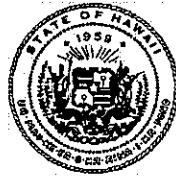


GM 450

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



LILLIAN B. KOLLER, ESQ.
DIRECTOR

HENRY OLIVA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

April 8, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: GM 450 - Gubernatorial Nomination of Pina S. Lemusu to the
State Rehabilitation Council

HEARING: April 8, 2010 - 2:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

The Department of Human Services supports the nomination of Pina S. Lemusu to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The SRC was established in the 1992 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The SRC acts in partnership with the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division on services that address employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Pina S. Lemusu is seeking reappointment to the SRC. Ms. Lemusu, during her first term on the SRC, worked on the issues and challenges our youth with disabilities face and in determining the unserved and underserved areas in Hawai'i.

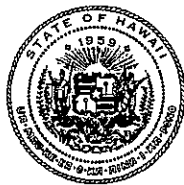
Ms. Lemusu has both personal experience, as a previous recipient of vocational rehabilitation services, and professional experience in working with

individuals with disabilities, which gives her a broad understanding that enables her to give good insight in determining the priorities for our Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Ms. Lemusu was selected for the National Summit on Disability Policy 2010, which advises Congress on the needs of people with disabilities regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act. This experience will aid to her wealth of knowledge and experience needed on the SRC.

Ms. Lemusu will provide representation to the SRC for Oahu.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this Committee.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND SERVICES FOR THE BLIND
O`ahu Branch
600 KAPIOLANI BLVD., SUITE 306
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2010
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Honorable Senators,

It is with great pleasure that I write this endorsement on behalf of Ms. Pina Lemusu for a second term to the State Rehabilitation Council of the Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation and Services to the Blind Division. As a current member of the State Rehabilitation Council, Ms. Lemusu, along with other council members, have brought guidance to the Division, as we have had to deal with the unpredictability many government agencies are currently facing.

Ms. Lemusu brings with her a gentle calmness which in turn brings about periods of reflection and thought. At times such as these, faced by all government agencies, reflection and thought is a good starting point to create the kinds of change we need to craft given our State's current economic situation. Helen Keller once said; "The world is moved not only by the mighty shoves of the heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker". I do think that Ms. Lemusu is one of those honest workers that can bring together the combined, to work towards the common good. And I'm sure that Ms. Keller would view those honest workers as heroes as well.

At times such as these, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division is in greater need than ever to continue to move forward so that those with disabling conditions can achieve a good job as they seek their opportunity for a better life. I do think that Ms. Lemusu's continued involvement with our State Rehabilitation Council will help us steer the course during these troubling times. I support the nomination of Ms. Lemusu and whole heartedly urge you to do so as well.

Sincerely,

Albert H. Perez
O`ahu Branch Administrator



Helping people with disabilities lead productive lives.

Winners at Work dba Abilities Unlimited
414 Kuwili Street #103
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

April 6, 2010

The Senate
The Twenty-fifth Legislature
Regular Session of 2010
Committee on Human Services
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Honorable Senators:

As the Director of Programs for Winners at Work dba Abilities Unlimited, I have had the privilege to work with Pina Lemusu. She has been a vital resource of information and support for our participants with disabilities seeking competitive employment. Abilities Unlimited (AU) provides employment and training services for clients referred by the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division.

As a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist, Pina has referred many clients to our employment programs. She has been an outstanding counselor in that she always seeks what is in the best interest of the client. When budget cuts made training funds very difficult to obtain, Pina would look for other resources to provide the services needed to help a client become job ready. In recent meetings with clients and their families, Pina would organize meetings involving other government agencies so that all could work collaboratively to find ways to provide the services the client would need to improve employability skills.

One of her outstanding qualities is her communication skills with the clients and with the Employment Counselors of Abilities Unlimited. Pina is the type of counselor that keeps the communications open between client, AU, and DVR. She is very involved in the client's job development and works as a partner with AU to help the client obtain competitive work and maintain success in their job.

What I admire most about Pina is her passion to assist individuals with disabilities. She goes beyond the regular job requirements of a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist. Pina has been very involved in the outreach efforts to provide more information about services to transitional students, parents and family members, and teachers. She has coordinated meetings between DOE Transitional Coordinators to hear presentations from a variety of agencies. She is always pursuing new and innovative ways to improve existing services. She has even sat in our classes to monitor the class material and observe the progress of her transitional students in our program.

Pina leads by example and she has taught the Employment/Education Department of AU to be better counselors and advocates for our clients. She has inspired us to look beyond the clients limitations and search for the unlimited abilities.

Sincerely,

Stanette Kitamura
Director of Programs – Abilities Unlimited

ChunOakland3 - Serena

From: Susan Miller [sbernadette@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 1:03 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Subject: Reappointment Of Pina Lemusu

April 8, 2010

Aloha Honorable Committee,

As a professional in the field of promoting competitive and meaningful employment for youth in transition and adults with disabilities, Ms. Pina Lemusu is among the best that I work with in the state system.

Ms. Lemusu has proven to me that she is in the Hawaii DVR system doing an effective job -- not just there to keep her job.

As a PWD, Lemusu challenges assumptions, pushes the envelope, raises the bar in her own life-work, and on behalf of others striving to better their lives and the quality of their lives by being employed. She's a warrior we want in a leadership position.

My vote is to reappoint her to the state rehabilitation council.

Lemusu is a grassroots advocate with the policy smarts and experience, and a sweetly wicked sense of humor to bring about the changes needed to get the scandalously low employment number/percentage out of the cellar!

Something has to change -- soon. We need PWD in good jobs! And sooner than later. We need Ms. Lemusu in a leadership position to promote and affect those changes in attitude, policy and practice to better and create more employment opportunities for pwd.

Hana Hou, Pina

Susan Miller
University of Hawaii
Center on Disability Studies
Project Director
Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
www.hireabilitieshawaii.org