



Proclamation *Presented*

In Recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month

WHEREAS, National Disability Employment Awareness Month's roots go back to 1945 when the United States Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week"; in 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities; in 1988, the United States Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month"; and in 2012 the U.S. Department of Labor has selected the theme "A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?" in an effort to raise awareness about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, National Disability Employment Awareness Month is celebrated by the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) within the U.S. Department of Labor; and recognizes people with disabilities as untapped resources, capable employees and valued customers; and

WHEREAS, the State of Hawai'i is committed to reducing the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities and works with business partnerships to ensure inclusive workplace policies and practices that create environments that encourage all workers – including those with disabilities – to reach their full potential and contribute fully to the organization's success; and

WHEREAS, National Disability Employment Awareness Month reminds us that hundreds of Hawai'i's people with disabilities are successfully placed in high quality competitive employment each year; that in FY 2011 the average annual earnings per rehabilitated individual increased over 500% to \$18,193.79; and

WHEREAS, National Disability Employment Awareness Month recognizes that the economic benefits of employing people with disabilities include increased earnings and purchasing power, increased taxes paid, and a decreased dependency on public assistance;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, NEIL ABERCROMBIE, Governor, and I, BRIAN SCHATZ, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim October 2012 as

"DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH"

in Hawai'i and urge people of the Aloha State to join us in commending Hawai'i businesses that employ persons with disabilities and include them in building an effective workforce that removes barriers to work for persons with disabilities.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this fourteenth day of September, 2012.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor, State of Hawai'i

BRIAN SCHATZ
Lt. Governor, State of Hawai'i