



The Senate Ka 'Aha Kenekoa

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Hawai'i State Senate Advise and Consent Process

Background. The Senate is responsible for confirming individuals appointed by the Governor to serve as directors or, in some cases, deputy directors to executive agency departments and members of state boards and commissions. Article V, Section 6, of the Hawai'i State Constitution requires the Governor to obtain the "advice and consent" of the Senate for the appointment of these individuals.

The Senate Rules require public hearings on all appointments prior to a confirmation vote by the full Senate. Once the Governor's appointments are received by the Senate, the Senate President refers them to the appropriate Senate standing committee for a public hearing. At the hearing, the committee will receive and review testimony, consider the nominee's qualifications, and come to a decision to either recommend or not recommend the nominee's appointment for confirmation by the full Senate.

Unlike bills and resolutions, which can be held and die in committee, all Governor's appointments must be voted on in committee and sent to the full Senate for a final vote before the end of the session.

The Senate Clerk's office identifies each Governor's appointment as a Governor's Message or GM and assigns it a number, e.g., GM 501, making it easier to track and follow as it moves through the legislative process. The Legislature's website has a wealth of information about all of the measures being considered during the session, including these GMs. You can find information on every GM received by the Senate, including its current status, hearings scheduled, and votes taken in committee and by the full Senate. Click on the Advise and Consent tab on the [Reports and Lists page](#) of the Capitol website to see a list of all appointments made by the Governor this session.

How can I participate? When a committee schedules a confirmation hearing, a public notice will be issued indicating the date, time, and location of the meeting. The committee will take testimony from the public, give the nominee an opportunity to make a statement, and ask the nominee questions. All confirmation hearings are open to the public and there are a number of ways for citizens to participate in this process:

- You can attend the hearing at the State Capitol.
- You may also view the hearing online – all Senate hearings are livestreamed and videos are archived on the Senate's [YouTube channel](#).

- If you are interested in expressing your opinion in support of, opposition to, or have comments on any appointment, you can submit written testimony to the committee. Your written testimony will be included in the public record online and archived permanently at the Hawai'i State Archives. You may also attend the hearing and testify in person or remotely via Zoom.

Submitting testimony. Your testimony may simply be a statement of your position (in support or in opposition) and can include information that you would like to share with the committee relevant to the appointment. If you plan to submit testimony to the committee for the hearing, the following information may be helpful to you:

- Once the committee files a notice that a public hearing will be held, you can submit your testimony. You may find more information about the Senate's testimony policy and procedures [here](#).
- One of the ways to submit testimony is through the Legislature's website. A testimony submittal tool is available to quickly indicate your support or opposition and submit any comments in the online form. You will need to create an [online account](#), but the process is simple and takes only a few minutes, and registration will allow you to submit testimony more easily in the future and access other online tools. Once you register, you can also subscribe to receive email notifications when a hearing is scheduled on any bill, resolution, or nomination (GM) and create customized lists to keep track of legislation you are interested in.
- If you are unable to submit your testimony via the website, please contact the appropriate Senate [committee](#) for assistance.
- Written testimony should be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the hearing. **All testimony received by the committee will be posted online on the Legislature's website and available to the public before the start of the hearing. Please do not include any personal and private information in your testimony that you do not want disclosed online.**
- In addition to submitting written testimony, you can attend the hearing and present your testimony in person. Parking in and around the State Capitol is very limited, so please plan ahead to be sure that you can be at the hearing on time. Let the committee staff know that you are present and listen for your name to be called. Government officials are usually called upon to testify first, followed by organizations and members of the public.

At the end of the hearing, the committee may make a decision to advise and consent to the appointment (support confirmation), reject the appointment, or defer making a decision until a later date.