

testimony

From: spohn [juneau2@earthlink.net]

Sent: Sunday, April 06, 2008 7:44 PM

To: testimony

Subject: April 9, 2008, 2:00 P.M. Testimony for Senate Education Committee (in favor of the confirmation of Artemio Baxa to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents)

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda and Committee members:

My name is Kurt Spohn. I am a former deputy attorney general for the State of Hawai'i, a former deputy prosecuting attorney for the County of Hawai'i, and a former deputy prosecuting attorney for the County of Maui. I was a public servant in state and county government for a total of 19 years, and an attorney in the State of Hawai'i for 20 years. I am a graduate of Yale University and the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College.

I testify today in favor of the appointment of Artemio Baxa to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. For the reasons I state below, I believe Mr. Baxa will be a very valuable addition to the board whose unique background will perhaps provide the board with insights that few other persons in the State of Hawai'i could provide.

I currently have no professional relationship with Mr. Baxa. The last time that we worked for the same legal office was in 1989, but we have remained friends for 21 years, and I have followed his legal career for all of those 21 years, including the years he served the people of Hawaii as a Circuit Court judge. Because I worked closely with Mr. Baxa at the beginning of my legal career, I am very familiar with his work ethic and with his uncompromising devotion to absolute honesty and with his exceptional integrity.

I first met Mr. Baxa in 1987 when, as a deputy prosecuting attorney for the County of Maui, we shared an office. We were both assigned to the felony screening section of the office at that time. In addition to screening cases sent to the prosecutor's office by the Maui Police Department, we worked closely with police detectives at the early stages of criminal investigations. We often worked very long and late hours, drafting search warrants, drafting warrants of arrest, discussing pending investigations with detectives, and deciding criminal charges and drafting the criminal complaints that would bring dangerous criminals to justice as quickly as possible and assure that there would be no additional victims due to delays in the criminal justice process.

We each personally represented the State of Hawai'i in preliminary hearings that had to take place within 48 hours to prevent the release of dangerous criminals into the community. We also represented the State of Hawai'i before grand juries in order to seek indictments against dangerous felons. Often we did not leave the office until after midnight on days when we arrived for work before 7:00 A.M.

I discuss my familiarity with the long hours Mr. Baxa's worked when we were both deputy prosecuting attorneys so that every member of this committee will understand that when Mr. Baxa is given responsibility to perform a job, he makes sure the job is done, and done well, no matter how many hours he must work to assure that his responsibilities are discharged with near perfection.

Many people have an interest in education, but very few people have demonstrated the determination to overcome the very difficult obstacles that Mr. Baxa was required to overcome in order to obtain the high level of education that he was able to obtain. There are very few people who would have the tenacity and determination to complete an education in one country, only to be told that much of the education would have to be repeated in their new country before they could continue their education. Most people, if told that their new country would not recognize the education that they had obtained in their country of origin, would simply have returned to their country of origin rather than repeating years and years worth of education.

Those who know the very impressive story of Mr. Baxa's life know how hard he had to work in order to complete his education in Hawai'i. There are very few people who would consider their education so important that they would be willing to work at jobs that they might consider beneath their dignity. Mr. Baxa is exceptional because he understands that any job is an honorable job if that job is done well. In his case, he was willing to do any job necessary for him to continue his education, and no matter where he was employed and no matter how he was employed, he always performed the job to the best of his considerable ability.

There is no question in my mind that the story of Mr. Baxa's life is an exceptionally inspirational story of a man whose quest for education was so important to him that he was willing to work hard for many years to obtain that education. Each of the jobs he was required to perform was always performed with honor and with excellence.

A member of the Board of Regents must be a leader. The story of Mr. Baxa's life shows that he is a leader of the most inspirational type: A leader who leads by example. Education is hard work, and Mr. Baxa's life is an example of how hard work is rewarded when a person decides in advance, as he did, that he would continue to work toward a goal until the goal was accomplished, no matter how long it took, and no matter how difficult and grueling the work was. Any student who learns the story of his life and emulates Mr. Baxa's quest for an excellent education is certain to succeed in whatever field of study they choose.

I believe Mr. Baxa would be one of the most valuable members of the board if he were to be confirmed. As I discussed above, there are

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probably few other persons within the State of Hawai'i who are more able to understand how difficult the struggle can be for a student who needs to overcome obstacles in order to complete their education. Mr. Baxa will be able to explain these difficulties to the other board members and he will have the unique experience necessary to inspire the board to make sure that every student is given a fair chance to complete their education.

If Hawai'i seeks to educate only those students who have no obstacles to overcome, then Mr. Baxa's unique experience would not be as important. But our system should be one where every student is given the chance to complete their education, and Mr. Baxa's presence as a board member is critically important if the board seeks to create a system where each and every student is given a fair chance to succeed. I know of no other person who could bring Mr. Baxa's life experience of such a difficult struggle to complete his education.

Because of Mr. Baxa's struggle to achieve his educational goals, and because of his humility regarding his impressive achievements, he is uniquely qualified to craft programs that will assure every student is given a fair chance to complete their education, irrespective of their family background. An educational system should be a meritocracy, and it cannot be a meritocracy without at least one board member who, from his own struggle for an education, can craft programs to assure that educational achievement is based more on merit and less on family wealth.

I strongly support the confirmation of Artemio Baxa to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents and I urge each member of this honorable committee to vote in favor of the confirmation of Mr. Baxa.

testimony

From: Richard Minatoya [kauailawyer@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, April 07, 2008 1:16 PM

To: testimony

Subject: Testimony for Senate Committee on Education, Wednesday, April 9, 2008 2:00 p.m.

Richard K. Minatoya, Esq.
P. O. Box 1366
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
RichardK.Minatoya@alumni.usc.edu

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 607
NOMINATION OF HON. ARTEMIO C. BAXA
TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee on Education:

It is with great pleasure that I write in support of the nomination of ARTEMIO C. BAXA to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. I have known Judge Baxa for several years, both as an attorney appearing before him, as a coworker at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Maui, and as a personal friend. I have nothing but the best to say about him. In all instances, I found Judge Baxa to be an intelligent, caring and gracious gentleman who has the utmost integrity. I have no doubt that Judge Baxa will do well as a member of the UH Board of Regents, and I wholeheartedly support his nomination without any reservations.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

RICHARD K. MINATOYA

BENJAMIN M. ACOB
22 Lala Obi'a Place
Wailuku, HI 96793

April 8, 2008

The Honorable Norman Sakamoto
Chair, Committee on Education
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

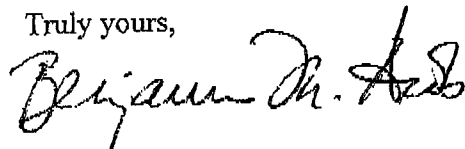
Dear Honorable Chair Sakamoto:

This testimony is in strong support of Retired Judge Artemio C. Baxa to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. He has devoted practically all of his working life in the public sector. It has been an honor and privilege to work alongside Judge Baxa in many of those years in the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney for the County of Maui where I have personally witnessed his qualities that I attest to.

Judge Baxa is a dedicated, hard-working, intelligent, fair, compassionate, and humble man with impeccable integrity. He has exhibited these qualities during his tenure as a deputy prosecuting attorney as well as during his judgeship. I am sure that these qualities will serve him well as a member of the Board and so will serve the community well. He knows the value of education because education contributed much to what he is today. As a true public servant, Judge Baxa is committed to give back to the community by being a member of the Board.

Thank you for your consideration of Judge Baxa to become a member of the board.

Truly yours,



Benjamin M. Acob
Prosecuting Attorney
County of Maui