

TESTIMONY

GM553

HTH
Confirmation Hearing
03-12-2012

SANDRA A. SIMMS
94-415 Kealakaa Street
Mililani, HI 96789
(808) 625-1834
sandra.simms48@gmail.com

March 6, 2012

The Honorable Josh Green, M.D.
Chair, Senate Committee on Health
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Appointment of Judge Sandra A. Simms (ret.) to the State Council on Mental Health

Greetings,

I am honored to have been asked to serve on the State Council on Mental Health by Governor Neil Abercrombie, and humbly request this committee to confirm my appointment.

I have been a member of the Board of Directors of Mental Health America of Hawai'i since 2006, serving as its Vice President and Chair of Resource Development. The organization has an established history of diligent work on behalf of supporting mental wellness and reducing the stigma of mental illness. We have championed those leaders and citizens in our community who have supported these efforts through our Mahalo Awards Luncheon held annually, which I currently chair.

In my years as a judge in the District and Circuit Courts of our state, I have first hand knowledge and experience of the issues and challenges facing those with mental illness and the systems and resources designed to address these complex matters. In my personal life, I, too, have had the challenge of having a family member with mental health issues. It is an important area, and I believe my understanding and compassion will enable me to be of greater service to my community. I welcome the opportunity to do so through my work on the State Council on Mental Health, if my appointment is confirmed.

During my interim appointment, I have attended its monthly meetings and a retreat workshop that held in September I've learned a great deal in my short time there, and

look forward to being of even greater assistance in working with the Council and the Department of Health in helping to assure competent, caring services and programs to promote the mental well being of our Hawai'i community.

Thank you for this opportunity to be of service.

Aloha and peace,

Sandra A. Simms
Retired Judge, State of Hawai'i



NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



LORETTA J. FUDDY, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Health

G.M. 553, G.M. 555, G.M. 556 & G.M. 594, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the State Council on Mental Health, gubernatorial nominees, SANDRA SIMMS, CHAD KOYANAGI, M.D., HAAHEO MANSFIELD and TYRA DU BOSE.

**Testimony of Loretta J. Fuddy, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
Director of Health**

March 12, 2012

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health strongly supports the nomination of Sandra Simms
2 (6/30/2014), Chad Koyanagi, M.D. (6/30/2016), Haaheo Mansfield (6/30/2016), and Tyra Du Bose
3 (6/30/2016) to serve on the State Council on Mental Health (SCMH) for terms to expire as
4 parenthetically indicated.

5 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

6 **Purpose and Justification:** To confirm the appointments of Sandra Simms, Chad Koyanagi M.D.,
7 Haaheo Mansfield and Tyra Du Bose to serve on the SCMH.

8 The SCMH appointees represent the federal mandated positions under Public Law 102-321,
9 Section 1914(c) representing the provider, vocational rehabilitation, and families of adults or families of
10 children with emotional disturbance segments of the community.

11 **Sandra Simms** is a retired judge, who served in the District Court from November 1991, then
12 appointed to the First Circuit Court in 1994 and later retired from the bench June 1, 2004. During her
13 tenure on the bench, Judge Simms presided over high profile cases, as well as cases involving domestic
14 violence, restraining orders, civil proceedings and felony jury trials. Judge Simms has given numerous

1 presentations to assist a variety of community organizations, schools and forums to better understand the
2 judicial system. Currently, she is a member of the National Bar Association and serves on the Hawai`i
3 State Board of Bar Examiners, which writes and administers the Bar exam for attorneys who want to
4 practice law in the State of Hawai`i.

5 Judge Simms is also well known throughout Hawai`i, not only for her legal counsel experience,
6 but also for her community involvement. For six years, she served on Neighborhood Board #25 (1983-
7 1990), and on various public school committees. She is the president of the Soroptimist International of
8 Waikiki, Vice President of the Board of Directors for Mental Health America and a member of the
9 Hawai`i Chapter of The Links, Incorporated. Judge Simms brings a wealth of knowledge and
10 experience in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, and the legal system to the SCMHI.

11 **Dr. Chad Koyanagi** is the Assistant Professor at the John A. Burns School of Medicine,
12 Department of Psychiatry, University of Hawai`i at Manoa. He also works as the Medical Director of
13 the Queen's Hospital, Kekela Unit, Psychiatrist of the Pacific Survivor Center for victims of Torture and
14 Human Trafficking, as a psychiatrist for the Department of Public Safety, is a provider of rural mental
15 health services on Moloka`i and Maui, and advocates for the needs of individuals with severe and
16 persistent mental illness. Dr. Koyanagi's experience in teaching and training in the field of psychiatry
17 will be an asset in developing innovative solutions to the mental health needs of our communities locally
18 as well as in rural Hawai`i.

19 **Haaheo Mansfield** is the Vice President of Programs, Parents and Children Together (PACT)
20 and has been working at PACT for over 23 years, of which, 16 of those years has been as a senior
21 executive. Her 26-year career has been primarily in the field of social services coupled with various
22 community volunteer activities in Hawai`i. In 2010, Governor Lingle appointed Ms. Mansfield to the
SCMHI, but during the transition to the new Administration, her name was inadvertently not submitted

1 for confirmation during the 2010 Legislature. During her tenure, Ms. Mansfield was instrumental in
2 working with the Council in carrying out its mission. The Council found Ms. Mansfield to be a hard
3 worker and an excellent team player, who is able to quickly get to the core of issues and creatively come
4 up with practical solutions. As a member of the SCMH, her attributes and abilities will continue to
5 make a positive impact and meaningful contributions to the people living with mental illness.

6 **Tyra Du Bose** is a resident of Hawai`i all her life, and now resides in Lana`i city. Although
7 Ms. Du Bose works in the Hawai`i Families as Allies program, her tenure on the SCMH will be in the
8 capacity of a family member of a youth with emotional disturbance. She is the mother of three children,
9 one of whom has special needs. Ms. Du Bose also represents the island of Lana`i, which will assist the
10 SCMH to better understand the needs of individuals living with mental illness in this rural locale.

11 Through social media, Ms. Du Bose has been able to educate her peers, collaborate with teachers, and
12 network with parents of children with special needs in her community. She has been an inspiration on
13 Lana`i and is enthusiastic about promoting awareness of mental illness and other disabilities in her
14 community through workshops, support groups and trainings.

15 We respectfully request your favorable consideration in confirming the appointments of Sandra
16 Simms, Chad Koyanagi, M.D., Haaheo Mansfield and Tyra Du Bose to the State Council on Mental
17 Health.

18 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of these appointments.



... HELPING HAWAII LIVE LIFE WELL

1124 FORT STREET MALL, SUITE 205. HONOLULU, HI 96813
 ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCE: 67 SOUTH PAUHI OFF BETHEL PH. 808.521.1846
 F: 808.533.6995 E: INFO@MENTALHEALTH-HI.ORG W: WWW.MENTALHEALTH-HI.ORG

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March 9, 2012

To: Sen. Josh Green, Chair, and Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair, and members, Senate Health Committee

RE: Confirmation of Nominee Sandra Simms to the State Council on Mental Health, GM553.

As Executive Director of Mental Health America, I strongly support the confirmation of Sandra Simms to the State Council on Mental Health.

She has been a member of the Board of Directors of Mental Health America of Hawai'i (MHA Hawai'i) since 2005. She has always performed in an exemplary manner. She is reliable, loyal and effective.

She will be an important voice of the mental health community as a member of the State Council on Mental Health, and I urge you to pass her nomination.

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

With Aloha,

Marya Grambs,
 Executive Director

Green4 - Mailene

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 09, 2012 7:04 PM
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: vested_interest_hi@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for GM553 on 3/12/2012 1:30:00 PM

Testimony for HTH 3/12/2012 1:30:00 PM GM553

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Elizabeth Kent
Organization: Individual
E-mail: vested_interest_hi@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 3/9/2012

Comments:

It is my pleasure to submit testimony in support of the nomination of Judge Sandra Simms (ret) to this position. Judge Simms will bring dedication, common sense, and compassion to this Board. I urge you to support her nomination.