

TESTIMONY

GM552

**HTH
Confirmation Hearing
03-14-2012**

Aloha Mailene,

I wish to be a member of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Oahu Service Area Board to contribute my expertise and skills as a clinician to advocate for the mental health community in Hawaii. As a member, my role will be to inform the service area coordinator of relevant matters, issues, and concerns within the mental health community and to bring much needed attention to mental health and substance abuse in our communities.

As a provider of mental health and substance abuse services, I am able to communicate professionally to others about the facts and myths of mental illness as well as address solutions to systems wide issues that prevent critical mental health services from being delivered efficiently and cost effectively. My hope is to decrease stigma toward those with mental illness and increase access to appropriate care for our communities overall health and wellbeing. I am knowledgeable, experienced and articulate about mental health and substance abuse issues which allows me to be approachable to people who have fears and biases about men, women, and children with mental illness or who are different from themselves. I have previously worked directing the statewide crisis service program contracted by AMHD and have recent intimate working knowledge of the challenges and needs of the state mental health care system. I am currently working as a contractor for the federal government so there is no immediate concern for possible conflict of interests.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Taryn E. Dean, LCSW, CSAC