

Business Revitalization Task Force

9th Meeting Minutes (draft)

Meeting was held virtually via Zoom and physical location at 250 South Hotel Street, Room 435,
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
November 19, 2025
2:02 p.m. – 2:24 p.m.

PRESENT:

1. **James Kunane Tokioka, Director**
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
2. **Dean I Hazama, Deputy Director**
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
3. **Kristen Sakamoto, Deputy Director**
Department of Taxation
4. **David J. Rodriguez, Equal Opportunity Officer**
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
5. **Sandra Fujiyama, Director of Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship**
University of Hawai'i at Manoa Shidler College of Business
6. **Dennis Lin, Deputy Director**
Department of Research & Development, Hawai'i County
7. **Nalani Brun, Director**
Office of Economic Development, County of Kauai
8. **Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director**
Hawai'i Food Industry Association
9. **Roseann Freitas, Chief Executive Officer**
Building Industry Association of Hawai'i
10. **Monty Pereira, GM and Sales & Marketing Director**
Watanabe Floral
11. **Wendy Laros, President & Chief Executive Officer**
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce
12. **Sue Kanoho, Managing Director**
Island Chapters & Executive Director, Kaua'i Visitors Bureau

13. **Jacob Aki, Public Affairs Manager**
Alaska Airline
14. **Sherry Menor- McNamara, Chief Executive Officer**
Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i
15. **Jimmy Chan, Owner & Founder**
Hawai'ian Chip Company
16. **Jade P. Rojas-Letisi, Executive Assistant**
Office of the Mayor, County of Maui
17. **Keali'i Haverly, Chairman**
Retail Merchants of Hawai'i

ABSENT:

1. **Amy Asselbaye, Executive Director**
Honolulu Office of Economic Revitalization
2. **Tessa Gomes, Representative**
Small Business Regulatory Review Board
3. **Tonga Hopoi, Vice President, Economic Development, Government & Community Relations**
Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i
4. **Kurt Miyashiro, Manager**
MK Equipment Corporation
5. **Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director**
Hawai'i Farm Bureau
6. **Alec Sou, President & General Manager**
Aloun Farms
7. **Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Founder & Chief Executive Officer**
Oceanit
8. **Constancio Paranal, Representative**
Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i
9. **Jeannine Souki, Senior Manager, Government & Regulatory Affairs**
Hawai'ian Telcom

Staff Members:

Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT),
Research and Economic Analysis Division (READ): Dr. Seth Colby, Joseph
Roos, Mustafa Shirzad.

CALL TO ORDER:

Time lapse: 2:02 p.m. – 2:04 p.m.

Dr. Seth Colby called the meeting to order; 17 members were present.

SUMMARY:

Agenda Item 1. Communication to the Task Force and Public Comment

Time lapse: 2:05 p.m. – 2:08 p.m.

Dr. Seth Colby opened the floor for public comments. Lorelei Calleton, a law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawai‘i at Manoa testified in support of the Hawai‘i Business Competitiveness legislative proposal. Lorelei emphasized that, while Hawai‘i faces challenges due to its unique geography and environmental commitments, many barriers are administrative and therefore solvable. Lorelei highlighted that the bill does not demand widespread deregulation, but instead creates a framework for modernization, consistency, and accountability. Lorelei stressed the importance of maintaining existing safeguards and protections, noting that any reforms must undergo careful scrutiny to ensure efficiency gains do not compromise public interest responsibilities.

Agenda Item 2: Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of September 12, 2025 and October 23, 2025

Time lapse: 2:08 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.

Seth Colby called for a motion to approve September 12, 2025, meetings minutes. Wendy Laros proposed a motion to approve the minutes and Monty Pereira seconded.

Members voted in favor:

1. James Kunane Tokioka
2. Dean I. Hazama
3. Kristen Sakamoto
4. David J. Rodriguez
5. Sandra Fujiyama
6. Jade P. Rojas-Letisi
7. Dennis Lin
8. Nalani Brun

9. Lauren Zirbel
10. Roseann Freitas
11. Monty Pereira
12. Sue Kanoho
13. Wendy Laros
14. Jimmy Chan
15. Sherry Menor-McNamara
16. Jacob Aki
17. Keali'i Haverly

Members voted against:

None.

The motion passed with a majority.

Dr. Seth Colby then called for a motion to approve October 23, 2025, meetings minutes. Dean I. Hazama proposed a motion to approve the minutes, and Roseann Freitas seconded the motion.

Members voted in favor:

1. James Kunane Tokioka
2. Dean I. Hazama
3. Kristen Sakamoto
4. David J. Rodriguez
5. Sandra Fujiyama
6. Jade P. Rojas-Letisi
7. Dennis Lin
8. Nalani Brun
9. Lauren Zirbel
10. Roseann Freitas
11. Monty Pereira
12. Sue Kanoho
13. Wendy Laros
14. Jimmy Chan
15. Sherry Menor-McNamara
16. Jacob Aki
17. Keali'i Haverly

Members voted against:

None.

The motion passed with a majority

Agenda Item 3: Discussion and Voting of the Final Task Force Report to be Submitted to the Legislature.

Time lapse: 2:10 p.m. – 2:24 p.m.

Dr. Seth Colby opened the discussion regarding voting for the final Task Force report to be submitted to the legislature. The group discussed the final report, which included additional details and appendices such as legislative proposals and PIG reports. Wendy Laros inquired about the timeline of the bill's funding, which covers only fiscal years 2026-2027. Director James Tokioka added that the legislature would make their own decisions and emphasized the importance of the report's deliverables. Dr. Colby confirmed that John Cole, Deputy Attorney General, provided context on the biennial budget process and suggested that continued funding would likely be requested through the department.

Dr. Colby called for a motion to approve final Task Force report to be submitted to the legislature. Wendy Laros proposed a motion to final Task Force report to be submitted to the legislature and Jacob Aki seconded.

Members voted in favor:

1. James Kunane Tokioka
2. Dean I. Hazama
3. Kristen Sakamoto
4. David J. Rodriguez
5. Sandra Fujiyama
6. Jade P. Rojas-Letisi
7. Dennis Lin
8. Nalani Brun
9. Lauren Zirbel
10. Roseann Freitas
11. Monty Pereira
12. Sue Kanoho
13. Wendy Laros
14. Jimmy Chan
15. Sherry Menor-McNamara
16. Jacob Aki
17. Keali'i Haverly

Members voted against:

None.

The motion passed with a majority

NEXT SETPS

1. The DBEDT/READ team to distribute the final Task Force Report with all members e-sign.
2. The DBEDT/READ team to distribute the signed version of the final report with all members.
3. The DBEDT/READ team to submit the signed final Task Force report to the legislature before 2026 session as required by the bill.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.