



GOV. MSG. NO. 362

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR

February 5, 2008

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Sirs and Mesdames:

In accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 6, of the Hawai'i State Constitution, I have the honor to submit herewith for your consideration and confirmation, the following nomination to the **Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs**:

Sandra S. Rongitsch

Term to Expire: 6/30/2012

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Lingle".

LINDA LINGLE

8 FEB -2 6 3 2008

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
HONOLULU, HAWAII

March 13, 2008

Senator David Y. Ige  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health  
415 S. Beretania Street Rm. 215  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Ige: **RE: Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (GM #362)**

Chair Ige and members of the Senate Committee on Health, thank you for this opportunity to present background information about myself as you deliberate my confirmation to Executive Office on Aging (EOA), Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA). I regret that I am not able to attend the hearing in person and ask that you consider the following:

I was born and raised on Oahu in 1942, obtained my masters degree in social work at the University of Hawaii, Manoa in 1983 and moved to Maui in 1993. I can assure you that there will be no potential conflict of interest regarding my service on PABEA.

I have 25 years experience as a social worker, including 15 years in the field of aging, serving clients in institutional, residential and home-based community settings. I am eager to contribute my thoughts and knowledge about the needs of older adults gleaned through the years working as a Public Guardian, Long Term Care Ombudsman, Adult Protective Services investigator, and presently, Medical Social Worker in Hale Makua's Home Health and Foster Family Programs.

I have actively advocated for elders and caregivers as a member of the Maui County Council on Aging, the Long Term Care Partnership, the Case Management Interdisciplinary Team, and more recently, the Hawaii Family's Caregiver Coalition.

Aging in Hawaii is a blessing but with long life comes an array of complex issues that can only be addressed by shared responsibilities of families, service agencies, and the legislature. The Executive Office on Aging is in a key position to plan, coordinate and advocate for older adults, wanting to 'age in place' at home. As a PABEA member, I will be able to use my experience and knowledge to help identify and recommend strategies to enrich the quality of life for older adults and caregivers. I will also commit my efforts to working collaboratively with the other board members, the staff and director of the EOA on behalf of Hawaii's elders and their caregivers. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Sandra Rongitsch, Medical Social Worker

(Attachment: Resume and three letters of recommendation)

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



NOEMI PENDLETON  
DIRECTOR

CHIYOME L. FUKINO, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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### Committee on Health

## GM 362 Gubernatorial Nominee for Policy Advisory Board for Elderly Affairs

### Testimony of Noemi Pendleton Director of Executive Office on Aging Attached Agency to Department of Health

Monday, March 31, 2008

1:15 P.M.

**Department's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA) is writing in strong support for the confirmation of Ms. Sandra S. Rongitsch's appointment to the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA).

**Fiscal Implications:** None.

**Purpose and Justification:** Ms. Rongitsch, an older adult consumer, has been a member of the PABEA since July 1, 2004 and an active participant in the PABEA Legislative Committee. She has over 20 years of experience as a licensed social worker, including 15 years of experience working with elderly clients in institutional, residential, and home-based settings; she is currently employed as a medical social worker at Hale Makua Home Health and Foster Family Programs on the island of Maui. Ms. Rongitsch exhibits a deep understanding of the challenges that an increasing elderly population poses and is an active advocate for elders and caregivers as a member of the Maui County Council on Aging, Long Term Care Partnership, the Case Management Interdisciplinary Team, and the Hawaii Family's Caregiver Coalition.

We, therefore, ask you to support her reappointment as a member of the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Honorable David Y. Ige  
Chair, Senate Health Committee  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 215  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 15, 2008

Subject: Nomination of Sandra Rongitsch for Executive Office on Aging's Policy  
Advisory Board for Elder Affairs

Dear Senator Ige and Members of the Senate Health Committee:

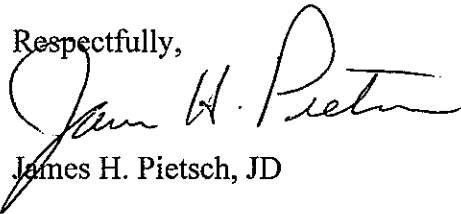
I am very pleased to submit a recommendation on behalf of Sandra Rongitsch who has been nominated for a second term as a member of the Executive Office on Aging's (EOA) Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA). If confirmed her term of appointment would end in June 2012.

I have known Ms. Rongitsch for over two decades and I know her to be an individual of the highest professional, ethical and moral standards. My first experience working with her was when I was the supervising attorney for the elder law unit at the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii and she was already identified as an important figure in the community for her work with the elderly and disabled. Not only was she very helpful to me in assisting my elderly clients but she was most supportive of initiatives to help make the lives of our Kupuna better.

Over the ensuing years, Ms. Rongitsch has gained even more experience in the field of aging and she continues to have my confidence and respect to this day. She is the perfect person to be on PABEA, which was created to advise the Director of the EOA on views of older consumers, service providers and others in the field of aging. Re-appointing her would ensure stability on the advisory board and would serve to demonstrate the importance of having experienced and dedicated advisors from the neighbor islands, and especially from Maui, which is experiencing a tremendous increase in issues relating to older persons and their caregivers.

Please let me know if I may provide you with any further information about Ms. Rongitsch, a dedicated and articulate advocate for the elderly. I can be reached at 808-956-6785 or at the address below.

Respectfully,



James H. Pietsch, JD

Professor of Law, Adjunct Professor of Geriatric Medicine  
Director, University of Hawaii Elder Law Program  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
215 Dole Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

# Hale Makua

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1520 East Main Street,  
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February 27, 2008

David Y. Ige, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 215  
415 So. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator and Members of the Senate Committee on Health:

I am submitting this letter, supporting the confirmation of Sandra S. Rongitsch to the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA).

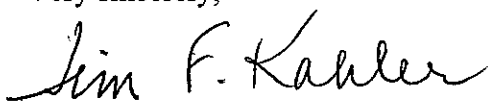
I have known Ms. Rongitsch for almost five years and have had the pleasure of supervising her in the capacity of Home Health and Foster Family Medical Social Worker. Her daily contact with elders, their families and members of the aging network on Maui can only be described as warm, professional and committed to helping elders age-in-place.

As a professional who has direct contact with elders and their care givers, she is very aware of their needs as well as how to use community resources creatively to meet their often complex psychosocial and long term care problems.

As an advocate for elders, she participated in PABEA sponsored community forums on Maui to identify concerns and issues of older adults and family caregivers for the Legislature's Kupuna Caucus. She has been involved in Maui's Long Term Care Partnership that focuses on fostering and improving long term care and supportive service systems to meet the current and future needs of Maui's older adults. Finally, Ms. Rongitsch is presently active in Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition and supports the Executive on Aging's efforts to define and expand caregiver services statewide.

In short, I believe that Ms. Rongitsch would be an asset in bringing to PABEA her talents as a team player in accomplishing goals and tasks and her extensive knowledge of elder issues.

Very sincerely,




Jim Kahler, Director  
Home Health Care and Foster Family Programs

*Excellence in Healthcare in Our Home and Yours.*

February 28, 2008

TO: Senator David Ige, Chair  
And members of the Senate Health Committee

FROM: Debbie Shimizu, LSW   
National Association of Social Workers, Hawai'i Chapter

RE: GM 362 Sandra Rongitsch's Confirmation to EOA's Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs  
**STRONG SUPPORT**

Chair Ige and members of the Senate Health Committee, I am Debbie Shimizu, Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers, Hawai'i Chapter. I am testifying **in strong support of GM 362 Confirming Sandra Rongitsch to the EOA's Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs.**

Ms. Rongitsch has been a member of the National Association of Social Workers, Hawai'i Chapter since 1995. She has worked as a social worker in the field of aging for 15 years assisting the elderly in institutional, residential and community home-based settings and is well qualified to be a member of the Executive Office on Aging Policy Advisory Board.

Ms. Rongitsch has been a strong advocate for the elderly. She has been working with NASW to make changes to the statute to better protect our elders. Ms. Rongitsch has consistently provided information and testimony at each hearing and has been a valuable asset to our advocacy efforts on aging issues. I am confident that she will make a positive contribution to EOA's Policy Advisory Board.

I am in strong support of her nomination and urge your confirmation of her nomination to the EOA's Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.