



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

## 2017 LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

*The Chamber's 2017 Legislative Package focuses on three strategic areas to support businesses in Hawaii. This package was proposed by members and approved by our Policy Committees, which are open for participation by all members.*

### SPURRING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Support Manufacturing Programs

Continue grant funding to manufacturers for training, energy savings initiatives, equipment and planning of new facilities.

#### Fund Small Business and Innovation Programs Supported by State Agencies

- Innovation and incubation

Continue support and funding for the Hawaii Small Business Innovation and Research program, supported by High Technology Development Corporation (HTDC), which helps local companies get federal R&D dollars for research and commercialization development.

Support a general fund appropriation for the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation, which invests state and federal money in a match with private firms to build targeted industries in Hawaii, including digital, innovation/tech and other areas.

- Regulations affecting small businesses

Support additional staffing to increase effectiveness of the Small Business Regulatory Review Board, which provides comment and input into the rulemaking process. The board also provides recommendations to the Legislature, Governor and counties on rule changes to help small business.

### INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

#### Support and Expand Existing Early Learning Programs

- Expand existing Early Education Programs to service an additional 400-500 children each year.
- Increase funding to the Department of Human Services to increase quality and expansion of care.
- Look to expand childcare to 3-year-old children.

#### Support Transit Oriented Development

- Create a state authority to plan and develop infrastructure near transit stations which are adjacent to state-owned lands. The infrastructure will help support transit oriented development.

### IMPROVING BUSINESS CLIMATE

#### Address Adams v. CDM Court Ruling

The case, arguably, overturns decades of settled law. In the past, because Hawaii is an at-will employment state, an employer could take an adverse employment action (e.g., firing, demotion, refusal to hire) for any non-discriminatory reason. The new rule as stated imposes far greater restriction, i.e., the adverse action must only be related to the person's ability to perform the job.

- Other aspects include that, essentially, if an employer ends up not hiring an applicant for a reason that is not stated in the job posting, the employer is on the hook for a discrimination claim.
- Lastly, the Court stated that the decision maker for a hiring decision must have personal knowledge of the issues/reasons for not hiring a candidate. This can be an issue especially for large employers as the interviewer is not the hiring authority.

#### Support Efforts to Increase Efficiency at the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

- Provide funding to support IT initiatives and staffing to help increase speed and efficiency in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations DC Division.

For more information, visit [cochawaii.org](http://cochawaii.org) or contact Pono Chong at (808) 380-2607 or [pchong@cochawaii.org](mailto:pchong@cochawaii.org)