

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3535**

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 19 2012

RE: GOV. MSG. NOS. 645,
646

Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui
President of the Senate
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2012
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Labor, to which was referred Governor's Message Nos. 645 and 646, submitting for study and consideration the nominations of:

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

G.M. No. 645 WALLACE FUKUNAGA,
for a term to expire 6-30-2016; and

G.M. No. 646 KIM COCO IWAMOTO,
for a term to expire 6-30-2016,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the personal histories, resumes, and statements submitted by the nominees and finds Wallace Fukunaga and Kim Coco Iwamoto to possess the requisite qualifications to be nominated to serve on the Civil Rights Commission.

WALLACE FUKUNAGA

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination of Wallace Fukunaga from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission; The Institute for Human Services, Inc.; Hawaii Friends of Civil Rights; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Honolulu Hawaii Branch; Japanese American Citizens League, Honolulu Chapter; and twelve individuals.



Rev. Fukunaga earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Asian Studies from Harvard University. He later obtained his Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary and his Doctor of Ministry from Pacific School of Religion. Currently, Rev. Fukunaga is a Minister for the United Church of Christ. He previously served as President of Northshore Resources, Inc., which was a self-start restaurant and property management company, and he was awarded WorkHawaii's Small Business Person of the Year in 1984.

Rev. Fukunaga has an extensive record of community service that demonstrates his commitment to serving the community and protecting civil rights. He is the former President of the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii, and previously served on the Board of Directors of the Japanese American Citizens League, Japanese Cultural Center, and Mental Health Association of Hawaii. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii. All of these organizations share a common mission of advocating for and protecting human dignity and civil rights.

According to testimony in support of his nomination, Rev. Fukunaga is committed to honoring diversity, serving the poor in ways that will empower and inspire them, and supporting military personnel while advocating peace. His effective leadership and listening skills, coupled with his great sense of humor, enable him to guide others through all, and sometimes difficult, situations. He is a passionate advocate for the rights of others, especially of those in the minority, and effectively negotiates for fair outcomes. While his beliefs may be based on Christian values, he is open and accepting of people of different faiths.

KIM COCO IWAMOTO

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination of Kim Coco Iwamoto from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission; Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus; Pride At Work Hawai'i; Mental Health America of Hawai'i; UNITE HERE Local 5; Japanese American Citizens League, Honolulu Chapter; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Honolulu Hawaii Branch; and four individuals. One individual submitted comments.

Ms. Iwamoto earned her Associate in Applied Science in Merchandising from the Fashion Institute of Technology, State



University of New York and obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University. She later earned her Doctorate of Jurisprudence from University of New Mexico School of Law. While in law school, she was the recipient of the Elizabeth Ann Randel Award for Initiative and Innovation Toward Race and Gender Justice. She is licensed to practice law in Hawaii.

Ms. Iwamoto currently owns and manages Affordable Quality Apartment Rentals, LLC, which is a small apartment complex in urban Honolulu designed and maintained to provide an affordable housing option in the urban core. She also owns and serves as a designer for Enlightened Energy, LLC, a company that transforms urban residences into model self-sufficient dwellings and energy portals for the community.

However, Ms. Iwamoto is most notably recognized for her dedicated service to the community. She is a former elected member of the Hawaii State Board of Education, former appointed member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board, and formerly served on the Career & Technical Education Coordinating Advisory Council and the Safe School Community Advisory Committee. She is also a certified therapeutic foster parent for Child & Family Services Hawaii and a certified foster parent with the Department of Human Services.

According to testimony in support of her nomination, Ms. Iwamoto is an advocate for economic and social justice. Several years ago, she served as part of a community coalition supporting hotel workers through a difficult contract negotiation. Her recognition and articulation of the economic justice issues at stake helped to educate and motivate the hotel workers through the negotiation. Her service as a certified foster parent and as an elected member of the Board of Education demonstrates her tireless dedication and advocacy for Hawaii's youth. As a member of the Board of Education, she was instrumental in amending Hawaii Administrative Rules so that Department of Education employees are prohibited from harassing or discriminating against students based on traits such as sexual orientation and gender identity expression, socioeconomic status, and physical appearance. Finally, she has served the State well through her work with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, by becoming the highest ranking elected transgender official in the nation, and by being a proponent of equal treatment.



Based on the testimony submitted, your Committee finds that Wallace Fukunaga and Kim Coco Iwamoto are exceptionally qualified to serve on the Civil Rights Commission. The nominees' breadth of life, professional, and community service experiences will serve the Commission and public well.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary and Labor that are attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominees, has found the nominees to be qualified for the positions to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nominations.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary and
Labor,



CLAYTON HEE, Chair



