

GM659

Testimony

April 4, 2011

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Tokuda:

Re: Nomination to the State of Hawaii Board of Education

Thank you for your letter dated March 30, 2011, relating to my nomination to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

As requested, please find written response to your questions as follows:

Why did you decide to apply to serve on the BOE?

I have been involved in both the private and public sector for many years. I have found the work in both sectors to be very challenging and stimulating. I have certainly experienced a sense of accomplishment closing multi-million dollar transactions, over the years, I have found it much more satisfying being part of an operation that helps others and improves the community. Public service is my passion.

From an Educational perspective, my life has been very influenced by the State's Public Education System. My wife has been working in the Department of Education as a school counselor for 25 years at numerous schools in Oahu and on Maui; over the years, I have learned how important the education system is in shaping the lives of our children. I can recall many stories of students from troubled backgrounds, on the verge of dropping out of school, becoming successful in life because of caring and competent teachers and counselors. These students went on to be successful in life as doctors, school teachers, military officers, and contributing family and community members. I am always moved when my wife tells me that these former students returned years later to thank her personally for believing in them and keeping them on track to reach their potential.

Each of us would like to have that type of impact on the lives of others. Given my training and experience, I can contribute by fashioning an organization and its culture that can best support its strategy, and by influencing and engaging others through positive leadership. I can bring my commitment to public service, as well as my experiences in the private sector and government to the Board of Education. I am deeply honored to be considered for an opportunity to be part of this transformation for public education in our state.

In light of the recent changes to the Board's composition, how do you perceive the role and responsibilities of individual members and the overall role of the BOE in regards to educational decision-making?

From an individual member standpoint, it is my belief that we were chosen by geographic area to represent our communities and to bring our local communities' perspective to the table. In my opinion, this perspective includes those of students, parents, teachers and the overall broader community. I believe that this geographic representation is not meant to influence decisions to "favor" one region or district over others, but to ensure that all areas have a voice and are heard in the deliberative process to ensure fair and equitable decisions for all. I feel that there might be a common-sense foundation of agreement upon which we can build a system that is flexible enough to meet the unique demands of diverse communities.

Our school system is extremely diverse in the communities it serves beyond just geography, and we need to be careful that we take advantage of the statewide nature of the DOE where it makes sense but do not allow a centralized formulaic approach to teaching our children. In a sense, I think that decision making needs to be closer to the students and communities we serve to effectively deliver education across our State.

From a Board of Education perspective, I think the role and responsibility of the Board, is to be more of a policy making Board, rather than an operational board that is involved in the day-to-day operations of the Department. From my perspective, the Board of Education should be working with Administration and the Legislature to set policy, direction and high level, priority strategic objectives. Its role thereafter should be to: a) support the Department of Education in achieving these goals and objectives, starting with selection of the Superintendent; b) monitor and hold the Department accountable; and c) be accountable to the people of the State of Hawaii through its work with the Administration and the Legislature.

Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the BOE, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, experiences, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the BOE. Highlight the three qualities you feel make you a highly qualified candidate.

I believe that the public has voted for the appointment of the Board of Education to bring a new perspective to the Public Education system. I do not pretend to have all the answers, but it is my belief that an effective Board will bring focus to the Board's role, an openness to ideas, and a learning mindset to the situation.

I think my background and experience will hopefully assist in the deliberations of goals and objectives that we will collectively design.

My experience and background for this position are strongest in the areas of Finance; Governance/Leadership; and Public/Private Sector.

Finance

I have worked extensively in the Finance area for the majority of my career. I have a degree in Finance from the University of Colorado, and worked in the banking community as a Commercial and Real Estate Banker for approximately 17 years. In this capacity, I worked on multi-million dollar financing transactions across numerous industries both locally and nationally.

Subsequent to my career in banking, I was the Director of Finance at the County of Maui. In this capacity, I was involved in financing County operations through General Obligation Bonds and was intimately involved in the County Budgeting process. I was also heavily involved in various collective bargaining issues, including labor negotiations and discussions regarding the Employee Retirement System, and the Health Fund.

In my current capacity at Maui Memorial Medical Center (MMMC), I led the first and only HHSC facility to issue a Revenue Bond to fund the expansion of the MMMC cardiovascular program (the first full-service cardiovascular program on a neighbor island in the State). MMMC has also been actively involved in looking for alternate funding including evaluating public-private partnerships with other large healthcare organizations. I also work closely with the MMMC Foundation to pursue philanthropic activities to support MMMC's operations and capital needs.

Governance/Leadership

When I became the CEO of Maui Memorial Medical Center in 2004, Maui Memorial Medical Center had been through years and years of turbulence and instability in management and leadership. In fact, it was mentioned to me that prior to my joining MMMC, there were 16 CEO's in 20 years. In addition to this instability, healthcare was rapidly evolving and the complexity of the organization was increasing exponentially. The community and the employees were vocally asking for more direction and leadership, and there was a tremendous community uproar for a new and better healthcare system on Maui

During my tenure here, we have transformed MMMC to be a major player in healthcare not only on Maui but also the State. This was accomplished through many efforts, but in particular, there were efforts to change the governance to bring decision-making closer to the bed-side at the local and community levels. Additionally, in order to meet the demands of the community, we needed to bring on new programs and become innovative in our approach to healthcare.

This drastic change in MMMC required tremendous amounts of work in the formation of new boards; creation and definition of roles and responsibilities; creation of new community-based mission/vision/values; creation of a Strategic Plan and strategic objectives.

This is an ongoing process that is still evolving and it is my belief that this evolution will continue for the foreseeable future.

From a Leadership perspective, MMMC is in the midst of a new initiative based on aligning strategy with organizational structure and procedures to corporate culture to make sure MMMC is ready for the dramatic changes the healthcare environment faces. I am also in the process of further developing leadership at every level of the organization.

In order to accomplish all these initiatives, as the Chief Executive, I needed to work closely with the Maui Regional Board, the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Board, the community, and the employees to ensure that the changes were sustainable and in the best interest of the community

I believe that these experiences in the transformation of MMMC will be helpful in my role on the Board of Education, especially as we try to bring decision making to the school and community levels. We will need to be innovative in finding solutions to a ever-changing education environment in the State of Hawaii

Public/Private Sector

Having seen the good, bad and ugly of both the public and private sectors, I have come to the conclusion that you cannot universally and arbitrarily apply private sector rules to the public sector and vice versa.

These models are very different and cannot be treated the same. Having said that, there is much to be learned from each sector, but the solutions and answers need to be a hybrid and one must be able to navigate through each of the systems. For example, many private companies do not have to contend with a unionized environment or work with Civil Service laws. Nor do they have to follow laws guiding things such as Procurement. In both these instances, at MMMC we have worked within the system to try and provide “private sector” flexibility but still balancing the need for greater accountability due to the use of Public Funds.

In the example of procurement, at MMMC, we historically had to deal with State Procurement Laws. We were successful in gaining an exemption to some of the State Procurement Laws, but were instructed to “live within the spirit of the law”. Additionally, we wanted to make sure that there was accountability in the system due to the use of public funds. Accordingly, we have been successful in changing policy to allow for more flexibility in the procurement area, but still recognizing the need for “fair competition” in the use of public funds.

From a Union perspective, we have worked closely with the unions in implementing Supplemental Agreements to allow for more flexible work rules, and continue to work with them as partners as we try to provide more flexibility in the system but still honor the Civil Service Rules that guide us.

Three Qualities that make me feel that I am a highly qualified candidate.

1. I am purpose-driven and am inspired to contribute to the welfare of others.
2. I am a collaborative leader dedicated to respectful teambuilding and individual vitality, with a track record of success.
3. I have consistently been an “out of the box” thinker, as I thrive being part of a Learning Organization

Please identify one short- and one long-term goal you would have as a BOE member and how you would accomplish these during your term of service.

Obviously, there are many short and long term goals that need to be considered. Many of which are critical to the delivery of education. These include, among other things, financial considerations, lengthening of the school year, curriculum development and the changing the school system to allow students to reach their potential. However, these are tactical goals and objectives, and a consideration of the new board is to make the school system sustainable and to be able to adapt to the ever changing environment. Accordingly, one of my personal goals is to make systemic change to the system’s organization

Short-term goal

If confirmed to the BOE, one critical short-term goal I would like to highlight is to create alignment between the Board, the Department, and the employees, in order to develop a sustainable organization that will be poised to effectively meet its strategic goals and objectives.

To accomplish this, I believe that we need to revisit the organizational set-up of the system and define and agree upon roles and responsibilities between the BOE, DOE, schools, teachers, parents, students and community.

From a structural stand-point, I believe we need to clarify the mission, vision, values of the BOE and to clarify and prioritize high level strategic objectives. In doing so, I would like to see the creation of appropriate metrics for the strategic objectives and the establishment of appropriate timelines for the implementation of the same. The Superintendent’s plan for a Balanced Scorecard would align with this plan.

Culturally, the problem of all large people driven organizations, is how do we lead and motivate an organization of more than 20,000 employees and infinitely more stakeholders when we get to know personally a fraction of these people. If an organization is to make sustainable change, you must address the culture of the organization and the culture must embrace values such as such as trust and collaboration, and these values and behaviors need to permeate throughout the system. I believe the way to start this is to look internally at the Board and base our actions on these values. The Board’s culture will set the tone and be an message for the entire DOE. I am hopeful that we can create measurements of culture and values become part of the metrics that we hold ourselves accountable to.

Long-term goal

In the longer term, I would like to be involved in the determination of the appropriate governance structure for the DOE. This would include the decentralization of the system support to ensure that decision making is closer to the classroom, and is appropriate for the communities in which they serve. Education is an integral part of the community, and should be “at the table” in all community planning discussions. I would appreciate the opportunity to pursue ensuring schools have/develop the tools to optimize all students potential and to ensure that teaching/instruction is appropriate for the communities that the schools serve.

To accomplish this, I believe that the Department of Education and the Board of Education must become active in their communities and collaborate with other state and local agencies that address land use, economic revitalization, workforce development, and other pertinent matters.

However, at the heart of it all and what makes any system work is the quality and the inspiration of the people in that system. I can envision an on-going system-wide human capital development process that deals with both content and competence as well as with vitality and character of all employees within the system

Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Board of Education? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

I think the only possible conflicts that I may have would be related to my family and their participation in the education system. My wife is employed by the DOE as an Outreach Counselor at Maui High School. Additionally, my children are students at Baldwin High School and Po’omaikai Elementary School.

As with all conflicts, I would disclose my interests, and if necessary, recuse myself from any voting on any possible issues of conflict.

Sincerely,



Wesley Lo

TESTIMONY OF WESLEY P. LO
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2011

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY ON GM 659 RELATING TO WESLEY P. LO FOR CONSIDERATION
AND CONFIRMATION TO THE STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am extremely honored and humbled to be considered to serve on the State of Hawaii Board of Education. It was quite a surprise and honor to be asked by Governor Abercrombie to consider serving on the Board of Education. I view this as a tremendous opportunity and honor to serve the people of Hawaii in this capacity.

Born on Oahu and raised in Makiki, I was a private school "brat" who was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to attend Punahou School. After graduating from High School, I attended the University of Colorado and received a degree in Business Administration - Finance.

In 1991, I married Nadine Gushi-Lo. Nadine is from Wahiawa where she received her public school education. My wife is an Outreach Counselor at Maui High School and has worked at various places throughout the Department of Education, including Waianae Elementary, Kaiser High School, Lihikai Elementary School, and Maui High School.

We moved to Maui in 1990. Together, we have two children, both of whom are receiving an outstanding education through the State's public school system. My son, Reggie, who is 15, attended Wailuku Elementary, Iao Intermediate School, and is now a sophomore at Baldwin High School. My daughter, Noelle, is 7, she attends Po'omaikai Elementary School.

After college, I returned to Hawaii and spent approximately 17 years in the banking industry. Most of this time was spent with First Hawaiian Bank, working closely with Donald Horner for years. In 1999, I became the Deputy Director of Finance for the County of Maui under Mayor James "Kimo" Apana, becoming the Director of Finance in November of that same year.

After my time with the County of Maui, I worked briefly for a radiology company and was approached by some members of the community to consider joining Maui Memorial Medical Center (MMMC) as the Chief Financial Officer in September 2003. I became the Chief Executive Officer of MMMC in July of 2004 with oversight of MMMC, Kula Hospital and Lanai Community Hospital.

While I spent the first 17 years of my professional life in the private sector, and this was a great experience, I discovered that the most satisfying times at work for me were when I could actually help somebody achieve something. What I mean is that in banking, I had been able to work on \$100 million deals, but found that those large transactions did not bring me the satisfaction I experienced helping somebody buy their first home. Seeing the joy and sense of accomplishment experienced by clients as their dreams were realized, far outweighed the sense of accomplishment I experienced closing a multi-million dollar deal.

When working for the County of Maui, I found that it was also extremely satisfying to work on issues, projects, and programs that were of benefit to the greater community rather than on an individual basis.

Now that I work in the medical field, I idolize the clinical people that I work with because they possess the direct skills, knowledge, and ability to comfort and assist in the healing of very sick people. Being able to support healthcare through my administrative work brings me a sense of personal satisfaction knowing that my work, albeit stressful and challenging, is related to supporting those who save lives.

Similarly, I have learned that education professionals save lives every day. I have to admit that I am secretly envious of my wife and her profession as an outreach counselor. This is certainly not because of the salary an outreach counselor makes, but because of the impact she is able to make on people's lives. Throughout the years, Nadine would come home from a long day at school with tears in her eyes. At first I figured it was because the job was challenging and stressful but discovered through her accounts that these were not tears of sadness or frustration, but tears of joy. My wife would tell me from time to time, former students who had come from broken or abusive families, backgrounds involving substance abuse and who had been on the verge of flunking school would call or visit her to let her know that because of her efforts, they had become successful and had gone on to become doctors, officers in the military, teachers, etc.

Because of these experiences, I believe that education and healthcare are two of the main building blocks of a community. If we want to sustain a community, we need education and healthcare to be the focal point of the discussion on how to build a community. Without this foundation, a community cannot sustain itself.

I believe that my experience will be helpful in my role on the BOE. I have an extensive financial background both in private and public sector. I have been involved in large corporate and real estate transactions. My finance background and experience in banking has trained me to be able to understand financial statements and to be able to analyze complex financial statements. I have been involved with public financing, including many issuances of general obligation bonds, and most recently, at MMMC, we were the first HHSC region to successfully issue a revenue bond to finance the only full-service Cardiovascular Program on the neighbor islands in the State.

Over the past few years, I have been heavily involved in governance issues as they relate to HHSC, a quasi-public agency. I successfully worked with the Legislature to create a new governance structure that decentralized the control of the Hospital system and “moved healthcare closer to the bed-side”, including the creation of regional boards and a more flexible regional structure that allows the regions to operate more efficiently through local control and adaptations to certain financing structures and the ability to operate outside the state procurement code while maintaining public accountability. I have been actively involved with the Maui Memorial Medical Center Foundation which has donated millions of dollars to MMMC.

In management, I have been responsible for numerous bank branches and operation. I was involved in a merger and the management succession of an existing company. I have managed large government operations which have also involved major process and information technology changes. I manage million dollar capital improvement projects including the expansion of MMMC through a large scale capital improvement project resulting in a new wing for the Hospital (\$38 million). I currently manage approximately 1500 employees on three islands and I am involved in an organizational development project aimed at aligning organization, structure, and culture throughout the facilities.

If confirmed to the BOE, my goals in the short term are to organizationally define roles and responsibilities between the BOE, DOE, schools, teachers, parents, students and community. I would like to clarify the mission, vision, values of the BOE and to clarify and prioritize high level strategic objectives. In doing so, I would like to see the creation of appropriate metrics for the strategic objectives and the establishment of appropriate timelines for the implementation of the same. I would like to work with the DOE to create the appropriate venue for input from all stakeholders to hold the BOE accountable. Fiscally, I look forward to the opportunity to analyze the DOE's financial situation and to look at options for revenue enhancement, cost savings, capital options (debt/equity/joint venture options where appropriate), philanthropy. Attaining these goals will require pursuing some "outside the box" options, some requiring legislation. I will pursue reviewing formulas and policies regarding the distribution and use of funds to ensure equity in the weighted student formula and no child left behind initiatives.

In the longer term, I would like to be involved in the determination of the appropriate governance structure for the DOE. I want to ensure that education is an integral part of the community, with appropriate involvement at all levels. I would appreciate the opportunity to pursue ensuring that curricula and schools are given the tools to optimize student potential at all levels and to ensure that curricula is appropriate for the communities that the schools serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you. I am grateful to all those who have supported me. I look forward to answering your questions.

COLLEEN W. HANABUSA
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1101

**COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES**
SUBCOMMITTEES:
READINESS
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

**COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES**
SUBCOMMITTEES:
INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS
FISHERIES, WILDLIFE, OCEANS & INSULAR
AFFAIRS

April 4, 2011

To: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice-Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

Re: GM 659 (Wesley P. Lo)
Date of Hearing: Wednesday, April 6, 2011
Time: 1:15 pm
Place: Capitol Conference Room 225

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee,

The purpose of this testimony is to offer support of the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the Hawaii State Board of Education. I urge your committee to recommend his confirmation to the full Senate.

I have known Mr. Lo for many years through his work with the Hawaii State Legislature as the CEO for Maui Memorial Medical Center. In this role, Mr. Lo has made substantial improvements in the field of healthcare on Maui and in the State of Hawaii. He was instrumental in decentralizing the governance of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation to bring governance closer to the bedside and continues to seek cutting edge solutions to improve healthcare for the community. I believe this type of innovative thinking will serve the Board of Education well.

Additionally, Mr. Lo is a dedicated public servant who devotes his time to the community not only professionally but also by supporting various non-profit community organizations through generous financial contributions and volunteering his own time.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify, and I urge you to support confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the Board of Education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colleen Hanabusa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress
Hawaii, District 1



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 1:15 PM
State Capitol Room 225

Testimony of
Honorable Neil Abercrombie
Governor, State of Hawaii

To the Senate Education Committee
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

GM659 Confirmation of **Wesley P. Lo** to the
State of Hawai'i Board of Education

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

I am pleased to support the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawai'i Board of Education. I have appointed Lo to represent Maui County for a three-year term ending June 30, 2014.

Lo is the Chief Executive Officer of the Maui Memorial Medical Center (MMMC) which is part of our Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation. Lo joined the MMMC team as Chief Financial Officer in 2003. Within a year, he became the CEO where he has served for almost eight years. Lo's leadership at MMMC has been transformative. First, he brought stability to the organization; prior to Lo there had been 16 CEOs in 20 years. Second, he has cultivated innovation in the complex field of health care and in providing government services to the people of Maui. Third, he led MMMC to be more responsive to community needs. This included creation of a new community-based set of mission, vision and values and bringing decision making closer to the bedside at the local and community levels. Finally, under Lo's leadership, MMMC developed new boards, created a strategic plan and objectives, is developing leadership at every level of the organization and realigned its organizational structures and procedures. Lo has the experience of leading the transformation of a complex government services organization and brings that expertise to the Board of Education where he will guide

and support the Superintendent in a similar transformation of public education to meet rapidly changing needs of a very community-based service.

Lo's prior experience includes Director of Finance for County of Maui. He also has 20 years of private sector experience in commercial and real estate banking in Hawai'i. Lo serves on a number of boards including current service as a Director of the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation, Maui Economic Opportunities Business Development Corporation Maui Memorial Medical Center Foundation and Maui Economic Development Board.

Lo brings an important perspective to the Board of Education. He has had executive responsibilities in both the public and private sectors. He understands the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities in both sectors and has experience leveraging business practice, where applicable, in the public setting. In addition to working in complex organizational environments, Lo has experience with collective bargaining in his role as Director of Finance for the County of Maui. Lo also has a strong background in finance which is important to governing the Hawai'i Department of Education with its \$1.7 billion annual budget which is approximately one-third of the state's budget.

Finally, Lo is passionate about public service. He has committed more than a decade to leadership in government on Maui. He has served the community on boards including Maui Coastal Land Trust and Affordable Housing Corporation of Maui County. He is invested to improving public education for Hawai'i's children, the state and also for his own family. Lo's two children attend public schools on Maui: Baldwin High School and Po'omaikai Elementary. Lo's wife is a counselor at Maui High School.

I am thrilled that Lo is willing to serve on the BOE. I have full confidence in Lo and look forward to working with him in this new role. I know that you will find Lo well qualified for the BOE and encourage you to confirm him.

TESTIMONY BY KALBERT K. YOUNG
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 659

April 6, 2011

RELATING TO WESLEY P. LO FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION
TO THE STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support for the nomination of Mr. Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

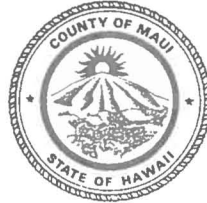
I have known Mr. Lo for over 6 years since becoming initially familiar with Mr. Lo in 2004 as a result of him and I having both served as former directors of finance for the County of Maui. Although we worked for separate mayoral administrations, Mr. Lo has always demonstrated a fair and balanced approach to fiscal sustainability and a willingness to address problems head on. I have also had the pleasure of working with Mr. Lo while he has been the current CEO of Maui Memorial Hospital. In addition, he has also worked for a number of significant financial institutions in the State of Hawaii. Mr. Lo has demonstrated a strong ability to lead organizations with attention to fiscal responsibility and financial improvement.

I know that Mr. Lo places a high degree of priority on education and healthcare as cornerstones of a thriving community. The public education system is important to his family as illustrated in his wife working as a DOE Outreach Counselor and his children are current students in the public school system on Maui.

I think Mr. Lo would be a good appointment to the BOE because of his demonstrated background in government service, but also for his experience and financial acumen. I believe his diversity of experience and long-term financial perspectives are important traits in a member for the Board of Education. Coupled with his personal investment in the public education system, I think Mr. Lo will work tirelessly to improve our State's educational system by contributing innovative and contemporary ideas to the Board's discussion, but also providing fresh deliberation to all ideas of his fellow Board members as well.

Mr. Wesley Lo will be a very valuable asset to the Board of Education. I urge the members of the Senate Committee on Education to support his selection by voting favorably on his nomination and advancing G.M. 659 for full Senate confirmation.

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
MAYOR




KEITH A. REGAN
MANAGING DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Ke'ena O Ka Meia

COUNTY OF MAUI – Kalana O Maui

TO: The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Alan M. Arakawa, Mayor 
County of Maui

DATE: Hearing of April 6, 2011, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225

SUBJECT: **TESTIMONY OF MAUI COUNTY MAYOR ALAN M. ARAKAWA ON
GM 659 IN SUPPORT FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND
CONFIRMATION OF WESLEY P. LO TO THE STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of GM 659 relating to the consideration and confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

I have known Wesley for many years through his employment with the County of Maui as its Finance Director, his current capacity as the Chief Executive Officer for Maui Memorial Medical Center and his service to the community.

Wesley believes that education and healthcare are the cornerstones of a thriving community. He is a lifelong resident of this state while not a product of public education himself, he believes in the public education system because his wife is a DOE Outreach Counselor and sees the quality of education his children receive in the public school system.

Wesley is a dedicated public servant who devotes his time to the community not only professionally but by supporting various non-profit community organizations both financially and by volunteering to assist them on his own time.

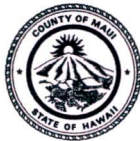
I think Wesley would be a good appointment to the BOE because he understands the workings of government, his business sense would be beneficial to a large organization such as DOE and having children he understands what the education needs are for our children and young adults in this state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of the appointment of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education

Council Chair
Danny A. Mateo

Vice-Chair
Joseph Pontanilla

Council Members
Gladys C. Baisa
Robert Carroll
Elle Cochran
Donald G. Couch, Jr.
G. Riki Hokama
Michael P. Victorino
Mike White



Director of Council Services
Ken Fukuoka

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April 5, 2011

TO: Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Joseph Pontanilla, Council Vice-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Pontanilla", is written over the "FROM:" line.

DATE: April 6, 2011

SUBJECT: **TESTIMONY ON GM 659, FOR CONSIDERATION IN SUPPORT OF
STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION, GUBERNATORIAL
NOMINEE, WESLEY P. LO, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2014**

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support for the confirmation of this appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. I provide this testimony as an individual who serves as a member of the Maui County Council.

It is my honor to have the opportunity to provide this testimony of recommendation on behalf of Mr. Wesley P. Lo for appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. I have directly known Mr. Lo for over 10 years on both a professional and personal basis. I have been aware of Mr. Lo's competence and proficiency long before meeting him due to public witness of Mr. Lo's prior performance of serving as the County of Maui's Director of Finance.

Since my time personally knowing Mr. Lo, I distinguish Mr. Lo to be an individual of high integrity. He is a dependable, trustworthy, hard working person who takes serious his commitments. I have known him to reach conclusions based on his practice of sound ethics and in fairness. As administrator for Maui Memorial Medical Center, Mr. Lo is a dedicated public servant who devotes time to the community, not only professionally, but by supporting various non-profit community organizations both financially and through practiced volunteerism.

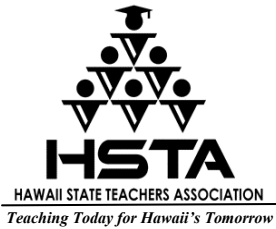
Mr. Lo additionally places priority in commitment to his family. It is this dedication and relationship that most importantly makes him an ideal candidate for serving in this capacity as the Maui representative member on the Board of Education. Being married to a DOE Outreach Counselor, and being parent to children attending public schools, Mr. Lo has direct experience, awareness, and knowledge of our community's educational system needs.

April 5, 2011
Page 2

Based on my witness of his character, his previous commitment, experience and service to our County's community , it is my honor to testify for support of recommending Wesley P. Lo for appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

Please feel free to contact me at (808) 270-5501 if you have any questions or need further assistance.

11:4:05:kbm/JP: GM 659



1200 Ala Kapuna Street λ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 λ Fax: (808) 839-7106 λ Web: www.hsta.org

Wil Okabe
President

Karolyn Mossman
Vice President

Joan Kamila Lewis
Secretary-Treasurer

Alvin Nagasako
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: GM 651, GM 653, GM 654, GM 657, GM 659 – Gubernatorial Nominees for
State of Hawaii Board of Education, DONALD G. HORNER, KIMBERLY
GENNAULA HAGI, BRIAN J. DE LIMA, JAMES D. WILLIAMS,
WESLEY P. LO

Wednesday, April 6, 2011

WIL OKABE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports the appointment of **Donald G. Horner, Kimberly Gennaula Hagi, Brian J. De Lima, James D. Williams, and Wesley P. Lo**, to the Hawaii Board of Education.

Each of these nominees brings with them dedication, enthusiasm and a vast knowledge base to a Board of Education that will oversee the Department of Education with the Governor maintaining ultimate accountability.

Diverse backgrounds, hard working, experienced decision-makers, exceptional integrity – these are all traits reflected in each of these individual nominees. These talents and abilities will join together to improve public education in Hawaii.

The nominations of Mr. Horner Ms. Gennaula Hagi, Mr. De Lima, Mr. Williams and Mr. Apo to the Board of Education and are well-deserving of your confirmation. We urge your support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Conference Room 225
April 6, 2011 at 1:15 p.m.

Testimony in support of GM 659, which nominates Wesley Lo to the Board of Education.

My name is George W. Greene, President and CEO of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), whose membership includes all of the acute care hospitals in Hawaii, two-thirds of the long term care beds, home care agencies and hospices, and other related provider organizations. Our provider members employ more than 40,000 people statewide, delivering quality care to the people of Hawaii. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the nomination of Wesley Lo to the Board of Education (BOE).

Hawaii's electorate voted in November to approve a Constitutional amendment that changes the Board of Education from an elected body to one that is appointed by the Governor. The Legislature recently passed a bill detailing the appointment process. The Governor has subsequently made the initial appointments of nine members to the new BOE. As a whole, the appointees represent diverse experiences and interests. The new BOE will face considerable challenges as it addresses the public's demand for improved student performance.

Wesley Lo would bring a wealth of financial expertise to the BOE. He is currently the Regional Chief Executive Officer of the Maui Region of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation. His former positions include those of Chief Financial Officer of Maui Memorial Medical Center, Chief Financial Officer of Maui Radiology Consultants, Director of Finance for the County of Maui, and the Branch Manager of the Kahului Branch of First Hawaiian Bank.

Wesley Lo has a personal commitment to public education. His children both go to public school and his wife serves as a counselor at Maui High.

I have firsthand experience working with Wesley Lo on various projects, as he is an officer of one of the members of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii. He is a consummate professional. I am confident that he will make valuable contributions to the BOE that advance our public school system for the children of Hawaii.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association supports GM 659.

April 4, 2011

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Education
Hawaii State Senate

RE: GM 659 - consideration and confirmation to the State of Hawai'i Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, Wesley P. Lo, for a term to expire 6-30-2014

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Education Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I comment on the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. I have known Wes for about 20 years both personally and professionally and know that his multi-faceted experiences will enrich decision-making about K-12 education in our State.


Wes held several positions in the banking and finance industry. I became acquainted with him during that period and was always struck by his keen understanding of lending and investments as well as his ability to think creatively about solutions and to communicate clearly about options.

He left the private sector to lead the County of Maui Finance Department where he excelled in managing a critical agency for our community. Since inception, Maui Economic Development Board, Inc. has always worked with the County of Maui in economic diversification. That partnership led to MEDB working with Wes on various initiatives and on preparing to present the economic and fiscal strengths of our county to bond raters. We experienced first-hand the extent of his professionalism and financial acumen, attributes which manifested themselves publicly as he oversaw the overall financial administration of all County departments over his four years of leadership.

Now as head of Maui Memorial Medical Center, his vision has led the institution to unprecedented levels and opportunities of health care for our residents, places where we never imagined our core medical institution could go. A 75,000 square foot new wing added a Critical Care unit, an Ambulatory Surgery Center, a Physical/Occupational Therapy unit, and a 24-bed Medical/Surgical unit. A Heart, Brain & Vascular Center offers services that would have previously required patients to risk the trip off-island. The new Helipad located on the campus saves valuable time in patient care by landing at the hospital instead of the airport. All of this was supported by his ability to explore ways to fund and finance innovations.

Perhaps most impressive about Wes is his unwavering dedication to our community. Our residents are his priority. Understanding the economic development potential of health care, Wes places a priority on creating new education and training opportunities for residents through the center, including job shadowing programs and internships. His children attend public schools, demonstrating his belief in public education system.

MEDB is so fortunate to have Wes as a member of our board of directors and our Vice Chair, to have his dedication, integrity, intelligence and caring spirit guide our economic development decisions. We know these values will similarly inform and steer our education system to a better future.


Jeanne Unemori Skog
President & CEO



Erin Conner

From: cnakamura@thelearningcoalition.org [cheri.nakamura@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 3:48 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Subject: GM 657: Written testimony in support of Gubernatorial Nominee, WESLEY P. LO, for a term to expire 6-30-2014
Attachments: HEE Voting Members and Participants 20110301.pdf

HE'E Coalition

4224 Waialae Ave., Ste 322

Honolulu, HI 96816

Tel: 808-926-1530

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www.HEECoalition.org

April 6, 2011

Senate Committee on Education

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 6, 2011 at 1:15 pm

Conference Room 225

GM 657: Written testimony in support of Gubernatorial Nominee, WESLEY P. LO, for a term to expire 6-30-2014

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee Members:

Hui for Excellence in Education, (HE'E), a statewide education coalition working to improve public education through family and community engagement, has reviewed the Governor's nominees for the Board of Education and found that all of the nominees meet the minimum qualifications required in the new law creating the appointed BOE (Act 5 of 2011).

HE'E is made up of voting, non-voting members (list attached), individuals and policy makers. HE'E's endorsement is supported by at least 75% of its voting members. This insures that any action taken by the group is of significant importance to the coalition as a whole.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura

HE'E Coalition Director



HE'E Coalition Voting Members (*) and Participants

*Academy 21

DOE Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Support

DOE Parent Community Networking Center

*DOE Windward District

*Faith Action Community for Equity

*Good Beginnings Alliance

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

Hawai'i Charter School Network

*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

*Hawai'i Education Matters

Hawai'i P-20

*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

*Kanu Hawai'i

*Leaders for the Next Generation

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

*Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

*Parents and Children Together

Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

UH College of Education

UH Law School

United States Army

Lyla Berg

Norman Sakamoto



Hawaii Education Matters
111 Hekili Street, Suite A1606
Kailua, HI 96734
Tel: 808-888-6922
www.hawaiieducationmatters.org

April 6, 2011

Senate Committee on Education
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Wednesday, April 6, 2011 at 1:15 pm
Conference Room 225

GM 659: Comments on Gubernatorial Nominee, WESLEY P. LO, for a term to expire 6-30-2014

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee Members:

Hawaii Education Matters (HEM) is a non-partisan, non-profit parent advocacy organization dedicated to quality public education in our state.

We feel that the amount of information provided on Mr. Lo by the Governor was limited. Please consider asking Mr. Lo the following questions, taken directly from the new law Act 5. We hope these questions will help the Committee better evaluate the candidates. In addition we have included a question related to community and family engagement and would ask that you also consider this question in your evaluation of the candidate.

1. Please have the candidate describe his experience with collective bargaining.
2. Please have the candidate describe his experience with complex organizations.
3. Please have the candidate describe his experience working among diverse colleagues and in developing consensus based policies.
4. Because HEM is a parent advocacy organization we would like to hear the candidate's thoughts on enhancing parent and community engagement in our public schools. Does the candidate know of any particularly effective community engagement models that could be replicated?

HEM was recently named in SCR 145 by Senator Tokuda (a concurrent resolution to develop a statewide parent/community engagement policy) to work with BOE on developing this policy prior to the 2012 legislative session. What do you feel the role of community and family engagement is in the educational success of the public school student?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ann Davis, MPH
Executive Director

April 4, 2011

**TO: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidana, Vice Chair**

**The Senate Committee on Education
Wednesday, April 6, 2011
1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225**

**RE: TESTIMONY ON GM 659 RELATING TO WESLEY P. LO FOR
CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

I am the Secretary to the CEO at Maui Memorial Medical Center (MMMC) and have known Wesley Lo for many years. As his Secretary, I have observed Wesley make decisions, handle adversity, and work with the community as he guided MMMC for the past 7 years. What I have found is that Wesley is truly committed to making this a better community.

As the CEO of Maui Memorial Medical Center, Wesley has been a trailblazer in his role and has made substantial improvements to the healthcare of Maui and the State. I feel that Wesley will be an excellent appointment to the BOE and provide value to the Board of Education as Hawaii moves forward in the future.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of this appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education

Sincerely,



Sheriann Yamaguchi
P. O. Box 880213
Pukalani, HI 96788

TESTIMONY OF Gary K. Kai

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2011

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225

GM 659: Nomination of Wesley P. Lo for consideration and confirmation to the State Board of Education.

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

My name is Gary Kai and it gives me great pleasure to submit this letter of support for Wesley P. Lo's nomination to the State Board of Education.

I have known Wesley for over 25 years, during we which time we worked together at several organizations. During that time I have come to know Wesley as a person with the ability to be very strategic and as well as being a very intelligent person. Most important, he is a person of great integrity and honesty.

Wesley believes that education and healthcare are the cornerstones of a thriving community. He is a lifelong resident of this state that while not a product of public education himself, believes in the public education system because his wife is a DOE Outreach Counselor and he sees the quality of education his children receive in the public school system.

Wesley is a dedicated public servant who devotes his time to the community not only professionally but by supporting various non-profit community organizations both financially and by volunteering to assist them on his own time. He would be a great contributor to the Board of Education and would help create a better future for our children.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of this appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education

Sincerely,

//s

Gary K. Kai
1042 Fort Street Mall, Suite 200
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TESTIMONY OF SAEDENE OTA
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2011

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY ON GM 659 RELATING TO **WESLEY P. LO** FOR CONSIDERATION
AND CONFIRMATION TO THE STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

I have known Wesley for 8 years through friendship and the Maui Memorial Hospital Foundation.

I think Wesley would be an incredible appointment to the BOE because he is completely sincere about his concern for better education and with his experience I can not think of a better candidate to represent Maui County. Wesley has incredible integrity as proven in his work to improve health care on Maui and he continues to work diligently against all odds and struggles.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of this appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education



Saedene Ota
Principal
Sae Design

TESTIMONY OF ANTHONY TAKITANI
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2011

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY ON GM 659 RELATING TO WESLEY P. LO FOR CONSIDERATION
AND CONFIRMATION TO THE STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

I have known Wesley for nearly 30 years and have worked closely with him for the last 7 years as an active member of the Management Advisory Committee for the Maui Memorial Hospital and most recently as a member of the Maui Memorial Hospital Regional Board.

Wesley is a diligent person of high integrity. He has a strong background in Finance both academically and professionally.

I believe Wesley would be a strong addition to the Board of Education and I wholeheartedly support the confirmation of this appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

R. CLAY SUTHERLAND

Attorney At Law
A Law Corporation

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Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii 96793
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(808) 249-2523 facsimile
e-mail: clay@rclaysutherland.com

April 5, 2011

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chairman
Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol
Room 218
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM 659 Relating to Wesley P. Lo for Consideration and
Confirmation to the State of Hawaii Board of Education

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225

Dear Senator Tokuda, and Members of Senate Committee on Education:

I write to you in support of Wesley P. Lo's appointment to the State Board of Education.

I have known Mr. Wesley Lo for over thirty-five years. We first met as classmates in high school, and thereafter our paths have crossed many times in our professional careers. Currently, I interact with Mr. Lo regularly with his employment as the chief executive officer of the Maui Memorial Medical Center and my membership on the Maui Regional Board for Hawaii Health Systems Corporation.

Mr. Lo brings a strong and varied experience to the Board, including skills he has received working as a banker, Director of Finance for the County of Maui, and employment in the healthcare field, together with his belief that the residents of the County of Maui deserve quality healthcare and educational opportunities. His wife works with the Department of Education, and both of his children are enrolled in the public school system. While I have worked closely with Mr. Lo to improve

healthcare here on Maui, and have personally witnessed his dedication and support, Wes also finds the time to share his expertise and experience with various nonprofit organizations here on Maui. Wes is a supportive and dedicated father to his children, and will bring a balanced and insightful perspective to the Board of Education, to assist the Board on its deliberations to find new ways to use the resources of the Department to educate the children of the State of Hawaii.

I have the utmost respect for Wes as a friend and colleague and strongly support his appointment to the Board of Education.

I thank you in advance for your anticipated support of Wesley P. Lo, and would ask that his nomination as a member of the State of Hawaii Board of Education be approved by the Committee on Education and submitted to the Senate body for confirmation.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Clay Sutherland". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "S".

R. Clay Sutherland

April 5, 2011

**To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair**

**The Senate Committee on Education
Wednesday, April 6, 2011
1:15 p.m., Conference Room 225**

RE: Testimony on GM 659 Relating to Wesley P. Lo for Consideration and Confirmation to the State of Hawaii Board of Education

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

I am currently the Administrative Services Officer for the Maui Memorial Medical Center (MMMC) where I report directly to Wes in an effort to improve Customer Service, Employee Relations and Community Outreach. I have known Wes for about eight years, and have worked with him on a number of different levels. In those various roles, Wes has always remained consistent in his self-less style of leadership and vision. I have watched him endure harsh criticism and public critique in an effort to do what is best for his staff and this community, and he continues to remain steadfast in his commitment to provide the best care possible to all of our residents.

I believe Wes would be the ideal representative for Maui County on the Board of Education because he has a proven track record of being able to rise above adversity to make the necessary improvements for the betterment of the population he is serving. During this pivotal state for our Education system I have absolute faith in Wes' commitment and leadership to move Hawaii in the right direction with regard to the education of our children.

Thank you for again for the opportunity to testify in support of the confirmation of this appointment to State of Hawaii Board of Education.

Sincerely,

Karey Anne K. Kapoi
Kkapoi@hhsc.org
(808) 442-5663