

GM733

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Crime Victim
Compensation Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, MARI A.
MCCAIG, for a term to expire 6-30-2015

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
**CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION
COMMISSION**

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
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LISA DUNN
Chair

L. DEW KANESHIRO
Commissioner

TOM WATTS
Commissioner

PAMELA FERGUSON-BREY
Executive Director

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 733
Consideration and Confirmation of Mari L. McCaig
to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission

by

Pamela Ferguson-Brey, Executive Director
Crime Victim Compensation Commission

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 19, 2011, 1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

Chair Espero, Vice-Chair Kidani and Members:

Thank you for providing the Crime Victim Compensation Commission ("Commission") with the opportunity to testify before you today. The Commission strongly supports the appointment of Mari A. McCaig to serve as a Commissioner, for a term to expire on June 30, 2015. Ms. McCaig is a knowledgeable, experienced, and compassionate advocate for crime victims, with specialized expertise in the provision of services to underserved victim populations, and in the treatment of sexual assault and domestic abuse survivors with PTSD.

The Commission is a quasi-judicial body that assists victims of violent crime by providing compensation for crime-related expenses. The Commission also administers a Restitution Recovery Project to collect restitution from inmates and parolees and disburse the collected funds to crime victims. Commissioners hear appeals from administrative decisions ordering or denying compensation and set policy for the determination of claims submitted to the Commission. Special areas of concern in the past have been the treatment of sexual assault and domestic abuse victims, enhancing the delivery of compensation services to underserved victim populations, while an ongoing concern remains the sustainable fiscal self-sufficiency of the Commission. The Commission is funded solely through special funds and federal matching VOCA funds.

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Victims of violent crime who apply for compensation are often traumatized and angry about what has happened to them and frustrated about the way the criminal justice system treats victims. Commissioners must be knowledgeable about the impact of violent crime on individuals and be sensitive and compassionate in dealing with these individuals. Ms. McCaig is a knowledgeable, experienced, and compassionate advocate for crime victims. She has served for over twenty (20) years as a Victim/Witness Counselor at the Honolulu Department of the Prosecution Attorney providing counseling and support to victims, witnesses and surviving family member in cases involving murder, assault, domestic abuse, sexual assault and other violent crimes.

Another area of commitment for the Commission is improving the delivery of compensation services to underserved victim populations. The Commission was part of a strategic planning project to develop a strategic plan to address the needs of underserved populations. Four populations of underserved victims were identified by the project: the elderly, individuals with limited-English language proficiency; the disabled, and visitors/tourists.

Ms. McCaig's expertise in promoting access to compensation on behalf of visitor/tourist victims will assist the Commission in meeting its commitment to assist this underserved victim population. Ms. McCaig has most recently served as the Director of the Visitor Assistance Program at the Honolulu Department of the Prosecuting Attorney. The Visitor Assistance program provides comprehensive victim services to crime victims who were victimized during their stay as visitors to Hawaii.

Ms. McCaig also has expertise in the treatment of PTSD suffered by survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault. After working as a research therapist with domestic abuse and sexual assault survivors, she co-authored an article in 2004 with Dr. Edward Kubany, *Cognitive Trauma Therapy for Battered Women with PTSD*. Ms. McCaig's expertise in this area will support the Commission's ongoing efforts to provide consistently excellent services to victims of these violent crimes.

Ms. McCaig's background, training, and experience will be invaluable to the Commission in its efforts to provide high quality services to Hawaii's violent crime victims. The Commission strongly urges you to confirm Ms. McCaig's appointment to the Commission.



VISITOR ALOHA SOCIETY OF HAWAII

April 14, 2011

Will Espero, Chair
Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 231
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Crime Victim Compensation Commission nomination # **GM733**

Dear Chair Espero and members of the Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs Committee:

It is with a great deal of respect that I write this letter of support for Mari McCaig for her confirmation to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. I have known Mari for a number of years in her capacity of the Director of the Visitor Assistance Program with the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office for the City and County of Honolulu.

Ms. McCaig is an expert in the field of dealing with victims. She has handled hundreds of cases involving victims and is a true professional. Her job is not an easy one, yet she is always calm in the face of crisis and composed when it comes to highly charged emotional situations.

Ms. McCaig is one of the most exceptional people that I know. When it comes to tragic situations, I have seen her first hand assist victims in situations where others may walk away. She is intelligent, kind, strong, compassionate, and is a knowledgeable resource with how to handle difficult situations.

Ms. McCaig would be a tremendous asset to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission, and it is with pride that I support her nomination. Thank you for your courtesy and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Lani Rich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Lani Rich
President and Executive Director
Visitor Aloha Society of Hawaii

Waikiki Shopping Plaza • 2250 Kalakaua Avenue, Suite 403-3 • Honolulu, HI 96815
Phone: (808) 926-8274 • Fax: (808) 926-0500 • Email: visitorexec@hawaii.rr.com

Testimony Before the
Senate Committee on Public Safety,
Government Operations and
Military Affairs
Friday, April 15, 2011

By
Ibrahim G. Aoudé, Ph. D. Chair
Department of Ethnic Studies
College of Social Sciences
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION AND CONFIRMATION OF MS. MARI A. MCCAIG
TO THE CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION COMMISSION.

Chair Will Espero, Vice Chair Michelle Kidani and members of the Senate Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs. My name is Ibrahim G. Aoudé and I am the Department Chair of Ethnic Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I had the pleasure of working with Ms. Mari McCaig at Ethnic Studies from 1976-1986. We have since become very good friends and so my testimony is based on having known Ms. McCaig for over 34 years. As a Teaching Assistant at Ethnic Studies, she was dedicated to serving the students and collegial with her peers and respectful of the faculty and staff. She was fair, knowledgeable and serious in everything that she did.

Ms. McCaig and often meet to discuss matters of significance to the community and I can say unequivocally that she has the interest of the community at heart. She has been demonstrating that on a daily basis in her position with the Department of Prosecuting Attorney from 1989 to the present. As a crime victim advocate, she has the experience and the knowledge and definitely the education to do a superb job in the support of crime victims. Ms. McCaig's close involvement with the community would also be an asset for her work in the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

I give her my full and enthusiastic support.
Mahalo Nui and Aloha.

From: Brasseur, Yvette [<mailto:ybrasseur@honolulu.gov>]
Sent: Friday, April 15, 2011 6:21 PM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: Letter of support for nomination GM733

April 15, 2011

Will Espero, Chair
Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 231
Honolulu, HI 96813

Honorable Chair Espero and Committee Members of Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs,

I am writing this letter in overwhelming support of the nomination of Mari McCaig to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. I have known Mari for eighteen (18) years, as we have been, and still are victim/witness advocates for the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney. In all the years I've known Mari, she has been a tremendous advocate for crime victims, as well as for other vulnerable populations in our community. She understands, on a deep level, the many and various ways that violent crime can affect both the individual, and the community at large. She regularly goes above and beyond what is required to meet the needs of the victims she serves. She also has an extensive understanding about marginalized groups, whether it be youth that get caught up in gang subculture (and are sometimes also victims of that culture), victims of domestic violence, or visitors to Hawaii, who become victims when they least expect it. I have seen Mari deal with people across the board with great sensitivity and compassion. With her wealth of wisdom and enormous heart I can think of nobody I would more highly recommend to serve as a commissioner to Crime Victim Compensation Commission than Mari McCaig.

Most Sincerely,

Yvette Brasseur,
Victim/Witness Advocate

Will Espero, Chair
Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 231
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairman Espero,

I am writing this letter in support of Mari A. McCaig's nomination to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. The reference number for her nomination is: GM733.

I recently retired from the Honolulu Police Department after 30 years of service. My last assignment was Detective/Supervisor of the Missing Persons Unit, Homicide Detail, of the Criminal Investigation Division.

I have known Mari A. McCaig for over 20 years, personally and professionally. I have worked with her on several felony cases throughout the years, where she was the Victim/Witness Advocate for our extremely traumatized victims, witnesses, and their families.

Mari's expertise was invaluable in assisting them through the complicated and sometimes frustrating criminal justice system. She assisted myself, and other detectives, on several occasions making sure our victims, and vital witnesses were in court, or present at the Grand Jury, prepared to testify. She provided them with comfort, support, information, and referrals.

Mari is a true professional, compassionate and sensitive to others feelings. She genuinely treats all individuals with dignity and respect. She has an excellent working relationship with not only the Honolulu Police Department, but all relative law enforcement and community agencies, and is highly respected in her field.

She is an inspiring mentor and role model, with the highest integrity, and a strong commitment to fairness and justice.

I have observed Mari tenaciously work long hours, absent of any monetary compensation, dedicated to the advocacy of crime victims and assisting them in acquiring the services due them, under Hawaii State Law.

I believe Mari will be a valuable asset to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

In closing, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to express my strongest support, without any reservation for Mari A. McCaig's nomination for this position.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jill Kauai
P.O. Box 244
Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795
Phone: (808) 554-6816
Email: JKauai808@gmail.com

From: Tam, Sandra [mailto:stam@honolulu.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2011 11:20 AM
To: Sen. Will Espero
Subject: CVCC Nominee Mari McCaig

April 18, 2011

Will Espero, Chair
Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 231
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Crime Victim Compensation Commission nomination #GM 733

Honorable Chair Espero and members of the Public Safety, Government Operations and
Military Affairs Committee:

I am writing in strong support of the nominee Mari McCaig to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. Mari and I have worked together as Victim Advocates with the Honolulu City and County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney for the past 22 years. For the past 14 years Mari has successfully created and directed the Visitor Assistance Program with a vision and dedication to improve crisis response and counseling services to our visitors who are faced with victimization.

Mari is well respected in the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney for her high standards for ethical conduct, extensive experience and her tireless contribution to give a strong voice to those who cannot speak for themselves. She consistently gives much more than required of her and has been a mentor to numerous students and advocates while providing various services to hundreds of victims with compassion, kindness and respect. Mari has worked with high risk/ vulnerable populations with sensitivity and caring, and has strength in identifying barriers to appropriate services and uses her keen problem solving skills to remove those barriers and make significant improvements in the lives of victims. In addition, her ability to successfully network in the community has led to positive cooperation with various private and government offices which again facilitates optimum services for crime victims. I have tremendous respect for Mari, a remarkable person who puts her heart and soul into making positive change for others.

I wholeheartedly support Mari's nomination to the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Sandra Tam
Victim Advocate
Victim Witness Kokua Services
Office of the Prosecuting Attorney

Mari A McCaig
P.O. Box 513
Ka`a`awa
Hawaii 96730
E-mail: mari.mccaig@gmail.com

April 18, 2011

Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Re: TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 733
Consideration and Confirmation of Mari McCaig to the Crime Victim Compensation
Commission

Senator Espero, Senator Kidani and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am honored to be nominated by the Governor to serve as a Commissioner on the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

I have worked as a victim advocate for 22 years with the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, City and County of Honolulu and I am currently the director of the Visitor Victim Assistance Program. A significant part of my professional life has been dedicated to working with victims of crime and providing services and support as they navigate through the arduous complexities of the Criminal Justice system.

One agency stands out as a beacon of light, hope and help for victims and that is the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. During the time I have worked with the Crime Victim Compensation Commission I have come to recognize and appreciate the importance of the vital service they provide to victims of crime.

I will be retiring from my position with the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney in May and look forward to the possibility of continuing to support the mission and work of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

My extensive experience in dealing with victims has given me a unique perspective on the physical, mental and financial hardships they face when victimized by crime. I believe that this experience would be an asset to the Commission and I would welcome an opportunity to be of service.

Sincerely,

Mari McCaig

Why do you wish to be a member of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission?

During the 22 years I have worked at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, I have been impressed by the excellent work done by the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. Victims of crime are often times left angry and disappointed by the criminal justice system. Their sense of justice and redress is restored in great measure by the compassionate treatment and the compensation they receive from the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission?

The primary role of a Commissioner, as I see it, is to determine the eligibility of the crime victim applicant. To then evaluate and analyze criminal justice data to verify that an eligible crime has occurred. And finally, to evaluate financial, medical and criminal justice documents to ensure that the victim is fairly and justly awarded compensation.

Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability of the Crime Victim Compensation Commission.

I have worked in the criminal justice system for 22 years providing services to a wide variety of crime victims and/ or surviving family members. During this time I have worked with victims of sex assault, domestic violence, physical assault, kidnapping and in the cases of homicide and negligent homicide, the surviving family members of the victim/s. In addition, my academic work has been primarily in the field of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I obtained a Masters in Counseling Psychology from Chaminade University and I am also a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC)

What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

During these austere economic times an important concern is that the Commission remain fiscally viable. I believe that this can be accomplished in a variety of ways. I am committed to the concept of restorative justice for crime victims. I believe an important part of this is holding offenders accountable for the harm they have inflicted on the victim and as a vital part of restorative justice holding them financially accountable by paying restitution to the victim and/or restitution to CVCC.