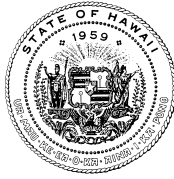


GM 847



NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
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April 11, 2012

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Nominee, Gerald Ohta (GM 847)
As a Member of the Language Access Advisory Council

Wednesday, April 11, 2012
10:00 a.m., Rm 016, State Capitol

Testimony of Dwight Takamine, Director,
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

The department supports the confirmation of Gerald Ohta to the Language Access Advisory Council. The Language Access Advisory Council serves as an advisory board to the executive director of the Office of Language Access (OLA), which provides centralized coordination and assistance to State agencies and organizations to ensure that no person is denied access to State or State-funded services due to their limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand the English language.

Mr. Ohta has been working as an Affirmative Action Officer in the State Department of Health (DOH) since 1981, and currently his responsibilities include serving as his department's Language Access Coordinator. He also serves as Vice Chair of the State Language Access Advisory Council. Mr. Ohta's previous public service includes working as Deputy for the State Office of Affirmative Action.

In addition, Mr. Ohta is also active as DOH's Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, a member of the Association of Refugee Health Coordinators, the Centers for Disease Control Public Health Training Network, Hawaii State Judiciary Supreme Court Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts, Hawaii Healthcare Acquired Infections

Advisory Committee, among others. Mr. Ohta is an instructor/trainer in numerous courses including unlawful harassment, employment discrimination, reasonable accommodation and counseling. He has advocated over the years in numerous capacities for public health issues, Native Hawaiian health, health equity and for persons with disabilities.

Mr. Ohta's past memberships include being a member of the American Public Health Association, Committee on the Status of Women, Aloha United Way, and the Governor's Council on Literacy and Lifelong Learning. He has participated as a panelist/speaker and moderator in many conferences and appeared in television and radio programs, speaking on health care, language access and affirmative action.

Mr. Ohta has worked with schools, universities, enforcement agencies, and public health agencies to ensure that our limited English speaking population is not denied essential government services. He also brings to the Language Access Advisory Council a wealth of contacts with language access advocates, organizations and agencies on the mainland.

I urge you to confirm Gerald Ohta to the Language Access Advisory Council where, if appointed, he will continue to serve the Council and the public's interest well.

NEIL ABERCROMIE
GOVERNOR



DWIGHT TAKAMINE
DIRECTOR

AUDREY HIDANO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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TO: Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor

FROM: Serafin “Jun” Colmenares, Executive Director, Office of Language Access

RE: **Testimony in Support of GM847 (GERALD OHTA)**
Language Access Advisory Council

HEARING: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 10:00 a.m., Room 016

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am Serafin “Jun” Colmenares, Executive Director of the Office of Language Access (OLA). The OLA strongly supports the reappointment of Gerald Ohta as member of the Language Access Advisory Council.

Gerald Ohta has been a very strong proponent of language access. As a member of the Inter-Agency Council on Immigrant Services – Language Access Working Group, Mr. Ohta is knowledgeable of the issues faced by the limited English proficient (LEP) population in Hawaii and recognizes the need to continue to work to improve and make government programs, services and activities accessible to the LEP population.

In addition, given his background working with schools and universities, community agencies, enforcement agencies, and public health agencies, Mr. Ohta brings a broad perspective to the Council as well as experience in working to make sure that the limited English speaking population is not denied access to essential government services, programs and activities. As the

Affirmative Action Officer for the State of Hawaii, Department of Health, Mr. Ohta has first hand knowledge of the challenges state agencies face in complying with Hawaii's language access laws. Mr. Ohta's knowledge combined with his wealth of contacts with language access advocates and his experience in legislation, policy and standards, training and development, and distance learning will greatly benefit the Council.

Finally, as a member and vice-chair of the Council, Mr. Ohta has ably supported and guided the Council and has shown an interest in finding ways to improve and systematize language access so all of Hawai'i's residents will have the opportunities to know about and make choices about state programs and activities for which they qualify or have an interest.

For these reasons, OLA strongly recommends the confirmation of Mr. Ohta's reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: hspoehr@papaolalokahi.org
Subject: Testimony for GM847 on 4/11/2012 10:00:00 AM
Date: Friday, April 06, 2012 7:04:03 AM

Testimony for JDL 4/11/2012 10:00:00 AM GM847

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Hardy Spoehr
Organization: Papa Ola Lokahi
E-mail: hspoehr@papaolalokahi.org
Submitted on: 4/6/2012

Comments:

Aloha. Papa Ola Lokahi strongly supports Mr. Ohta's name to the Council. mahalo.