

Testimony before the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations  
April 15, 2009

Anh (Betty) Brow – GM 510  
Language Access Advisory Council

Chair Taniguchi, Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations, thank you for this opportunity to present my background for your consideration of my confirmation to be a member of the Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC).

I am an Executive Vice President, and Head of International Banking for the Bank of Hawaii. My business and team members cover the international clients of the Bank, including foreign visitors, newly-settled immigrants and members of the Asian ethnic communities who may feel more comfortable to communicate in another language than English, or do business with people who understand their cultural needs. Bank of Hawaii's international division is the largest of its kind among the banks in Hawaii. We have five teams that focus on five of the major ethnic communities in Hawaii – Japanese, Korean, Cantonese, Mainland Chinese, and Filipino. We provide brochures and web sites in different languages and my team members are able to assist our clients in 10 different languages and dialects. Our mission is not only to leverage our language capabilities to develop business for the Bank of Hawaii, but also to help attract international visitors to the Islands.

I myself am a native of Vietnam, and have lived, studied, and worked in a number of countries including Vietnam, India, France, Russia, China and Hong Kong (besides Mainland US and Hawaii). I obtained both a B.S. and M.B.A. degrees from the University of Maryland. Before going into banking, I have worked for the US government in Washington DC as well as in Moscow and Beijing. I have over 23 years of experience in banking, first in Hong Kong and then in Hawaii since 2005. My exposure to the international market has allowed me to learn a number of languages and this has helped me in my current business. I am fluent in Vietnamese, French and English and am conversant in Mandarin Chinese.

I believe that I can contribute to the LAAC due to my close association with the various ethnic communities in Hawaii, as well as through my business that deals with companies catering to foreign visitors. My team and I are active members of various Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Philippine associations and chambers. My objective is to assist LAAC to expand the language facilitation in government agencies as well as among the private industry, in particular the Hawaii tourist industry.

I thank you for your time and your consideration for my confirmation to the LAAC.

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SERAFIN P. COLMENARES JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS

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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 GM510 (ANH BROW)**  
Language Access Advisory Council

HEARING: Wednesday, April 15, 2009, 10:00 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 the Executive Director with the Office of Language Access (OLA). The OLA strongly supports the confirmation of ANH BROW to the Language Access Advisory Council to represent a resident of the City and County of Honolulu who has an interest in language access.

Ms. Brow is a new Council member who is the Executive Vice President and Head of the International Banking Division at Bank of Hawaii. She is responsible for all banking activities for international clients of the bank, both commercial and individual. Her division has banking officers who speak different languages, including Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, and Taiwanese), French, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Ms. Brow herself is fluent in Vietnamese and French and is conversational in Mandarin Chinese.

Born in Vietnam, in a village near Hanoi, Ms. Brow left Vietnam in 1959 with her parents and lived in India, then France before settling in the United States in 1965. She started her career working for the U.S. Postal Service in Washington, D.C. as a management analyst. From 1978 to 1982, she worked for the U.S. State Department at the U.S. Embassies in Moscow and Beijing, in the Budget and Consular Offices. Ms. Brow spent the next 21 years in Hong Kong working in commercial, investment and retail banking. She returned with her family to the United States and settled in Hawaii in 2005. Prior to joining Bank of Hawaii in May 2007, she worked for American Savings Bank as a management consultant. Ms. Brow obtained her Bachelor of Science and MBA degrees from the University of Maryland.

For these reasons, Ms. Brow is an excellent candidate for the Language Access Advisory Council and should be confirmed as a member.

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I have known Ms. Anh “Betty” Brow for about three years through my interaction with her as board members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii and through business and community events. I have found her to be a very honest, hardworking, effective and friendly business executive; a very caring community leader; and a talented linguist.

I was very happy to learn that Ms. Brow has been nominated by Governor Linda Lingle to the Language Access Advisory Council for our state. With her linguistic skills in Vietnamese, English, French, and Chinese; her business background as Executive Vice President for the international banking division of Bank of Hawaii; and her relationship with many minority groups, Ms. Brow would be an outstanding addition to the Council. I believe Ms. Brow would contribute tremendously to the Council in terms of resources and connections that she can offer and that minority groups faced with language barriers will be able to benefit from her involvement with the Council.

I wholeheartedly support Ms. Brow’s nomination to the Language Access Advisory Council, and I urge that her nomination be confirmed expeditiously.

Sincerely yours,

TED C. T. LI  
President

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April 6, 2009

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Judiciary and Government Operations Committee (JGO)  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 219  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Reference: GM 510 – Mrs Anh "Betty" Brow

I am writing this letter in support of the nomination by Governor Lingle for Mrs. Anh "Betty" Brow to be a member of the Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC).

My name is Johnson W.K. Choi, President of the Hong Kong China Hawaii Chamber of Commerce (HKCH), an organization that promotes the cultural and business links between Hawaii, Hong Kong and China. To meet our objectives, we are interested to support government programs that would foster closer communications between Hawaii and Asia, such as the LAAC.

In my view, Mrs. Brow would be an asset to the LAAC and be able to help implement its programs. Mrs. Brow is the Executive Vice President and Head of International Banking Division at the Bank of Hawaii. Her group is considered to be the largest and most professional international banking team among the banks in Hawaii. Her office makes available marketing brochures and web sites in 5 different languages, and her team members are native speakers of up to 10 different languages and dialects. Her staff offers banking services and assistance to all international clients of the Bank, including all non-English speaking ethnic customers. Mrs. Brow herself is of Vietnamese descent and has lived in a number of Asian and European countries. She is fluent and conversant in several languages, including Vietnamese, French, and Mandarin Chinese. Mrs. Brow is also an active member of a number of ethnic chambers, including the HKCH, and would be an excellent representative on the LAAC for the private industry. She could help to coordinate efforts by the private industry with those of the government agencies, to develop language capability and better service the Hawaii ethnic community as well as foreign visitors to the Islands.

I strongly support the JGO's confirmation of Mrs. Anh "Betty" Brow's nomination by Governor Lingle to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Sincerely,

Johnson W. K. Choi, MBA, RFC.  
President

JWKC/cc

Ref: HKCHccRecommendationLetterBettyBrow

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