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Lamakū

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**He Lani Ko Luna,
He Honua Ko Lalo**

*Community-Based
Learning Center*

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi
The Senate
State of Hawai'i
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 19, 2009

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

Re: GM353 Nomination to the Language Access Advisory Council

Thank you for your letter dated February 5, 2009 requesting information to assist the Senate in my confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council. I have formatted my responses according to the questions outlined in your letter.

Why do I wish to be a member of the Language Access Advisory Council? I was first appointed in 2007 and have served as the "one representative of a Hawaiian language advocacy organization" as described in the law for council membership. I have served as the executive director of the non-profit 'Aha Pūnana Leo for nearly 17 years and am currently the director of strategic partnerships and collaborations. Furthermore, the University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Hawaiian Language College, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani, has provided an adjunct professorship in order for me to represent the College as well on the council.

How do I perceive my role and responsibilities as a member of the Council? The 'Aha Pūnana Leo and Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani support removing barriers to services for non-English speakers. Our organization is the local, national and international model for Native language revitalization. The 'APL was established in 1983 to rescue the Hawaiian language (then) on the brink of extinction through the establishment of a statewide system of preschools, which use the Native Hawaiian language exclusively. We provide a culturally appropriate early childhood education system with strong family support and involvement and with strong preschool skills attached to k-12 education statewide immersion education. I believe my role and responsibilities are to advise the executive director of the Office of Language Access and provide input for the implementation and compliance for the Language Access Law and to support quality oral and written language services in providing these services.

I believe my first hand experience in establishing and developing Pūnana Leo can assist the Language Access Advisory Council. As Hawaiian language is also an official language of our state, I can contribute my expertise in this area, as I am a fluent speaker. I have translated for the Office of Language Access and performed an oli for the opening of the Language Access Conference.

I have received invitations to give presentations on the Hawaiian immersion programs from various universities including Harvard University, Teachers College of Greenland, Western Washington University and the University of Minnesota. The 'APL hosts large number of national and international

E O I a K a ' Ō l e l o H a w a i i

visitors to the program from Indian tribes from across the US and Canada in addition to dignitaries from Greenland, Japan, New Zealand and Taiwan. These experiences add a more global appreciation for language diversity of which I can share with the council. I work well with others and serve on the Local School Board for a Hawaiian Immersion Charter School. I have leadership skills and serve as the chairperson for the Native Hawaiian Education Council. I am enthusiastic and very interested in my work and the mission to keep our Hawaiian language alive, thus keeping Hawai'i's culture authentic and vibrant.

I do not foresee any conflicts of interest with my serving on the advisory council.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of my appointment to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nāmaka Rawlins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'N'.

Nāmaka Rawlins

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TO: Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Honorable Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

FROM: Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, Executive Director, Office of Language Access

RE: **Testimony in Support of GM 353 (MAUREEN N. RAWLINS)**

HEARING: Tuesday, March 17, 2009, 9:30 a.m., Room 016

Good morning, Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, and I am the Executive Director with the Office of Language Access (OLA). The OLA strongly supports the confirmation of Maureen N. Rawlins to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Maureen N. Rawlins is a current Council member, who serves as the Director of `Aha Punana Leo, a non-profit organization devoted to the preservation and propagation of Hawaiian language and culture. This is the oldest state-wide native organization in the United States that provides education through the Language Nests and Language Survival School model. As a language advocate, Ms. Rawlins has been actively involved in the promotion and preservation of the Hawaiian language for over 20 years. She is also an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the UH-Hilo Hawaiian Language College.

Based on her experience, Ms. Rawlins' has a strong background to bring to the Council the perspective of a Hawaiian language advocacy organization. For these reasons, the Office of Language Access strongly supports the confirmation of Maureen N. Rawlins to the Language Access Advisory Council for a second term.

Fax: 586-6659

Testimony in Support of GM 353 Maureen N Rawlins
March 15, 2009

To: The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
The Honorable Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations.

Hearing: Tuesday, March 17, 2009, 9:30 am Room 016

From: Tin Myaing Thein, Ph.D. Pacific Gateway Center

Dear Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am sending this testimony in support of the confirmation of Maureen N. Rawlins to the Language Access Advisory Council. I am Tin Myaing Thein, Executive Director of the Pacific Gateway Center.

Maureen Namaka Rawlins is the Director of 'Aha Punana Leo, a non-profit organization devoted to the preservation and perpetuation of Hawaiian language and culture. She is a language advocate and has been involved in the promotion and preservation of the Hawaiian language for several decades. She serves as the Adjunct Assistant Professor at the UH-Hilo Hawaiian Language College. She presently serves on the Language Access Advisory Council.

With her experience, passion and compassion, Namaka will be a definite asset to the Council. We need the perspective of the host culture in the deliberations and discussion of the Language Access Advisory Council. Furthermore, Ms. Rawlins is a person of impeccable integrity, always with humor and in line with what is pono. As an organization providing language interpretation and translation services, Pacific Gateway Center strongly supports the confirmation of Maureen N. Rawlins to the Language Access Advisory Council for her second term. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Aloha,
Tin Myaing Thein