education costs are increased as a result of longer commutes. Furthermore, the stress and conflict among families can be reduced by increasing the time parents have with their children and are able to, as a family, participate in community activities around their neighborhood. Finally, the opportunity for remote work in state government jobs will make better paying jobs available to those who would otherwise not be able to apply for roles far from home.

G Sector - Not all state government jobs can be done remotely. But for those that can, under proper supervision and guidelines, the option of remote work is an important recruitment and retention tool that could benefit the state. The data on vacant positions at both the State and County level show the need to improve work opportunities in government. It is for these reasons that we support the bill's effort to properly study and report on these opportunities. Properly created, we believe remote/hybrid work program for the State will improve its workforce and thereby, serve the entire state for our future.

At Hawai'i Community Foundation we know that providing the option for remote and hybrid work is a powerful tool for recruiting and retaining great workers. Since the start of the pandemic, we have done precisely what this bill envisions: identifying jobs that are good candidates for remote work and then implementing a plan that allows for a hybrid work environment. Our employees are still producing great results and we have developed a suite of best practices – including for the management of remote workers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 3296





**LATE**

**February 2, 2024**

**Committee:** Senate Committee on Labor and Technology  
Senate Committee on Government Operations

**Bill Number:** SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work

**Hearing Date and Time:** February 2, 2024, 3:00pm

**Re:** Testimony of HPM Building Supply in Support

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committees,

We write in strong support of SB 3296. This bill is an important step towards recruiting and retaining state workers while simultaneously addressing issues of affordability that will help keep local families in Hawai'i, strengthening community ties.

HPM Building Supply is a 100% employee-owned company serving Hawaii's home improvement market and building industry for over 100 years since 1921. With 18 locations across Hawaii and Washington State, HPM offers various services and products, including retail stores, building supply and lumber yards, home design centers, drafting and design services, and manufacturing facilities. HPM is dedicated to enhancing homes, improving lives, and transforming communities one home at a time.

As a State-wide employer with over 600 employees – and one that is based in Hilo – we understand how hard it can be for people in rural, neighbor island communities to find good-paying jobs that enable them to live, work, and play in their own communities. If we can recruit people from rural and neighbor island communities to work in government by identifying government jobs that are good candidates for remote work, then we'll strengthen those communities by keeping local working families there.

We have state jobs we need to fill. While departments are correctly working to become more competitive based on wages and benefits, remote work has been shown to be a recruitment and retention tool that attracts workers and costs the state less than some other options.

This bill also aligns with HPM's values of Heart, Character, and Growth. By supporting innovative ways to fill vacant state jobs with local workers, we show that we care about the future generations and our current workforce shaping it. Our company's value of Heart is caring for one another as a community.

With the incorporation of remote work, HPM has been able to stay connected with our employees, provide flexibility in work life balance and greater collaboration between all the regions that we serve. As a company we embrace the reality that the workplace environment is ever changing, and we must adapt.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 3296. I strongly encourage your support and passage of this measure.

Sincerely,

Dennis Lin  
Community Relations Administrator





Statement of  
**Meli James, Cofounder**  
**Mana Up**

SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work

Aloha,

We write in strong support of SB 3296. This bill requires the Department of Human Resources Development to: (1) conduct a remote work study; (2) review any recent remote work studies done by the counties; (3) develop and administer a remote work program; and (4) submit the study to the Legislature prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025. It is an important step towards recruiting and retaining state workers while simultaneously addressing issues of affordability that will help keep local families in Hawai'i, strengthening community ties.

Mana Up is a statewide initiative that supports entrepreneurs in Hawai'i, providing them with resources and tools to scale globally. As these entrepreneurs continue to grow, they also help to sustain the local economy through economic diversification, local job creation, givebacks, investment, and a regenerative culture of entrepreneurship – providing a better future for generations to come here in Hawai'i.

Many of these entrepreneurs' businesses also depend on working with government. Whether it is registering a business with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, or working with the State Historic Preservation Division on getting approval on a building, or simply filing their corporate taxes, they need government to work. And even though government employees are working hard, there are frequent complaints that government doesn't operate quickly enough. One of the reasons for that is we have so many open government positions because it's hard to recruit people into government service. Increasing use of telework and hybrid work will help us recruit and retain state workers.

Mana Up and our portfolio companies have seen great success with both remote and hybrid work. The Mana Up corporate team has a hybrid work structure which allows the team to collaborate during in-office days while also having independent productivity during remote working days. This fosters a sense of autonomy for employees and we've seen it help to recruit and retain quality team members that can help propel the mission of Mana Up.

This bill is a good opportunity to help recruit and retain quality state workers and Mana Up is happy to support it.

Sincerely,

Meli James, Cofounder  
Mana Up





TITLE GUARANTY  
HAWAII

February 2, 2024

**Testimony in support of SB 3296, Relating to Remote Work**

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committees,

We write in strong support of SB 3296. This bill will make it more likely that local working families can stay in their communities by helping to identify state jobs that are good candidates for remote work, and then linking those jobs with the people who need them most in our state.

Title Guaranty of Hawai'i is the oldest and largest title company in the state. We have been owned and operated by a kama'aina family since 1896 and we are proud to employ over 250 residents who work in our branches across the state. Being a longtime employer of so many people in Hawai'i – and one so deeply tied to local housing – we know how important it is for people to be able to stay in their communities. But that's becoming unaffordable for too many people, especially in more rural areas across the state.

This bill takes a compelling approach to solving this problem by recognizing that one way to keep people in their communities is to connect them with jobs that let them stay where they are. And these are jobs that are otherwise difficult to fill. Recent news reports have shown that 27% of state government civil service positions are vacant. It's been shown nationwide that offering remote and hybrid work options is an effective tool for recruitment and retention. This bill's approach of connecting state jobs that can be done remotely – with people who can stay in their communities if they can obtain those types of jobs – is exciting.

Our remote workforce has proven to be successful, as it allows our employees to work with flexibility, efficiency, and effectiveness. We have implemented virtual platforms for collaboration to manage productivity, which has been working great. Our staff who work from home are meeting expectations and have the necessary resources to equip and empower them for success.

We urge you to support SB 3296.

Sincerely,

Mike B. Pietsch  
President and Chief Operating Officer  
Title Guaranty of Hawai'i



Title and Escrow is our business. Hawaii is our home.



**LATE**

**Michael Mohr  
493 Portlock Road  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825**

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committees,

I am writing to strongly support SB 3296. This bill does a good job of simultaneously addressing two critical issues for the state: (1) a high number of vacancies in state jobs; and (2) the need to connect people in more isolated areas with good-paying jobs that can keep them in their communities.

As a resident who spends considerable time thinking about how to improve Hawaii for everyone in broad and durable ways, an investment in recruiting and retaining local residents to work in state jobs that are good candidates for remote work will decrease vacancies, increase job satisfaction and attract high quality workers.

Not all state jobs can be done remotely. But for those that can, the option of remote work is an important recruitment and retention tool. that could benefit the state. This is crucial at this time.

Most of my colleagues are hybrid workers and would not even apply for jobs without that opportunity.

Mahalo for all you are doing.

Please pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Mike

**LATE**

**SB-3296**

Submitted on: 2/2/2024 11:24:46 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/2/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emerald Adams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kāko‘o