

**Presentation Before the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental and
Military Affairs**

February 27, 2008

**Luis A. Parker, MSgt. USAF (Ret)
Governor's Message (GM) number 398**

State Advisory Board on Veterans' Services

Chair Lorraine Inouye, members of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental and Military Affairs (IGM), mahalo for this opportunity to share with you some of my background for your consideration of my confirmation to the State Advisory Board on Veterans' Services.

I was born in Pensacola, Florida and grew up there and for a short time in San Antonio, Texas. Both of my parents served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. My father was a Pearl Harbor Survivor. I graduated from Pensacola High School and later from the University of West Florida with a Bachelor of Arts degree

Almost straight from high school I joined the Marines and served two combat tours of duty in Vietnam as a company radio operator and as a Combined Action Platoon Team Leader. In 1971 the Air Force called and I reenlisted with a career path in the medical field.

My outlook on services for our veteran population has the advantage of those two very different backgrounds. As a combat wounded veteran I realize what bureaucratic obstacles our veterans face today because I face them myself. But I know that problems can be solved if the right people have the right attitude and tools necessary to do the right thing.

We have both the duty and the privilege to work on behalf of our veterans and to be proactive in our vision for their future and that of their families. We have many challenging issues ahead of us, access to healthcare, educational opportunities, employment, counseling services, and the list can go on and on.

I welcome the opportunity to work with the other board members and in working through and with the Office of Veterans Services and other agencies to find solutions for the challenges that lie ahead for us, and the veterans we serve.

I respectfully request your support in my nomination to the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services. Mahalo nui loa.

Aloha Pumehana.

Luis Alejandro Parker, B.A.
USMC/USAF (Ret)

Education/Military & Civilian: Graduate of the *University of West Florida* at Pensacola with a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Humanities. I was also a writer and photographer for UWF's student newspaper "*The Voyager*." I've completed correspondence and residential courses at both the USAF SAC NCO Academy at March AFB, CA. and at the Systems Command *Senior NCO Academy*, at Kirkland AFB, NM. Completed AF requirements for an associates degree in Pharmacy Technology.

Work Experience:

1988-1989, Citi-Bank – Check processing.

1989-1991; Radiology Dept., US Naval Hospital Pensacola

1991-92 – Veterans Affairs PTSD Research Lab - Medical Administration

1992-1998, Kaiser Permanente Diagnostic Imaging Dept. Job title: Diagnostic Imaging Records & Administration Supervisor.

Military Service:

1966-1969, U.S. Marine Corps – Vietnam, two tours.

1971–1988, US Air Force, MSgt, (Ret)

1981-1986. Health Professions Recruiter, Los Angeles area Earned top medical recruiting awards for both FY83 & FY85.

Awards/Decorations: Purple Heart, AF Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnam Service Ribbon & Campaign Medal, Civic Action Ribbon, Presidential Unit Citation, AF Outstanding Unit Citation, USMC & USAF Good Conduct and others.

Community Service: I served as a Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Unit Commissioner, and District Commissioner and the *District Award of Merit* in 1983. I am also an Ordeal member of the Order of the Arrow.

I am the founder and current president of the Vietnam Veterans of America Oahu Chapter 858. We are a registered 501 (3c) Not-For-Profit veteran organization. We have about a hundred members and associate members, a core of whom attend our monthly meetings.

Members of my community supported me on the *Ewa by Gentry Community Association Board* in 2006 and I will serve again this year.

Hobbies/Interest: Besides home projects, I enjoy swimming, reading, and golf.

Vietnam Veterans of America
Oahu Chapter 858
"Kako'o Mau"

FEB 19 2008

February 14, 2008

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye
Chair, Senate Committee on Intergovernmental
And Military Affairs

Cc: Senators Shan S. Tsutsui and Fred Hemmings

Re: Requested Information

Dear Senator Lorraine R. Inouye:

Thank you for the congratulations concerning my nomination to this important team. I was very honored when a respected friend asked me to consider applying for a seat on the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services. The idea grew and after some investigation and consulting with my wife, we decided to open the door further. I am truly humbled to have the support of so many friends and that my candidacy was taken seriously. What follows is the information you requested:

a) Why do you wish to be a member of the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services?

I wish to be a member of this board because of the access it affords me to issues affecting veterans. As a person in a leadership position in a veterans' organization, accurate information relevant to our members is obviously very important to me. I'm sure you will agree that it is imperative for anyone in a leadership role to have access to accurate information, only then can we accomplish the work that we are privileged to do. But good, reliable, and honest information comes only from being associated with organizations whose core values are based on justice, integrity, and meaningful purpose, don't you agree?

b) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services?

I believe the board has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that services and access to services continue to meet the needs of our veterans. Their duty is to ensure that the state's resources are being utilized wisely and to ask the hard questions. We also need to take care of our veterans once they pass on by providing top-quality cemeteries with enough resources to maintain them at the highest possible standard. The board works on behalf of the citizens of this state and the governor. Members of the board should be a

non-partisan group whose work focuses on what is in the best interest of our veterans and their families, period.

One of our purposes in the VVA is to study, on a non-partisan basis, proposed legislation, rules, or regulations introduced in any federal, state, or local legislative or administrative body which may affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others; and to develop public-policy proposals designed to improve the quality of life of the Vietnam-era veteran and others especially in the areas of employment, education, training, and health. In a sense we are both plugged into the same outlet already.

c) Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services.

Decision-making processes should always begin with the end in mind. Whenever an issue is in discussion, I like to negotiate on solutions with win-win outcomes so we can do the right thing. It is crucial that whenever possible, we base our vote on what outcomes we can all live with. We can then sleep at night knowing that the facts and all the outcomes were taken into consideration when we voted for or against something.

My career as a supervisory while on active duty and later at Kaiser Permanente, have given me some level of exposure to working with groups of people with different ideas and backgrounds. Ditto for my past experience as a District Commissioner and now as president of a veterans' group. Every situation presents new challenges and opportunities. Mostly I've come to appreciate the importance of good communication, the value of setting boundaries and the utility and effectiveness of working as a team.

d) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

Besides fixing our cemetery problems, I have this dream that our veterans who were the most in need and lived the farthest from town had close by user-friendly access to healthcare and other services.

I hope that someday we can present a plan for a comprehensive health center for veterans and military retirees on the Leeward coast. A complex of structures with plenty parking would house the following:

- 1) A Leeward Vet Center: Office space for two counselors and a receptionist. A DVOP position would be there on a rotating basis with the Honolulu Vet Center and the eventual realization of a Windward complex. Veterans Service Officers could also use this office.
- 2) A prescription & refill pharmacy from Tripler AMC. Military retirees and qualifying family members who live in the area could pick up their prescriptions and refills at the new outlet. This would be dispensary only, no inpatient or emergency services. St. Francis West would be the closest acute care medical facility.

3) A branch of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). Veterans would be able to take advantage of the many helpful services offered at the new OVS branch office. No longer would they have to drive all the way into town and negotiate town traffic or engage in long commutes.

4) A long-term care facility for veterans who are too often turned aside by other medical institutions for whatever reason. Sometimes its because they have the wrong health insurance or not enough of the right coverage, or maybe they are in mitigation with their HMO about coverage, and the list goes on and on. A VA lead long-term care facility in Leeward Oahu would speak volumes about how we take care of our veterans who have great needs. It would also house a physical therapy unit.

6) A comprehensive outpatient VA Clinic as well as an office for a benefits advisor, perhaps on an appointment or rotating basis but a full-time position would be ideal.

The new "Veterans' Health Complex," a joint venture of the State of Hawaii and the Department of Defense, could be located near or on the site of the former NAS Barbers Point Clinic at Kalaeloa. The DLNR probably already owns the property.

These strategically located complexes neighbored with community centers, would serve as a hub for our veterans who live in areas like, Leeward, Windward, and Central Oahu. A Hawaii State Veterans' Health Complex would be a model for other states interested in reaching out to rural area veterans. Imagine a one-stop shopping type of area with public transportation access and plenty parking. What a great benefit for military retirees and their families as well as all veterans living on the Leeward coast and in Central Oahu.

Workers at the Veterans' Health Complex" would be pooled from the Leeward community thereby creating jobs much closer to home and reducing long commutes to town or to Tripler. The Leeward area is still affordable for most active duty and retired military. It just makes good sense to have a place where Central and Leeward area veterans can get most all of their healthcare needs met minus the obvious challenges of coming into town and then with multiple destinations because services are so dispersed.

e) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services?

I respect people I meet. I believe in balance and moderation in all things. I believe that every veteran and indeed everyone, has a story and a purpose.

I try to treat everyone I meet with respect and I base any opinions of them personally by their actions rather than their words. I believe most people, regardless of their station in life, are basically good inside. There's always a place on the team for someone who wants to be part of a team. Sometimes it's just a matter of finding the right player for the right position. I believe past behavior is one of the best indicators of future behavior, don't you?

I believe in balance, in listening to all parties and in seeking win-win outcomes. I think a team member with this philosophy of problem solving would be of great value.

I have a strong spiritual sense that things happen for a reason. I don't question my faith or beliefs because of a road not taken. I believe we are where we are because that is where we are supposed to be. This attitude brings me calmness and helps me keep a level head when there may be chaos all around me, a trait that should prove to be of value as a board member. I'm also pragmatic and I believe that luck is the result of chance, while success is the product of intention.

f) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services?

In 2000 I wondered why there was no Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter in our state. After much counseling with my wife and a few Vietnam veterans I knew, we started holding meetings at the old Colombia Inn on Kapiolani Blvd. I had a strong focus at that time and relied on some basic administrative and organizational skills and with the help of some new friends our vision came to past. My ability to stay on track and see things through may be of some value hopefully.

g) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Advisory Board on Veterans' Services? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

In the three meetings I've attended thus far I've not reviewed any subject that would present a conflict of interest to me personally. Honor is a precious thing to have and I would reclude myself or resign at the mere suggestion of anything that may be perceived as a conflict of interest on my part.

I sincerely hope that my responses pass muster. I've already notified your office of my availability to meet you personally and at your convenience if necessary. If there are any further questions please let me know. I was deeply honored when a friend suggested that I apply for a position on this board. We now have our work to do and I pray that our mutual toil is to noble ends. Mahalo for investing your time to read this. I look forward to our paths crossing soon. Malama pono.

Aloha Pumehana,

Luis A. Parker, USMC/USAF (Ret)
VVA Oahu Chapter 858, President

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY
RELATING TO THE CONFIRMATION OF
GM 398, LUIS ALEJANDRO PARKER FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6/30/2008
AND
GM 399, LUIS ALEJANDRO PARKER FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6/30/2012
TO THE ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS SERVICES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 27, 2008

BY

OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

Good afternoon, Chair Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair Shan Tsutsui and members of the Committee.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). OVS strongly supports confirmation of Luis Alejandro Parker to complete the term of expiration on June 30, 2008 and to support his reappointment for another term to expire on June 30, 2012.

In the short time that Mr. Luis Alejandro Parker has served as the new Oahu representative to the Advisory Board on Veterans Services, he has created a whirlwind of action in providing information to the Board concerning veterans' activities as an advocate to veterans.

Mr. Parker's service in the Marine where he sustained combat wounds and received a Purple Heart for action in Vietnam, as well as other medals, and his service in the U.S Air Force where he returned as a senior non-commissioned

officer, has earned him the respect of fellow veterans. He shares the experience that veterans' have when seeking benefits for injuries from VA.

Additionally, as an educator in his past career, and a retired Pharmacy Superintendent at Castle Hospital in Arizona, he brings a wealth of knowledge to the Board.

Mr. Parker is the President of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 858. He is a continuous advocate for the Vietnam Veterans and is aware of the issues that involve veterans.

I am sure with his experience; background and knowledge will truly benefit the Advisory Board on Veterans Services and all the veterans in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony.



Ewa by Gentry

FEB 25 2008

February 22, 2008

To: Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Inter-government and Military Affairs Committee (IGM)
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 201
415 Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI. 96813

From: Susan E. York, President
Ewa by Gentry Community Association

Re: Luis Parker, candidate for the State's Advisory Board on Veterans' Service

Date: February 20, 2008

Dear Senator Inouye,

I write in support of the appointment of Luis Parker to the State's Advisory Board on Veterans' Service. Mr. Parker served on the Board of Directors for the Ewa by Gentry Community Association (EbGCA) for a year, prior to his accepting a leadership position with the Vietnam Veterans Association. While we were sad to lose him on our Board, we fully supported his need to focus on the needs of veterans.

Members of the EbGCA Board of Directors serve on a voluntary basis in the capacity of fiduciary managers for a planned community of over 6800 homes. Mr. Parker chaired the Property/Contracts committee and was responsible for primary oversight of one of the largest landscaping contracts awarded in Hawai'i. As the second largest planned community in the State of Hawai'i, Ewa by Gentry encompasses 1283 acres of land, requiring a landscaping budget of \$480,000. Our total operating budget of \$2,300,430 (in 2007), is funded through homeowner dues, therefore the Board's duties and responsibilities are significant—and our constituents are our neighbors!

The nine-member Board is comprised of homeowners and developer representatives with diverse educational, professional, and ethnic experiences, so we do not always agree on a course of action. I could rely on Mr. Parker's integrity, patience, and good humor to help resolve differences while keeping the best interest of the community uppermost in the problem-solving process. He was often the calm voice of reason in heated debate, and offered practical and respectful solutions.

I respectfully submit that Mr. Parker's leadership experience and his passion for veteran's issues make him the ideal candidate for the State's Advisory Board on Veterans' Service.

Ewa By Gentry Community Association

91-1795 A Keaunui Drive • Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706 • Tel: (808) 685-0111 • Fax: (808) 685-0114

Fred P. Staedel, MBA, ThD (ABD)
P.O. Box 26441
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

February 20, 2008

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye
Chair, Senate Committee on Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 201
Honolulu, Hawaii

Dear Senator Inouye,

Please accept this letter of recommendation in support of Mr. Luis A. Parker who is currently being considered for an appointment to the Advisory Board on Veterans Services.

I know Luis Parker through his capacity as founder and president of the Oahu Chapter 858 of the Vietnam Veterans of America. He has realized many achievements in his life, which his biography documents, but in my mind his most important achievement is his taking the initiative to bring a chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America to Hawaii. This has made a tremendous difference in the morale and services to Vietnam Veterans on Oahu. I personally have greatly benefited from the comradeship that the local chapter has afforded me. His leadership as our chapter president has perpetuated the chapter to the point that its establishment is firm, its mission is in place, and its service to Vietnam Veterans and the community is well entrenched. In short, if there were no Luis A. Parker, there would be no Oahu Vietnam Veterans of America.

Luis is a veteran who is totally dedicated to veterans. Luis is a Vietnam veteran who is intimately aware and empathetic to the needs of veterans. Luis' service in both the Marine Corps and the Air Force gives him a unique spectrum on the needs of veterans from all services. I consider Luis an invaluable resource when it comes to veteran's affairs and their needed services in the state of Hawaii. With all appropriate respect, to not have Luis on the Advisory Board on Veterans Services would be a great loss to the board and the veterans of Hawaii.

In order to fully substantiate my support for Luis, it may be helpful to further identify who I am. I am currently on the faculty of the University of Phoenix, Hawaii Campus, and have been since the campus opening in 1993. I am also currently serving as the Area Chair for General Studies. I teach business management courses both on the undergraduate and graduate level along with courses in communication, critical thinking, and ethics. I served in the Air Force for five years attaining the rank of captain and served as the base civil engineer at Monkey Mountain Air Force Station outside of DaNang, Vietnam (1967-68). I may be contacted at (808) 394-1964 for further input.

Respectfully submitted, (signed) Fred P. Staedel

inouye2 - Maigee

From: Chuong_Nguyen/MCKINLEY/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2008 11:09 AM
To: Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye
Subject: Advisory Board on Veterans Services

Dear Senator Inouye

(Re GM 398)

This is to express my support for Loui Parker, who is appointed by Governor Linda Lingle to the Advisory Board on Veterans Services.

I have known Mr. Parker unofficially for about 10 years and during the last 5 years I as a member of Chapter 858 (Associate Vietnam Veterans of America - VVA) have officially worked with him in chapter business and veterans activities. These activities have included Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, and World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and Gulf War anniversaries at the National Cemetery of the Pacific on Punchbowl and at the State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe. Other business includes regular monthly meeting at the Oahu Veterans Center on Kukila Street in Salt Lake, the cleaning of the Vietnam and Korean memorials, and the annual Fourth of July parade in Kailua.

Mr. Parker has voluntarily involved himself with many of the Vietnamese American veterans under Free Vietnam Organization in Hawaii. He annually attended our commemoration for the fall of Vietnam and Indochina and our year-end community gathering, which is annually organized by Free Vietnam veterans. It is a two way street showing his external cooperation with associate members of Chapter 858 of the VVA. Having served in Vietnam during the war (in 1968), he understands our culture and provides a comfortable bridge for chapter members communication. Mr. Parker also speaks a smattering of Vietnamese.

Personally, Loui Parker is a soft spoken, friendly person and a devoted veteran who is willing to do anything that would help meet the needs of other veterans.

Being the Chapter 858's "point of contact", he efficiently facilitates chapter business and displays good administrative as well as planning experience. With such experience, Loui, if approved by your committee, can be an asset to the Advisory Board on Veterans Services.

2/21/2008

Senator Inouye, on behalf of Free Vietnam veterans, I do support Gov. Lingle's appointment of Loui Parker to the Advisory Board on Veterans Services, without reservations. We recommend your approval.

Thank you very much.

Chuong Nguyen
DOE Teacher
HPU Associate professor

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 15, 2008

To: Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair,
Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 201
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

From: Rona F. Adams,
Past President, Vietnam Veterans of
America, Chapter 858, Oahu, Hawaii
134-4 Noke Street
Kailua, HI 96734
Tel: (808)254-6231
Email: ronaadams@hawaii.rr.com

Subject: Letter of Reference for Luis Parker ..
GM 398

I have known and worked with Luis Parker since May 2003. During my tenure as President of the VVA, Chapter 858, we worked very closely dealing with issues related to the growth and goals of the Chapter along with the needs of the Vietnam Veteran. He taught me the meaning of truly belonging and Vietnam Veteran pride....we represent a group of awesome men and women. He also taught me what I needed to know and understand to serve as the leader of our Chapter here on Oahu.

Since my position of President ended, Lu and I have worked closely to insure the dissemination of information important to our Veterans.

Luis Parker is a skilled critical thinker, an experienced problem solver and possesses a talent for being visionary. He is a respected member of leadership by all that have worked with him, his friends and other veterans. He has a good working relationship with the leaders of other Veterans Organizations. He possesses a wealth of experience, knowledge, and strong leadership skills.

I endorse him as a candidate for a seat on the State Advisory Board on Veterans' Services without hesitation.

Respectfully Yours

Rona F. Adams

Rona F. Adams

CC: Shan S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair

E-mail: sentsutsui@capitol.hawaii.gov

Fred Hemmings

E-mail: senhemmings@capitol.hawaii.gov

Luis Parker

E-Mail: vvaoahu@yahoo.com

inouye2 - Maigee

From: igawae [igawae001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2008 7:22 PM
To: Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye; Sen. Shan Tsutsui
Subject: State Advisory Board on Veterans' Affair-Luis Parker

I heartily support the nomination of Luis Parker to the "Advisory Board on Veterans' Affair", I'm a member of VVA chapter858.

Sincerely,
Earl Igawa



Vietnam Veterans of America

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A Not-For-Profit Veterans Service Organization Chartered by the United States Congress

February 27, 2008

LATE

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye
Chair, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 201
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Inouye,

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is pleased to endorse Luis A. Parker as a member of the Advisory Board of Veterans Services in your fine state.

Mr. Parker, a founding member and current president of VVA's Oahu Chapter #858, is a veteran of both the Marine Corps and the Air Force. He served two WestPac tours of duty in Vietnam, Okinawa, and Japan. His was a radio operator in an infantry company from 1967-1968, then served as a team leader with Popular Forces units, part of the Marine Corps' successful Civic Action Program, until the Spring of 1969. His awards include the Purple Heart, a Navy Presidential Unit Citation, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Marine Corps Good Conduct Ribbon, and the National Defense Ribbon.

Having joined the Air Force in 1971, he received training in healthcare and emergency medicine while specializing in hospital pharmacy. In 1981 he was selected to be a medical recruiter. In five years recruiting for the Air Force's Health Professions Scholarship Program in Los Angeles, he was the top recruiter for the 3569th Recruiting Squadron twice. When he left the Air Force, he had risen to the rank of master sergeant.

In 1991, Lu and his wife Kiu live in Ewa Beach and will be celebrating their 21st anniversary this year.

We believe that Luis Parker will be a significant addition to your advisory board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Rowan".

John Rowan
National President