

**GM839**

**CAROL MON LEE**

**Nomination to the Western  
Interstate Commission for Higher  
Education**

**Carol Mon Lee**  
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April 3, 2012

Senator Jill Tokuda  
Chair, Senate Committee on Education

RE: Nomination to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education  
(WICHE)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to answer these questions.

1) *Why do you wish to be a member of the WICHE?*

In this current economic climate with reduced funding to education, WICHE is even more important to our state than ever. WICHE gives our youth increased higher education options by providing support to study out of state, to study in fields not currently taught in Hawaii, and to take advantage of distance learning. WICHE also enables students from the mainland to study here in Hawaii, enriching our schools and community by their diversity and allowing us to share our unique island culture.

Since 1976 I have lived in Hawaii pursuing a career, raising and caring for my family and being involved in our community. Although my professional career has included education, law and business, the major thread through both my career and my years in community service has been education, including 12 years as a trustee at St. Andrews Priory School and 2 ½ years as an elected member of the Hawaii State Board of Education (until replaced by the appointed board).

By becoming a commissioner on WICHE, I will represent Hawaii's interests and also work for the collective good of the 15 state members on WICHE's many important educational initiatives including; the Western Cooperative for Education Technology, the Western Governors University, the WICHE Internet Course Exchange, the North American Network of Science Labs Online, and the Interstate Passport Initiative.

Although it is clichéd to speak about our individual responsibilities to our community and society in general, my many years of community service in Hawaii are evidence of my long-term commitment to giving back. And for me, the opportunity to serve in the field of education is even more rewarding.

2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the WICHE?

My role would be to assist WICHE in its work as a thought-leader in higher education, including the development of policies and programs that improve access, quality, and affordability to students. In addition, I would work to ensure that those policies and programs are communicated to and used to the maximum advantage by our citizens.

3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the WICHE 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 as a member of the WICHE.

I am a former member of the Hawaii State Board of Education and retired Associate Dean at the Univ. of Hawaii Richardson School of Law. Although I was formally trained to teach K-12, my experience in education is deeper and has incorporated my legal training, business and administrative skills and interest in public service.

After finishing Barnard College and Columbia University's Teachers College, I was unable to find a permanent teaching position so I completed a law degree at Univ. of Calif. Hastings College of Law. I practiced law for 2 years in Los Angeles but upon moving to Hawaii, took the opportunity to switch to teaching law at UH Law School between 1976-78. My career then shifted to corporate business and more law practice for several years, though I continued to stay involved in education through volunteer work.

Finally in 1996, I returned to UH Richardson Law School as Associate Dean - a position that perfectly combined my law and business background, my administrative skills and my interest in education. I retired at the end of 2006. As Associate Dean I wore many hats including 1) head of the academic program (curriculum, special programs, ABA compliance, academic calendar) 2) student matters (counseling, discipline, Orientation, student handbook) 3) administration (faculty hiring, staff supervision, employee investigations, ABA/AALS site visits, communications, special events) 4) programs coordinator (Externship Director, Legal Writing Program) 5) and other responsibilities (e.g. building renovations, faculty committees, upper campus liaison, AALS annual meetings, Acting Dean and briefly Interim Dean). Because the Law School was small with about 100 students per class, I worked closely with our students. Upon my retirement, the students established the Carol Mon Lee Scholarship Fund, which has since become endowed, and the alumni association made me an honorary alumna.

My work in education has been uniquely three-dimensional. In addition to teaching and higher education administration, I have participated in institutional level policy-making. For 12 years, I served on St. Andrews

Priory's Board of Trustees. I was also elected to the Hawaii State Board of Education in 2008 to help formulate statewide educational policy. I worked with the Department of Education, the Hawaii State Public Libraries Systems and various educational partners during a challenging period. We faced budget cuts, furloughs, program cuts, school closures, labor union issues, and major department reorganizations. I chaired the Legislative Committee and the Superintendent Search and Selection Committees. While on the BOE, I took great interest in the Hawaii P-20 Initiative and know this will help in my role as a WICHE commissioner.

My business background includes 15 years as Senior Vice-President of American Trust Co. of Hawaii and Bishop Trust Co., local sister financial services companies handling fiduciary matters for individuals and corporate clients. I was a member of the executive team and worked on complex and difficult issues including corporate reorganizations and mergers, hardware conversions involving system wide changes, the 1987 financial crisis and finally the sale and transfer of the businesses to Bank of Hawaii.

As a lawyer, I practiced in business firms in Hawaii and California. I was also a staff attorney at the 1978 Hawaii Constitutional Convention where I became sensitive to the uniqueness of our island culture and the fragility of our resources.

Public service has also been a vital part of my life. I was the first president of Hawaii Women Lawyers in the late 1970's. HWL promoted the advancement of women and addressed broader community issues like domestic violence. I have held leadership positions in many other organizations. Governor Waihee appointed me to the Hawaii Real Estate Commission for two terms. Most recently I was a volunteer staffer on several APEC projects.

I believe that my broad experiences in education, law, business and community service will provide a useful balance to commission members with more academic expertise. As a former member of the Hawaii State Board of Education, I can also provide a unique understanding of the K-12 perspective to the WICHE.

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

I hope to help Hawaii maximize its higher education goals through WICHE by:

- a) Identifying more opportunities for our students through WICHE's cooperative programs
- b) Taking advantage of WICHE's data, research and projects that are far beyond the our individual state's capacity to produce

- c) Improving the alignment between K-12 and higher education by helping our students be prepared for college and
- d) Insuring the success of our students who participate in WICHE.

I also hope to contribute to the bigger picture by participating in WICHE's work in leading edge educational issues.

5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the WICHE?

- a) Diligence. I take my responsibilities very seriously and strive to persevere. I seek to always be prepared, do my share, and help others. I am thorough and take great pride in my work.
- b) Positive attitude. Though I am highly realistic and have a practical approach to problem solving, I maintain a positive attitude and work with good cheer.
- c) Good at working with others. I enjoy teamwork and consensus building. Although I don't give up on my principles, I don't insist on my own way and will take into account others' perspectives. I am an attentive listener with good interpersonal skills and enjoy working toward a common goal.

6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the WICHE?

My recent service as an elected member on the Hawaii State Board of Education exposed me to many issues our public high school students face in their preparedness for college. I will bring that sensitivity to the WICHE.

7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the WICHE? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

My son, Michael Lee Shinn, completed his first year at U.H. Richardson School of Law in 2010 but is currently on leave while serving in the U.S. Air Force and deployed to Afghanistan. I believe he later plans to complete his law degree at UH under the G.I. Bill. Neither my husband, retired U.H. Prof. Jerry Bentley, nor I know of others who might pose a conflict for me.

If a questionable situation arises, I would 1) disclose my relationship or interest to the appropriate parties 2) seek counsel – from the State's Ethics Commission, the UH General Counsel's Office or other entity and 3) recuse myself from voting if there is either an appearance of or actual conflict.

I would be happy to expand on any of these answers. MAHALO!

**GM839**

**TESTIMONY**

**Carol Mon Lee**  
[carolmonlee@gmail.com](mailto:carolmonlee@gmail.com)

April 11, 2012

The Honorable Jill Tokuda, Chair  
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Education

Re: GM 839, CAROL MON LEE  
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education  
For a term to expire 6-30-2016  
Friday, April 13, 2012 at 1:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conf. Room 225

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of my nomination by Gov. Abecrombie to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. WICHE is a 15 state consortium that provides exchange programs in undergraduate, graduate and professional schools by increasing the access, quality and affordability of higher education opportunities for its member states' residents. In Hawaii, this has meant the savings of millions and millions of dollars for our students who have participated in WICHE programs since 1959. WICHE is also a national leader in the development of important educational initiatives and policies including technology, distance learning, workforce development, financing, financial aid and behavioral health. Hawaii has benefitted greatly by its membership and I would be honored to continue this important work.

My experience and interest in education, law, business and public service as well as my years of living in our community will serve me well as a

commissioner. I am a former elected member of the Hawaii State Board of Education that formulates K-12 public education policy for our state. I also have years of experience in higher education both as a member of the faculty and as Associate Dean of the Univ. of Hawai`i Richardson School of Law. For 12 years I served as a trustee of St. Andrew's Priory School. As a WICHE commissioner, I hope to work on the alignment between K-12 and higher education to insure the success of our students who participate in WICHE programs.

I have also practiced law in both Hawaii and California, served as a staff attorney for the 1978 Hawaii Constitutional Convention, worked for 15 years as a senior executive in two Hawaii financial services businesses, and volunteered in professional and community activities for decades. My broad background will bring a balance to those with more academic expertise. I look forward to representing Hawai`i's interest on WICHE as well as contributing to the development of important education-related issues under WICHE's leadership.

I have been the beneficiary of much goodwill over the years and thank my many mentors and supporters who have encouraged and sustained me during this time. I look forward to continued service to our state in a field I hold especially important – education. Thank you for supporting my nomination to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

Carol Mon Lee



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*Doris Ching, EdD*  
*Emeritus Vice President for Student Affairs*  
*University of Hawai`i System*  
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April 8, 2012

The Honorable Jill Tokuda, Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education  
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education

SUBJECT: GM 839 CAROL MON LEE, WICHE  
4/13/12, 1:15 P.M.  
LETTER IN SUPPORT

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Ms. Carol Mon Lee for appointment to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Ms. Lee is a visionary educator, legal professional, and community-oriented individual with sound perspectives of both lower and higher education. I am confident that she will provide a high quality of leadership for WICHE and assure that the decisions of the Commission are congruent with the needs of our students and community of the State of Hawai`i. Ms. Lee is an ideal candidate for the position. It is a privilege to support her appointment.

Ms. Lee's dedication to quality and high standards of education are evident in her work as a former elected member of the Hawai`i State Board of Education, and faculty and associate dean of the University of Hawai`i William S. Richardson School of Law. Her commitment to public service has been further recognized as a recipient of the `Ikena Award by the Hawai`i State Bar Association and the Distinguished Service Award by the Hawai`i Women Lawyers.

As a former WICHE commissioner, I am confident in my observation that Ms. Lee's personal and professional attributes will be assets in her work as commissioner. She uses sound judgment and upholds high standards of ethics, honorable conduct, and moral character. She will, undoubtedly, fulfill her responsibilities that will benefit the students and community of the State of Hawai`i and the Western region. I am pleased to support Ms. Lee's appointment to WICHE.

Sincerely,

*Doris Ching*

Doris Ching  
Emeritus Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Hawai`i System  
Former Commissioner, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

April 8, 2012

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair

GM 839 CAROL MON LEE, WICHE  
4/13/12, 1:15 p.m  
Letter in Support

I am writing in strong support for the nomination of Carol Mon Lee to serve as one of three Commissioners representing Hawaii in WICHE. Ms. Lee is uniquely qualified for this role. She has strong credentials both in higher and K-12 education as well as a strong business and legal background.

I can speak from personal knowledge regarding her background as an educator. On the higher education side, she served for over ten years as the Associate Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law. I hired her for this job and it was one of the best decisions I made while I was Dean of the School of Law. In her role as Associate Dean, she was actively involved in higher education issues in general and in accreditation issues in particular. Law schools are not accredited by WICHE, but they do go through a very stringent accreditation process. This process includes an intensive site visit every seven years and a very lengthy annual questionnaire. As Associate Dean, Ms. Lee organized and managed this process on behalf of the School of Law. As a testament to her skill and dedication, during her tenure, the School of Law received its best accreditation report in the first thirty years of the history of the school. Thus, particularly on the accreditation side, Ms. Lee brings a wealth of experience.

On the K-12 side, after retiring from the School of Law, Ms. Lee was an elected member of the State of Hawaii Board of Education and served two and one-half years in that role until the process for selecting board members was switched to an appointment process by the legislature. As a School Board member, Ms. Lee was very active in championing reform of Hawaii's K-12 educational system and chaired important committees.

In addition to her unique and strong experience, Ms. Lee as a person is an excellent choice. She is extremely diligent, detail oriented, and a hard worker. She works well with people. She is always willing to make her opinions known, but in doing so, she is always sensitive to other people's opinions and is never aggressive. I think she would relate very well with her fellow commissioners. At the School of Law, she got along very well with our diverse constituents: students, faculty, staff, alumni, the bar, and the broader University community.

I recommend her without any reservations and with the highest possible praise. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

I am sorry I will not be able to appear in person to support Ms. Lee's nomination, but I am teaching in China this semester so I am submitting my testimony in support by e-mail.

Lawrence C. Foster  
Professor and Former Dean  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
[lawrence@hawaii.edu](mailto:lawrence@hawaii.edu)

THE HONORABLE JILL N. TOKUDA, CHAIR  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2012  
State of Hawaii

April 9, 2012

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 839**

Relating to the appointment of Carol Mon Lee  
to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

April 13, 2012 1:15 pm  
Conference Room 225

submitted by  
Joe Blanco

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I write in strong support of Governor Abercrombie's nomination of Carol Mon Lee to serve as commissioner to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

For five-plus decades, Hawaii has been a member of WICHE. Our state's long standing investment in WICHE allowed tens of thousands of Hawaii students to attend undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in other Western states through WICHE's Student Exchange Program at significantly reduced tuition rate.

Carol and I have known each other professionally since the early 80's. I seen first hand Carol's outstanding administrative contributions at the UH Law School during my tenure on the UH Board of Regents. Ms. Lee's advanced educational credentials, her diverse and outstanding professional career, and her stellar record of community service, especially in the areas of higher and lower education, makes her highly qualified and an ideal person to serve on the WICHE Commission.

Towards that end, I respectfully urge the Senate Committee on Higher Education to advise and consent to Ms. Lee's nomination to serve as a WICHE commissioner. I am confident she will serve Hawaii and the Commission with great honor and distinction.



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MĀNOA

Friday, April 13, 2012

Testimony in support of GM 839 Carol Mon Lee for WICHE  
Submitted by Dr. Amy Agbayani, Director

Chair Tokuda and members of the Senate Committee on Education

I am taking this opportunity to express my professional and personal support for Ms. Carol Mon Lee's nomination to WICHE. As a colleague at UH Manoa and community organizations, I have had the opportunity to work with Ms. Lee. I believe her tenure as an administrator with the UH Manoa Richardson School of Law as well as her work on the Board of Education provides the kind of knowledge and experience of value to a Hawaii WICHE representative. Ms. Lee understands higher education and lower education current issues facing our state and nation. I respectfully request you approve her nomination.

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair

Re: GM839 CAROL MON LEE, WICHE  
4/13/12, 1:15 pm  
Letter in Support

Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kidani and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

It is a distinct honor for me to write this letter in support of the nomination of Carol Mon Lee, Esq. as a commissioner representing Hawaii on the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

Having known Ms. Lee since 1979 when she was my seminar instructor at the William S. Richardson School of Law and having followed her career closely throughout the next three decades, I can confidently state that her varied experience in education and exceptional ability make her eminently qualified to be a WICHE commissioner.

Carol Mon Lee has had a lifelong commitment to and passion for education, as is evidenced by her teaching experience in K-12 both here and abroad, her administrative experience as Associate Dean of the UH Richardson School of Law, her service on the St. Andrew's Priory Board of Trustees and her service as an elected member of the Hawaii State Board of Education.

Her experience as a practicing lawyer, as senior vice-president of a major Hawaii trust company, as first president of Hawaii Women Lawyers and as a member of the Hawaii Real Estate Commission demonstrate both the leadership skills and commitment to public service which will enhance her performance as a WICHE commissioner.

If she has been recognized and lauded by Hawaii Women Lawyers, The Hawaii State Bar and the Richardson School of Law, it is because her core values include devoting her best efforts and energy to every endeavor she undertakes - a value we hope every higher education student will espouse. She embodies the concept of *noblesse oblige* and is exemplary in her generosity to others. Her character is admirable.

If confirmed as a WICHE commissioner, I have no doubt that she will be not just a WICHE Commissioner, but an outstanding one – one who will contribute significantly to WICHE's mission of improved access to higher education and student success, and one who will make Hawaii proud.

I unequivocally support her confirmation as a Commissioner representing the State of Hawaii to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, of which I am certain she will be a valued asset.

Very truly yours,

Patricia Y. Lee, Ph.D., J.D.

Regent Emeritus of the University of Hawaii  
& former Chair of the Board of Regents

April 12, 2012

TO: Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair

FROM: Aviam Soifer, Dean and Professor  
William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawai'i

HEARING DATE/TIME: Friday, April 13, 2012, 1:15 p.m., Conf. Room 225

MEASURE NUMBER: Testimony in Support of GM 839, CAROL MON LEE, WICHE

Carol Mon Lee is supremely well-qualified to be a one of the three commissioners representing Hawai'i on the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). In fact, Carol's vast experience in higher education—along with her direct involvement with students of all ages and her great success as a lawyer, entrepreneur, and public servant—combine to make it abundantly clear that she is a wonderful, uniquely appropriate choice for this position.

I write from direct experience. I benefitted immensely from working very closely with Carol in my first years as Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law. She served with remarkable diligence, intelligence, and dedication in this role from 1996-2006 and she was immensely helpful to me from the period even before I formally became Dean in the summer of 2003 until her retirement in 2006. I learned quickly that Carol is never one to toot her own horn, but that she is vastly accomplished as well as very savvy and wise in a myriad of different roles. When she left the Law School, we had to divide her job and literally it took three people to try to fill it.

Carol is the rare combination of a person who attends to details and is immensely practical while also being very capable as a visionary pathfinder, particularly on behalf of women and others who historically have not been treated equally in our society. The many public service awards she has garnered only touch the surface of the vast number of things she has done very effectively for others.

Carol's willingness to take on a new role as a WICHE commissioner, while also offer great care and support to her family members and others in need, illustrates how deeply committed to the well-being of others she truly is. The congruence between this new educational role and Carol's vast experience and many successes throughout her multifaceted career make this particular appointment and pending confirmation seem not only entirely suitable and appropriate, but also worthy of celebration.

In summary, I enthusiastically and unequivocally urge the confirmation of Carol Mon Lee to be a WICHE commissioner representing Hawai'i.

Please feel free to contact me if additional details might be of interest.

Mahalo nui.

April 12, 2012

TO: Senate Committee on Education  
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Hearing: Friday, April 13, 2012, 1:15 pm, Conf. Room 225

RE; GM 839, Nomination of CAROL MON LEE as a Commissioner of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

From: Lyn Flanigan

Senators, I submit this testimony in strong support of the Governor's nomination of Carol Mon Lee as a Commissioner of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Carol has been my colleague and friend for many years and I am continuously in awe of her commitment to women's programs and education and her tremendous energy in pursuing her commitment.

Her professional background is a testament to her commitment: founding member of the Hawaii Women Lawyers group and leader in this group and in the Hawaii State Bar Association throughout her legal career in Hawaii. Her ten years as Associate Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law, her three years on the State of Hawaii Board of Education and her application for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents all stand as testament to her experience in and commitment to the education field. And, believe me, Carol Mon Lee does not do anything without full commitment.

That she has been nominated as a Commissioner for WICHE is a boon for WICHE, to have someone with her depth and breadth of experience in education and in the law.

I know that Carol Mon Lee will be a contributing Commissioner on WICHE and I strongly and without reservation recommend confirmation of this nomination.

Sincerely,

Lyn Flanigan

Interim Director of Career Development, Alumni Relations and Pro Bono Programs at  
the William S. Richardson School of Law  
Formerly, Executive Director of the Hawaii State Bar Association