

GM 662

Submitting for consideration and
confirmation to the Correctional Industries
Advisory Committee, Gubernatorial Nominee,
JAMES WATARU,
for a term to expire 6-30-2015

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
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TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 662, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINATION OF
JAMES WATARU
TO THE CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

by
Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata, Director
Department of Public Safety

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

Thursday, April 12, 2012; 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

Chair Espero, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) strongly supports the nomination of James Wataru to the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee, term expiration of June 30, 2016.

Mr. Wataru has had considerable experience as a member of the plumbers union. Mr. Wataru also serves on various community boards focusing on foster care. Mr. Wataru's contributions to Correctional Industries' efforts to employ inmates and prepare them for transition back to the community would be very valuable.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Mr. Wataru's nomination.



HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 1463, AFL-CIO
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The Senate
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2012
Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
April 12, 2011

Governor's Message No. 662 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee, Gubernatorial Nominee,
JAMES WATARU

My name is Robert H. Lee and I am the President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO. HFFA represents the 2,800 active and retired professional fire fighters throughout the State. HFFA strongly supports Governor's Message No. 662, confirming James Wataru, Gubernatorial Nominee to the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee.

Mr. Wataru, President of the United Public Workers Hawaii, is most qualified to serve on the Commission. His professional experience, understanding of the correctional system and his service on the Workforce Development Council makes him a qualified nominee.

HFFA have had many opportunities to discuss issues of mutual concern with Mr. Wataru as he is a member of the Honolulu Fire Commission. Mr. Wataru welcomes input from the stakeholders and makes sound and fair decisions.

It is our honor and privilege to support Mr. James Wataru to serve as a member of the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee.

SHOPO



April 11, 2012

Via email: PGMTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov; hard copy mailed

The Honorable Will Espero, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety,
Government Operations, and Military Affairs
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Espero and Committee Members:

Re: **JAMES WATARU**
GM 662
Confirmation to the Correctional Industries
Advisory Committee
Term to Expire 6-30-2015


Hearing on: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 224

On behalf of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers, the labor union representing approximately 2900 police officers statewide, we are pleased to submit this letter in support of James Wataru.

His knowledge and experience will definitely be an asset for vital input and decision-making.

Thank you for your consideration and this opportunity to submit our support.

Sincerely yours,


TENARI R. MA'AFALA
President

jmo
File

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April 11, 2012

Senator Will Espero, Chair
Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs
Conference Room 224
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: LETTER IN SUPPORT OF JAMES WATARU

Dear Chair Espero and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong support of James Wataru to serve on the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee. I have known James for five years, both as a professional and as a close personal friend. During that time, I have had the pleasure of witnessing James' well-earned reputation for leadership and community involvement. Throughout his life, James has demonstrated a strong intellect and a unique understanding of the people of Hawai'i. More importantly, he has always been honest, straightforward, and committed to improving our community.

James is a consummate professional. He is unwavering in his commitment to public service, yet always finds time for his family and friends. He has served honorably and dutifully in many different capacities, most recently as the State President for UPW AFSCME Local 646. He is also President of the Kaiser High School Athletic Booster Club, a member of the Fire Commission, and an Advisory Board Member for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

James will bring to the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee a wealth of knowledge and experience, and a passion to serve the public. He will also no doubt foster a strong working relationship between Correctional Industries and the Department of Public Safety. In sum, James clearly possesses the professional credentials, the life experience, and a strong record of community service that, in my humble opinion, would enable him to excel on the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee. Thank you in advance for your kind consideration of James Wataru's nomination.

Very truly yours,



Kevin A. Souza, Esq.

Original Message-----

From: james wataru [mailto:jswjr66@AOL.COM]

Sent: Tuesday, April 10, 2012 11:24 AM

To: Sen. Will Espero

Subject: james wataru response to questions.

Aloha Senator Espero, Vice Chair Kidani, and committee members

I received your questions and here are my responses I apologize for the delay in getting these to you but I was in D.C last week and only got them upon my return on Monday.

As to question number one

I wish to be a part of this committee because having served on many boards in the past as well as currently I feel as though when asked, and you are able you have an obligation to do so and I have always found public service to be very rewarding and feel I can bring a different view to the committee.

As to question number two

I believe that I am qualified for this position because in my position as the President of a large labor organization as well as my involvement on other boards and commissions I have a good understanding as to the climate of our economy and our employment market, and because I feel that those in our incarcerated community are a very underutilized workforce in our state and in a tough economy such as the one we are in now I feel the need to make use of this manpower to both ease the cost burden to the public but more so to help train these inmates to be successful contributing members of our community upon their release so that they don't continue on with this terrible cycle.

As to question number three

I hope that with the other members of this committee we can work together with both the department of public safety and the public to build a strong relationship and develop programs that would be beneficial to all parties involved as well as those that are incarcerated, because if we do not then we are destined to repeat this same cycle of inmates using the prison system as a revolving door.

I know that there are those who refuse to change and sadly those we can not do much for, but I truly believe that given the right circumstances and the right opportunities we can make a difference and we can change lives. I know that reading this it may seem as though I have visions of something that is beyond our expectations and if you think for a second that I am writing any of these things with the hopes of impressing the confirmation committee let me tell you I am not. Being a foster parent for the past 12 years has shown me and my family that one person or one family can absolutely make a difference in the life of a person thought to be destined for a life of crime and incarceration so yes I truly believe that we can be successful and accomplish the things of which I have written.

As to question number four

No I see no conflicts and if any arise I will bring them to the attention of the committee.