

JC 6

DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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**THE HONORABLE CLAYTON HEE, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2012  
State of Hawai`i**

April 11, 2012

**RE: JC6, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Judicial Nominee, SHIRLEEN M. KAWAMURA, for a term of six years.**

Chair Hee, Vice-Chair Shimabukuro and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu submits the following testimony in support of JC6, the appointment of Shirleen M. Kawamura to the bench of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, for a term of six years.

As the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney, it is important that a judge be competent, fair, objective, and with judicial temperament. Shirley possesses these important traits.

As an attorney in private practice, Shirley and I represented separate defendants in a criminal case. She was then a public defender. Though my client was tried separately from her client, we consulted and worked together in pretrial motions. I was very impressed with Shirley's knowledge of the law and her competency in courtroom procedures. I also observed her skill and courtroom performance in other criminal cases.

The department strongly supports Shirleen M. Kawamura for District Court Judge of the First Circuit of the State of Hawaii. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



Testimony of the  
HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
relating to the nomination of

**SHIRLEY M. KAWAMURA**

**District Court Judge, First Circuit Court**

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair  
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair

From: Carol K. Muranaka, President, Hawaii State Bar Association

Hearing: Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 016  
State Capitol

The Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on the qualifications of Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge, First Circuit Court.

The HSBA Board has established criteria for determining the qualifications of judicial appointments generally utilizing the American Bar Association Guidelines for Reviewing Qualifications of Candidates for State Judicial Office. The HSBA uses the following criteria in its deliberations: integrity and diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and responsibilities and duties required of the position for which the applicant has been nominated. The HSBA Board's rating system includes the categories of "qualified" and "not qualified."

As part of its procedures for evaluating and taking positions on judicial appointments, the HSBA Board utilizes a subcommittee of the HSBA Board to review materials presented by the nominee and input from members. The subcommittee is also tasked with checking references and contacting others who have knowledge of the nominee's experience and qualifications. The full Board reviews the materials prepared by this subcommittee, the materials submitted by the nominee and members, and conducts an interview of the nominee.

Taking into consideration all of the information presented by and about the nominee and an interview with the nominee, the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association finds Shirley M. Kawamura to be qualified for the position of District Court Judge, First Circuit Court.

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April 9, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair, and Members,  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge - In Support

Hearing Date: April 11, 2012 @ 10:00 a.m.

Dear Senator Clayton Hee and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit. I am a partner in the law firm of Takemoto & Shimozono, LLC, and I have known Ms. Kawamura for approximately 12 years. We worked together as Deputy Public Defenders and I have also known her on a personal basis as well.

On a professional level, Ms. Kawamura is extremely intelligent, hard-working, and dedicated. As a Deputy Public Defender, I personally observed her in the courtroom and reviewed her legal work and I found her to be very committed to the cause of providing quality legal representation to indigent defendants. On a personal level, I have found Ms. Kawamura to be thoughtful, considerate, and a very family-oriented person.

I believe she has the ability to be fair and impartial and possesses the necessary legal skills to be an excellent judge. I am very confident that as a member of the Judiciary, Ms. Kawamura will serve with distinction. If you have any questions, please contact me at 536-2900. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Kenneth Shimozono  
Attorney at Law

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and Labor  
From Ronette M. Kawakami  
Deputy Public Defender, State of Hawai'i**

**To the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and Labor, Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee:**

**Re: JC 6, Nomination of Shirley M. Kawamura to the position of District Court Judge, for a term of 6 years.**

I would like to express my strong, unequivocal support for **Shirley M. Kawamura**. She possesses the necessary qualities to make an excellent District Court Judge. I believe she is the best qualified candidate on the JSC list. I have known her for about 14 years, and we are personal friends. Please be assured that my personal connection with her does not influence my opinion. I am a strong believer that judicial nominations should be exclusively merit-based, and Ms. Kawamura merits the position of District Court Judge.

1. Ms. Kawamura is familiar and comfortable with the Courtroom and she understands what it means to be a litigator.

I have known Ms. Kawamura since 1996, when she clerked for the Honorable Dexter Dean Del Rosario. I had the opportunity to observe her as Judge Del Rosario's law clerk whenever I appeared in his court, which was quite often. She clerked a trial where I was the defense counsel, and Ms. Kawamura was intelligent, organized, pleasant, knowledgeable and professional. As a law clerk, you could see how she was soaking in everything important in the legal field, learning every day from everything around her. Her ability to learn and process the business of being a trial attorney was tremendous.

After her clerkship, and a one year stint at Ashford and Wriston, the Office of the Public Defender was fortunate to have Ms. Kawamura join us. At the Office of the Public Defender, Ms. Kawamura did numerous district court trials and circuit court jury trials. Her experience would serve her well inasmuch the learning curve, if there is one for her, will not be steep. Her previous experience as a litigator, together with her current role as a per diem judge means she can "hit the ground running".

2. Ms. Kawamura is highly competent, diligent and has a strong work ethic.

During her tenure here, Ms. Kawamura worked hard for her clients, often into the wee hours of the night. She is thorough, meticulous and committed to whatever task she undertakes. Her commitment to excellence in her work makes her an ideal District Court Judge. It is always important for her to get it right. In all of my interaction with Ms. Kawamura, she has never taken shortcuts with her work or with the rights of clients. In fact, as personal friends, we do socialize, and often she was unavailable because she

needed to work on large, high profile litigation case. No one out works her. I don't expect that she would be any different on the bench.

3. Ms. Kawamura will be fair to both sides.

Ms. Kawamura is one of the fairest people I know. She looks at both sides of any issue with an objective eye. Even when we discuss non-legal matters, Ms. Kawamura sees the whole picture, and considers both sides of an argument fairly. I am confident that on the bench, she will not favor one side or the other, but will follow the law as applied to the facts of every case.

4. Ms. Kawamura's character is impeccable.

The entire time that I've known Ms. Kawamura, she has been of impeccable character. She is a devoted daughter, wonderful mother and wife, all the while juggling a very demanding career. Actually, wonderful mother doesn't begin to accurately describe her. Ms. Kawamura does everything to nurture, teach and raise her children so that all their dreams can be fully realized. She is just a good person.

In conclusion, it is my belief that Ms. Kawamura is the best candidate for the District Court vacancy. Her experience, work ethic, fairness, and personal character speak for itself.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions at 808-221-4703, or [kawakamr004@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:kawakamr004@hawaii.rr.com)

Sincerely,

*/s/ Ronette M. Kawakami*  
Ronette M. Kawakami  
Deputy Public Defender  
Supervisor, Felony Trials Division

# TSUGAWA BIEHL LAU & MUZZI

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April 9, 2012

via E-Mail: [JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Ref: JC6  
Hearing: 4/11/12, 10:00 am, Conf. Rm. 016

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

**Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court Judge  
of the First Circuit - In Support**

Dear Senators Hee, Shimabukuro and Members of the Senate Committee:

I am writing in support of the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court Judge of the First Circuit. I have been a practicing attorney in Honolulu for 27 years and have had a chance to work with Ms. Kawamura as co-counsel these past few years on a very complicated litigation matter.

Based on that experience, I had ample opportunity to observe Ms. Kawamura and her legal abilities. The litigation was very complicated and contentious involving most of the largest firms and best lawyers in the State. Ms. Kawamura exhibited excellent lawyering skills in a large hearing which her side ultimately prevailed. In my opinion, she is an extremely intelligent person and very good lawyer. She is always a strong advocate for her positions supported by well reasoned legal argument. Her temperament is firm and fair.

It is without reservation that I wholeheartedly recommend and support Ms. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge.

I would be happy to answer any questions concerning Ms. Kawamura.

Very truly yours,



Alan K. Lau

AKL:vsy  
77240

# KAWASHIMA LORUSSO

LLP

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April 9, 2012

**VIA E-MAIL: JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov**

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: JC6 - Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of  
the First Circuit, Judge - In Support**

Dear Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura as a judge to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, and thank you for the opportunity to have input into this process.

As a partner at Kawashima Lorusso LLP, I have had the pleasure of working with Ms. Kawamura for more than six years. In that time, Ms. Kawamura has impressed her fellow attorneys, whether inside or outside of the firm, as well as her clients, with her legal skills and analytical abilities. She has very strong writing and speaking skills, and is able to quickly grasp even the most nuanced arguments. Her organizational skills, honed from her years of practice at the Office of the Public Defender, have allowed her to effortlessly handle a variety of cases, everything from a straightforward motor vehicle accident case to the most complex multi-party commercial cases, all at the same time. She is extremely diligent and conscientious, always more than willing to put in the long hours necessary to put out a tremendous work product. It was a great loss to our firm when Ms. Kawamura left, but we have no doubt that she is more than qualified to take on the challenges, and excel, in this next stage in her professional development.

I find it admirable that Ms. Kawamura's experiences as a *per diem* judge have only served to deepen her desire and commitment to become a full-time judge. As a female attorney with a young family, both she and her family have made personal sacrifices to allow her to work in our firm and as a *per diem* judge, yet she continues to eagerly and quite cheerfully serve in the judiciary. Over the years, Ms. Kawamura has demonstrated a



Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
April 9, 2012  
Page 2

natural ability to handle one of the most challenging tasks for any young lawyer, which is to find the right balance between personal and professional life.

Perhaps most impressive about Ms. Kawamura, however, is that in spite of all her success and accomplishments in the legal field, she remains compassionate, humble and grounded. In fact, her present application for the judgeship reflects her desire to give back to the community in which she grew up. Even when taking difficult positions or making difficult arguments on behalf of clients, she manages to convey the right combination of toughness, wisdom, and aloha that belies her years. I have no doubt that Ms. Kawamura will be a tremendous asset to the judiciary for years to come.

I therefore strongly support the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura as a judge for the District Court.

Very truly yours,

KAWASHIMA LORUSSO LLP



BRIAN Y. HIYANE

April 9, 2012

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
State Capital room 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Regarding: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – In Support

Dear Senators and Senate Committee Members,

I fully support and honor Shirley Kawamura's nomination to District Court Judge. I have know Shirley all of her life, we are first cousins, 14 years apart in age. My mother baby-sat Shirley every weekend for years. As she grew older and more independent, Wahiawa still remain her home and the place she would run to on the weekends, and in between school breaks. Shirley is rooted and grounded in her early beginnings in the country. Her life would take her to many places outside of Hawaii but she remains connected to the values, customs and people of Hawaii.

I have watched her successfully accomplished everything she set out to do. As a 7-year-old child, Shirley declared to her family, she would become a lawyer. This is so amazing to me that a 7-year-old child would know this and become exactly what she proclaimed.

I am proud of my cousin Shirley not only because of her successful career as an attorney and part time District Court Judge, but because of the value she brings into my life and the lives of her family. I lived with her and her family in 2008 during a transitional period in my life, and I can testify about the absolute steadfast commitment she has in her marriage to Jason, and her children. Shirley understands the social, economic, and government issues that we face today, and with great conscious teaches her children to become better individuals with the intention of instilling in them service to community and country. I see her love and devotion for her children, never failing to teach them the importance of respect, integrity, and obedience as well as encouraging them and supporting them in their gifts and dreams.

As a judge, Shirley can and will bring all of her life to the bench. Her greatest strength is her intelligence, coupled with her respect and honor for the laws that govern our court system. I believe she has the ability to discern complicated arguments with clarity and confidence and to render a decision that is fair. Shirley truly cares about the people of our community.

I respectfully submit this letter of character reference for your consideration.

Much aloha,



Carolyn M. Pace  
560 N. Nimitz Hwy. #122B  
Honolulu Hawaii 96817

Cheryl Bourque  
745 Fort Street, Suite 500  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813  
(808) 275-0300

April 9, 2012

Via E-Mail

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
E-Mail: [JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – in Support

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members,  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

This endorsement of Shirley M. Kawamura (Shimizu) is being provided for your consideration in the confirmation of Ms. Kawamura as Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit. I have known Ms. Kawamura professionally for eleven years, having worked with her on the criminal calendar at District Court and as her former secretary at the law firm of Kawashima Lorusso, LLC.

Ms. Kawamura is dedicated to serve in the capacities in which she has committed her life as a per diem judge, as an attorney and a mother. Ms. Kawamura is thorough and efficient in her reviewing of cases as I have been witness to her daily work routine. She is continually sought out by her peers for both advice and support. Her professionalism as both a Judge and attorney is without any compromises. Dedication is a cornerstone in Ms. Kawamura's character as she spends her spare moments available researching and reviewing upcoming or pending cases for her District Court assignments.

Ms. Kawamura has strong personal values and high moral standards. She is a natural leader and has the respect of not only her peers but those placed above her. I highly recommend and endorse Ms. Kawamura to be confirmed as a District Court Judge of the First Circuit, serving justice in Hawaii. If I can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Cheryl Bourque

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Cc:** [makaliu@aol.com](mailto:makaliu@aol.com)  
**Subject:** Testimony for JC6 on 4/11/2012 10:00:00 AM  
**Date:** Monday, April 09, 2012 9:46:46 AM

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Testimony for JDL 4/11/2012 10:00:00 AM JC6

Conference room: 016  
Testifier position: Support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: David Kaapu  
Organization: Individual  
E-mail: [makaliu@aol.com](mailto:makaliu@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 4/9/2012

Comments:

I am writing in support of Shirley Kawamura's nomination for District Court Judge. I have known and worked with Ms Kawamura for a number of years and as an attorney, she is very competent and exhibits a high degree of integrity. Shirley has the temperament and demeanor which would well serve the judiciary and the general public. I feel that Ms. Kawamura would make a fair, intellectual and thoughtful judge. I would highly recommend Ms. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge, First Circuit. Mahalo David Ka'apu Attorney

April 10, 2012

Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair  
Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee  
on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: *JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge –*  
**IN SUPPORT**

Dear Senators Hee, Shimabukuro, and Members:

Please accept this testimony in strong support of Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

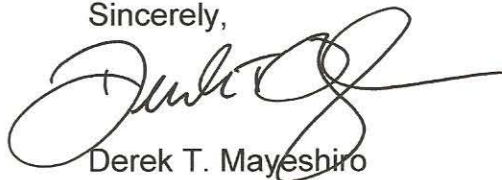
I have known Shirley for many years, at first as an acquaintance, but later as opposing counsel in various legal cases we handled. Shirley is a highly skilled litigator. She has always demonstrated exceptional legal analysis and knowledge of procedural and evidentiary rules. Also, Shirley is a constant professional in her dealings with opposing counsel while still advocating for her client.

In addition, Shirley's years of experience in both civil and criminal law affords her versatility in serving as a judge in either arena.

Today, Shirley's exemplary service as a per diem district court judge is reflective of her intellect, experience, and temperament that has benefitted the judiciary and the community.

For these reasons, I strongly believe that Shirley will set new standards for excellence in the judiciary.

Sincerely,



Derek T. Mayeshiro

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April 9, 2012

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

Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge  
In Support

Dear Chairman Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members:

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Ms. Kawamura as a Honolulu District Court Judge in the First Circuit. I have worked with and known Ms. Kawamura for over ten years.

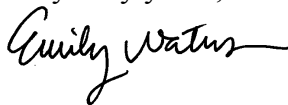
I first met Ms. Kawamura as an adversary in court while I was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and she a Deputy Public Defender. We had many cases against each other and I was able to witness first-hand that she has an incredible work ethic and was always a zealous advocate. Her preparation and thoroughness helped in resolving many cases. As a trial attorney, she was equally effective.

I also know that since she has practiced law in the civil area, she has contributed much to several large and complex cases. Although I have not had the opportunity to work with her on civil matters, I am keenly aware of her abilities and dedication to servicing her clients.

On a personal level, Ms. Kawamura is a devoted mother and wife and her demeanor will serve the bench well. She has a practical side to her that will only benefit the bench and the community at large.

Thank you for your time and please accept my testimony in support of Ms. Kawamura's confirmation.

Very truly yours,



Emily Kawashima Waters

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April 7, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Testimony in Support of JC6 - Confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura for  
Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit**

Dear Senators Hee and Shimabukuro,

I support the confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura to the position for Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit. I have known Shirley for fifteen years and believe she will be an excellent addition to the bench. Shirley is a well respected trial attorney and an advocate for the underprivileged based on her prior work with the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii and the Public Defender's Office.

Shirley has a balanced experience in both the criminal and civil arenas. In addition, to the Public Defender's Office and private practice with the KAWASHIMA LORUSSO firm, Shirley's Per Diem Judge experience makes her an excellent choice for District Court Judge. I have had the opportunity to observe Shirley's performance on the bench while in private practice, and it was nothing short of stellar. She handled the civil calendar at District Court efficiently and effectively.

Shirley's volunteer work as a Guardian Ad Litem and with the Foster Parent's Association shows that she can appreciate the struggles that families face in raising children in Hawaii. Legal services are so expensive that the indigent are often misrepresented or not represented at all, and that is truly a travesty. I believe volunteer



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April 7, 2012  
Page 2

work is a critical experience for a judge to have, because that judge should not look at the socio-economic status of its participants in administering justice. She will make an excellent judge because she is honest, trustworthy, fair, and compassionate. Her moral courage is unquestioned and her integrity is impeccable.

I have had the opportunity to observe Shirley's work as a litigator when I was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and she a Deputy Public Defender, and she has handled many different cases well. Her experience as a litigator gives her a perspective that other litigators can appreciate that the judge that will be hearing their cases has trial experience. I am confident that if Shirley M. Kawamura is chosen, she will make an excellent District Court Judge.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment on her confirmation.

Very truly yours,

**Clay Chapman Iwamura Pulice & Nervell**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Franklin Don Pacarro, Jr.", written in black ink.

Franklin Don Pacarro, Jr.



**Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks**  
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April 4, 2012

Honorable Clayton Hee  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Honorable Maile S. L. Shimabukuro  
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

SUPPORT for Confirmation of SHIRLEY M. KAWAMURA  
District Court of the First Circuit

Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2012  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Place: Conference Room 016

Dear Chairman Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I write in SUPPORT of the confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura for the District Court of the First Circuit.

I am personally familiar with Shirley Kawamura's professional qualifications to serve as a District Court judge. I am an attorney licensed to practice law in Hawaii since 1993. Shirley Kawamura was licensed in 1997 and has been involved in cases handled by myself and my office, as well as professional service with the Bar and Judiciary.

Shirley's civil law practice has concentrated on the defense of those insured under liability insurance policies. Our office represents plaintiffs. Shirley has served as defense counsel in many cases handled by my office where she has been the opposing counsel. I have personally been involved in cases handled by Ms. Kawamura and can attest that she has the

Ltr to Senators Hee, Shimabukuro, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
in SUPPORT of Shirley M. Kawamura as District Judge of the First Circuit

April 4, 2012

Page 2 of 2

professional qualifications to serve as a district court judge. In addition, Shirley has the personality and temperament to make an excellent judge. Shirley has always displayed a respect and civility to opposing counsel and parties that is uncommon in the litigation field. Her demeanor is particularly suited for judicial office where she will be the interface between our judicial system and the public.

Shirley is an experienced litigator with extensive experience in both criminal and civil cases, who is familiar with courtroom procedures, as well as the tactics and strategies employed by lawyers in pre-trial discovery and case preparation. This practical experience is invaluable in assisting judges with the proper management of their cases and rulings on legal matters.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of the confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura as a District Court Judge of the First Circuit. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey K. S. Komeya', followed by a horizontal line.

Geoffrey K. S. Komeya

GKSK:ant

**Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks**  
*Attorneys at Law, A Law Corporation*

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L. Richard Fried, Jr.  
Gerald Y. Sekiya  
Wayne K. Kekina  
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Brian T. Toma  
Gregory Y. P. Tom  
Deborah A. Johnson

April 5, 2012

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawai`i State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

**RE: JC 6 - Support for Confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura for District  
Court of the First Circuit, Judge**

**Hearing : April 11, 2012**  
**Time : 10:00 a.m.**  
**Place : Conference Room 016**

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair; Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair; and Members,  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I write in support of the confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai`i. I am an attorney licensed in Hawai`i since 1993, and during that time had the pleasure of working with Ms. Kawamura on numerous civil litigation cases at the law firm of Kawashima Lorusso & Tom.

Ms. Kawamura has a proven record of progressive experience and skill in criminal and civil litigation, a record she developed at the Office of the Public Defender and in civil litigation private practice. She has also gained substantial experience and skill as a per diem judge in our State District Courts. Perhaps most importantly, Ms. Kawamura possesses outstanding character and is of the highest integrity, qualities that the people of the State expect and demand of a Judge and qualities that are critical to maintaining the people's trust and confidence in our legal system. Accordingly, given her integrity and her unique combination of criminal and civil litigation skills as a lawyer and a per diem judge, there is no question that Ms. Kawamura is a highly qualified and competent jurist.

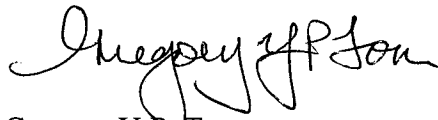
Through her diverse criminal and civil litigation experiences, Ms. Kawamura has garnered a deep understanding of the law, not only as to the law's technical standards and requirements, but also the effect that a law or a judicial ruling has or will have on the citizens of

Senate Committee On Judiciary And Labor  
April 5, 2012  
Page 2

our State. Thus, her legal analysis consistently displays the reasoning, fairness, and sense of justice required of any jurist in our judicial system.

Ms. Kawamura would be an excellent Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit, and her confirmation would greatly enhance and benefit our State Judiciary. I appreciate your consideration of my support for confirmation of Ms. Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory Y.P. Tom". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Gregory Y.P. Tom

GYPT:ant

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April 9, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chairperson  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
State Capitol  
415 Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: JC-6: Shirley M. Kawamura for  
District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – In Support

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Committee Members:

I am writing individually, and in my capacity as managing partner of Hawk Sing Ignacio & Waters, to support the confirmation of Shirley Kawamura, Esq. for the vacant District Court Judgeship.

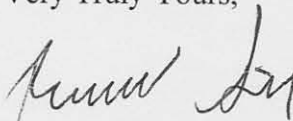
We are a small law firm that has collectively practiced daily in the District, Family, and Circuit Courts for the past 8 years. Individually, each of our attorneys has practiced in these same courts for over 15 years. We are familiar with the histories, procedures, and personalities of the Courts of the First Circuit.

Ms. Kawamura is one of the brightest, quickest, and most competent attorneys that I have ever met. She has impeccable academic credentials, as well as years of practical “in the trenches” experience as a Public Defender. Public service needs honest, talented, and caring individuals like Shirley Kawamura.

Outside of her professional life, Ms. Kawamura is a loving caring parent, who treats others with respect and fairness. She is levelheaded and compassionate. She possesses the best of the traits that we hope for ourselves. I trust her as a friend and colleague, and believe that our community needs and deserves Ms. Kawamura on the bench.

The opportunity to have such a qualified individual on the bench should not be passed up. Please feel free to call upon me if you have any questions or concerns.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Sing".

Richard Sing  
Hawk, Sing, Ignacio & Waters

**LAW OFFICE OF HOWARD K. K. LUKE**

ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
DAVIES PACIFIC CENTER  
SUITE 2022  
841 BISHOP STREET  
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HOWARD K. K. LUKE  
DAVID M. HAYAKAWA

TEL: (808) 545-5000  
FAX: (808) 523-9137

April 10, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – In Support

Dear Senators Hee and Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

Please accept my strong support of Shirley Miki Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

As you probably already know from a review of her resume, Ms. Kawamura has a stellar background in scholastic achievement, and in her almost fifteen years of law practice. She was particularly effective as a deputy public defender handling a broad spectrum of felony cases at the trial level. Her knowledge of the applicable cases serving as precedent and her ability to understand both sides of any legal issue before her enabled her to be an especially effective advocate for her clients.

As a per diem district court judge, she demonstrated all the qualities of being capable of higher judicial office. She has demonstrated wisdom, good judgment, and a thorough understanding of the law and the issues before her. She has great respect for the process, and for the respective positions of the parties, their attorneys, and the witnesses who appear before her. I believe her abilities are already such that she would also be qualified to serve in the Circuit and appellate courts of Hawaii.

On a more personal level, I can attest to her high qualities as a mature, personable, and intelligent individual. She is a wonderful mother and wife, and a good friend to all who know her.

I respectfully urge you to confirm Ms. Kawamura to the District Court bench.

Respectfully submitted,



HOWARD K. K. LUKE



Testimony of the  
HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
relating to the nomination of

**SHIRLEY M. KAWAMURA**

**District Court Judge, First Circuit Court**

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair  
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair

From: Carol K. Muranaka, President, Hawaii State Bar Association

Hearing: Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 016  
State Capitol

The Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on the qualifications of Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge, First Circuit Court.

The HSBA Board has established criteria for determining the qualifications of judicial appointments generally utilizing the American Bar Association Guidelines for Reviewing Qualifications of Candidates for State Judicial Office. The HSBA uses the following criteria in its deliberations: integrity and diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and responsibilities and duties required of the position for which the applicant has been nominated. The HSBA Board's rating system includes the categories of "qualified" and "not qualified."

As part of its procedures for evaluating and taking positions on judicial appointments, the HSBA Board utilizes a subcommittee of the HSBA Board to review materials presented by the nominee and input from members. The subcommittee is also tasked with checking references and contacting others who have knowledge of the nominee's experience and qualifications. The full Board reviews the materials prepared by this subcommittee, the materials submitted by the nominee and members, and conducts an interview of the nominee.

Taking into consideration all of the information presented by and about the nominee and an interview with the nominee, the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association finds Shirley M. Kawamura to be qualified for the position of District Court Judge, First Circuit Court.

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April 5, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
State Capitol  
415 Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: JC-6: Shirley M. Kawamura for  
District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – In Support

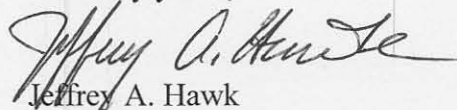
Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Committee Members:

I would like to give my highest recommendation for confirmation of Shirley Kawamura to the District court of the First Circuit. I have known her since 1998 when I started working for the Office of the Public Defender. Since that time, I have worked with her as an attorney and as a member of the Defender Council.

I believe that Shirley has a high degree of legal ability. At the Office of the Public Defender, she had numerous jury trials and knows how complicated the cases can be. In working with her, I could see that she was an exemplary attorney. I believe she has sound legal judgment, is fair to all sides of an issue and comports herself in a manner befitting a Judge of the District Court.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office, 532-3800.

Sincerely yours,



Jeffrey A. Hawk  
Attorney at Law

**YAMAMOTO & SETTLE**  
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW COMPANY

April 5, 2012

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL (JDLtestimony @capitol.hawaii.gov)**

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuo, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Writer's Direct Dial: (808) 792-1283  
Writer's Email: jyamamoto@yshawaii.com

Re: JC6 - Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge -  
In Support

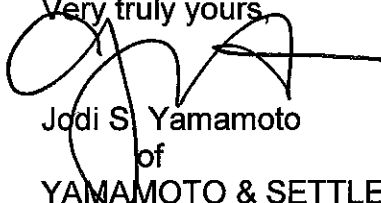
Dear Senators:

My name is Jodi Yamamoto, and I am currently an attorney with Yamamoto & Settle, which practices in the areas of finance, real estate and energy law. I have been a practicing attorney for over 16 years. It is with great pleasure that I submit my enthusiastic support for Shirley Kawamura to serve as a full-time District Court Judge to the First Circuit.

I have known Shirley for over 25 years as we attended Iolani School and Brown University together, and I have always known Shirley to be a bright, hard-working, and caring individual with exceptional integrity and moral fortitude. With her strong educational background and performance, including a law degree from Stanford University, Shirley could have practiced anywhere and been paid handsomely to do so. Instead, after clerking for Judge Del Rosario, she accepted a deputy position with the Public Defender's office in order to serve the public and to make a difference. At the Public Defender's office, Shirley worked tirelessly for her clients, often under difficult conditions. Still, she persisted and thrived.

After many years of public service, Shirley joined the private practice ranks and continued her work for her clients in complex civil matters. However, she could not stray from public service for long and soon became a per diem District Court Judge, as well. Shirley has the benefit of being proficient at both civil and criminal law, as well as being comfortable with serving as an arbiter of disputes. In short, she would be a great asset to the bench, and I whole-heartedly support her nomination to be a full-time District Court Judge. If you have any questions or would like me to expound further, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Very truly yours,



Jodi S. Yamamoto  
of

**YAMAMOTO & SETTLE**  
A Limited Liability Law Company

**Testimony of John M. Tonaki,  
State Public Defender to the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
and Labor**

April 11, 2012

JC6: Nomination of Shirley M. Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit

Chair Hee and Committee Members:

It is a privilege for me to support Shirley M. Kawamura's nomination to be a judge of the District Court of the First Circuit. Shirley is an exceptional candidate who has extensive experience in both civil and criminal cases. She served with distinction as a Deputy Public Defender between 1999 and 2005. During this period, she was known as a tireless advocate for those charged with criminal offenses. She progressed very quickly through all levels in the office, trying cases in the Family, District and Circuit courts as well as handling cases on appeal to both the Supreme Court of Hawai'i and the Intermediate Court of Appeals. By the time that Shirley submitted her resignation to the office in 2005 to accept a position at the law firm of Kawashima, Lorusso, LLP., she had risen to the position of Deputy Public Defender IV handling serious felony cases.

As a Deputy Public Defender, Shirley stood out for her commitment to hard work, her willingness to assist others in the office with their cases and the scholarship of her submittals to the court. She always demonstrated compassion for the indigent clients we serve and was a tireless advocate for justice on behalf of every person she represented. She was always well-prepared and thoroughly researched every legal argument before it was presented in court. She was forceful and passionate in her courtroom presentations.

Even after leaving the Public Defender's office, Shirley demonstrated her commitment to the cause of indigent defense by serving as a gubernatorial appointee to the Defender Council, the governing body of the Office of the Public Defender. Shirley has most recently served as a per diem District Court Judge. As expected, she has performed her judicial duties efficiently and with a deep commitment to justice. She is decisive but thoughtful in resolving issues of law and is always calm in her demeanor.

I enthusiastically support the nomination of Shirley Kawamura to this judicial position. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this matter.

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# LAW OFFICES OF KEVIN A. SOUZA, LLLC

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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

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April 5, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: Letter of Support for Judicial Nominee Shirley M. Kawamura**

Dear Senator Hee & Members of the JDL Committee:

I write in strong support of judicial nominee Shirley M. Kawamura to be appointed to the District Court of the First Circuit. I have known Ms. Kawamura for eighteen years, both as a colleague and as a personal friend. Through the years, I have had the pleasure of observing Ms. Kawamura practice law and serve as a per diem judge in the District Court. On each occasion, she has demonstrated a strong intellect and a firm understanding of the law. More importantly, she has always been honest, straightforward, and committed to our judicial system.

Ms. Kawamura is a consummate professional. She is unwavering in her commitment to public service, yet always finds time for her family and friends. She served honorably and dutifully as a Deputy Public Defender from 1998 to 2005. Over the course of her seven years with the office, she rose to the level of Public Defender 4, a classification reserved for only the most experienced and capable trial attorneys. Since 2005, Ms. Kawamura has worked as a trial attorney for Kawashima Lorusso, LLP, where she advanced her reputation as a talented and committed litigator. Ms. Kawamura is also actively involved in a number of community and non-profit organizations.

Ms. Kawamura will bring to the District Court a wealth of knowledge and experience, a passion for public service, and an ability to render justice appropriately. She will no doubt play a vital role in upholding the already strong working relationship between the judiciary and the community. I believe that Ms. Kawamura's knowledge and experience, and her strong family and community involvement, will be a credit to the Judiciary. I urge you to confirm her nomination to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Very truly yours,



Kevin A. Souza, Esq.

April 9, 2012

TO: The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

The Honorable Malia S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

FROM: Kristin E. Izumi-Nitao *kei*

**SUBJECT: Testimony on JC 6, Consideration and Confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Judicial Nominee, SHIRLEY M. KAWAMURA, for a term of six years**

Wednesday, April 11, 2012  
10 a.m. in Conference Room 016

Chair Hee, Vice-Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of judicial nominee Shirley M. Kawamura for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

As a prior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and Deputy Attorney General, I have had the pleasure of working with Shirley. She is a bright, dedicated, hard working, and fair attorney who I believe also has the compassion and thoughtfulness sought in judicial nominees. She is very comfortable in the legal profession and is accomplished in a variety of legal areas. She is also a good person with a strong sense of family values. I am therefore honored to submit this letter in support of her nomination.

April 10, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: JC6—Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit,  
Judge—In support.

Dear Senators:

I am submitting this testimony in support of the candidacy of Ms. Shirley M. Kawamura for appointment as a judge to the District Court of the First Circuit. My name is Kristin Shigemura, and I have been an attorney practicing in Hawaii for over 14 years.

I have known Ms. Kawamura since 1984 when we both attended Iolani School. We studied for the Hawaii State Bar together and clerked together in the First Circuit Court from 1997 to 1998 when she was the law clerk for the Honorable Dexter D. Del Rosario. Ms. Kawamura has always been a woman of incredible integrity and compassion. She is focused with a quick mind, and works hard to achieve both her goals and to support those causes she is passionate about. Ms. Kawamura has a stellar educational background having attended Brown University and Stanford University Law School. While she could have chosen to work at any law firm in Hawaii or on the mainland, her desire to help others even when it might be unpopular to do so, and her dedication to that goal, led her instead to the Public Defender's office in Honolulu. There she gained extensive trial experience in evidentiary and procedural matters as well as the practical realities of our justice system. Her legal experience was further developed as a civil attorney with the Kawashima Lorruso firm. In private practice she learned the intricacies of civil discovery and procedure, and was able to utilize her trial experience, which is a rare asset in civil litigation these days.

The costs of litigation and the complexities of our civil legal system too often serve as a barrier to the common citizen's access to justice. Not all persons who come to court can afford counsel, but even when they can, a judge's ability to quickly rule on evidentiary matters and her confidence in moving the matter fairly and efficiently through pretrial and trial is invaluable. Ms. Kawamura has the legal acumen, the experience, and the compassion to handle any civil or criminal matter fairly, expeditiously, and justly. I believe she would be an excellent judge and would represent our state courts and our justice system well.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kristin S. Shigemura

**From:** [Laura Maeshiro](#)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Subject:** Measure JC7, PAUL WONG Hearing: 4/11/12, 10:00 a.m.  
**Date:** Friday, April 06, 2012 2:32:28 PM

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TESTIMONY FOR : JC7 – JDL Committee Hearing

April 11, 2012

10:00 a.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 016

RE: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, **Judicial Nominee PAUL B.K. Wong**

Position: **IN STRONG SUPPORT**

Submitted by: Laura Maeshiro, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

---

To the Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair, the Honorable Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I have known Mr. Paul Wong on a personal level for over 10 years.

Also, I am a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu, State of Hawaii. In this capacity, I also observed Mr. Wong in practice at court throughout the years.

**I strongly support Paul Wong's nomination.** I have the honor of personally knowing Mr.

Wong on a social basis for many years. He is thoughtful and intelligent, with a great sense of humor. Mr. Wong is one who thinks about the greater good in life and would strive for the betterment of our communities, in everything he does. He cares about people and he cares about our legal system. He is well versed in the law, both criminal and civil practice. As a Judge, I know that he will give due care to any matter before him, while treating all parties with respect and professionalism. He truly has the character, intelligence, and knowledge to uphold the integrity of our judicial system.

I have a great deal of respect for him as he is not only an accomplished trial attorney, but a person with strong family values. He will make an excellent father for his baby on the way.

As a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, I have appeared in front of numerous Judges on the District, Family, and Circuit Court levels so I fully understand that the selection of a person to fill the role of Judge should not be taken lightly. It cannot be emphasized enough how essential one's character, intelligence, and knowledge of the law is in order to be a Judge. Paul Wong is strongly suited for this very important role of a District Court Judge.

**For these reasons, I strongly support PAUL B.K. WONG, and respectfully ask that he be confirmed to the District Court of the First Circuit.**



**From:** [Mark Yuen](#)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Subject:** JC6 Hearing, 4/11/12, 10:00 a.m. Shirley Kawamura"s Confirmation Hearing  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 10, 2012 9:08:48 AM

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Mark Yuen  
1709 Wilhelmina Rise  
Honolulu, HI 96816

The Honorable Senator Clayton Hee  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Ms. Shirley M. Kawamura's Confirmation Hearing (April 11, 2012, 10:00 a.m.)

Dear Honorable Senator Hee:

I address this letter to you in order to support Shirley M. Kawamura's confirmation as a District Court Judge for the District Court of the First Circuit. I have known Ms. Kawamura for approximately 10 years. I worked against her as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and while she was a Deputy Public Defender and highly respect her as an outstanding attorney and litigator.

I highly recommend Ms. Kawamura as a district court judge for the reasons as stated below. While litigating cases against Ms. Kawamura, I knew that she would be a great attorney for the Public Defender's Office. I found her to be compassionate in her cause, highly intelligent, hard working, very personable and most of all, fair.

In addition, I also believe that Ms. Kawamura possesses the right judicial temperament to be an effective judge. Ms. Kawamura is an excellent communicator, genuine, very considerate of others, and extremely humble. These are qualities that I feel are necessary to be not only a judge, but to be a great judge.

In summary, although her outstanding resume as a government and private attorney speaks for itself, I want to make it clear that Ms. Kawamura's resume does not show her compassion for the law and her belief in fairness and integrity. If you confirm Ms. Kawamura to be a district court judge, I believe she would be a solid addition to the bench and an asset to our legal community.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Yuen

# MARR JONES & WANG

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

*Labor and Employment Law*

April 9, 2012

**Via Email:** [JDCTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JDCTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Chairman Sen. Clayton Hee  
Vice Chairman Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania St., Room 407  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit  
Judge – In Support  
Date and time of hearing: April 11, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.**

Dear Senators Hee and Shimabukuro:

Please consider this letter my testimony in support of Shirley M. Kawamura's confirmation as a District Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I have been a licensed attorney since 2002 and worked in private practice as an attorney specializing in litigation. Since 2009, my practice has focused almost exclusively on employment litigation with the Marr Jones & Wang law firm.

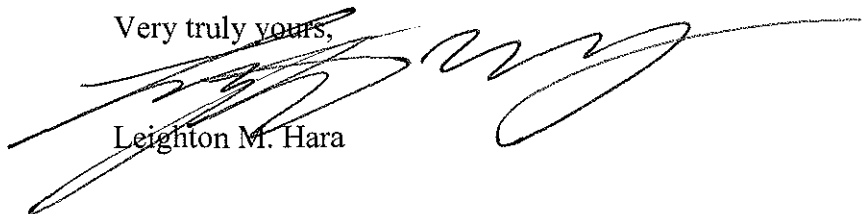
Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with Ms. Kawamura as counsel for a co-Defendant in a civil case that was successfully resolved in favor of our respective clients. As a result of that case, I had the opportunity to participate in numerous depositions as well as discuss litigation and trial strategy with her.

Ms. Kawamura has always been hard working, fair, and extremely knowledgeable about civil and criminal matters. As a public defender, Ms. Kawamura spent the early part of her career assisting people who could not afford legal representation and has tried numerous jury trials to verdict. She also seamlessly transitioned from criminal law to become an effective civil litigator. Ms. Kawamura's experience, personality, and demeanor will serve the public well and are qualities which will make for an excellent Judge.

Chairman Sen. Clayton Hee  
Vice Chairman Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro  
April 9, 2012  
Page 2

It is with great pleasure that I submit this testimony in support of Ms. Kawamura. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leighton M. Hara', written over a horizontal line that extends across the page.

Leighton M. Hara

April 9, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro  
Vice Chair, Members  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First  
Circuit, Judge – In Support

Dear Senators:

I am writing this letter in support of Shirley Kawamura to serve as a Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit. I have known Ms. Kawamura for approximately 12 years, both personally and professionally. I first met Ms. Kawamura as a law clerk and worked together at the Public Defender's Office.

As an attorney, Ms. Kawamura was known for her advocacy and trial skills as well as her professionalism. She places great pride in each position she has held. In every task she has dedicated the time and effort to produce detailed and quality work. Her work product has achieved the highest respect and regard from both her colleagues and opponents. Furthermore, as a per diem judge for the past two years, Ms. Kawamura demonstrated that she is fully capable of meeting the high demands of full-time District Court Judge.

Outside of work, Ms. Kawamura places high value on her family and her community. I am confident that Ms. Kawamura's experience as a litigator, and her strong family and community involvement, would be a great asset to our Judiciary.

In conclusion, I strongly support Ms. Kawamura's appointment as District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

Very truly yours,

Michelle L.A. Sagaysay  
m\_sagaysay@yahoo.com

**From:** [Nani Medeiros](#)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Subject:** JC 6: Shirley Kawamura, Wednesday, April 11, 2012  
**Date:** Monday, April 09, 2012 7:02:35 PM

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**Aloha Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and members of the committee,**

**My name is Nani Medeiros, Policy and Public Affairs Director at the Hawaii Primary Care Association. I submit this testimony in strong support of judicial nominee Shirley Kawamura. I have known Shirley personally for over twenty years. During the course of our friendship I have watched Shirley develop and advance her career, begin a family, and engage in civic and community responsibility. Shirley's a responsible, dedicated person with one of the fairest and most balanced demeanors I have ever encountered professionally. I have 100% confidence that Shirley would make an excellent full time judge. She is one of those rare persons who can listen to all sides of a story, equally, with fairness. Between her professional achievements and personal dedication to family and community, I don't think you can find a better candidate willing to serve.**

**Please advise and consent to JC 6, naming Shirley Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit.**

**Mahalo,**

**Nani Medeiros**

Nina L. Takamori  
c/o 745 Fort Street, Suite 1700  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 10, 2012

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair  
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capital  
413 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: JC 6 - Testimony in Support of the Confirmation of Shirley M.  
Kawamura, Judicial Nominee, for the District Court of the First Circuit,  
State of Hawaii Hearing: Wednesday, April, 11, 2012 at 10:00 am

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members of the Committee:

I am writing this letter in strong support of the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I am attorney licensed to practice in Hawaii since 2003, and I have personally known Ms. Kawamura for approximately 11 years, and have been impressed by her intelligence, work ethic and integrity.

I previously clerked at the Intermediate Court of Appeals, and I believe Ms. Kawamura exhibits the qualities required of a judge. She is intelligent, articulate, and ethical, and further, I have no doubt that Ms. Kawamura will be a wonderful mentor and role model to future law clerks.

I respectfully request your favorable consideration in the appointment of Ms. Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Nina L. Takamori

Owen T. Iida  
c/o 745 Fort Street, Suite 1700  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 10, 2012

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair  
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capital  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: JC 6 – Testimony in **Support** of the Confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura,  
Judicial Nominee, for the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii  
Hearing: Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at 10:00 am

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members of the Committee:

I am writing this letter in strong support of the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I am an attorney licensed to practice in Hawaii since 2000. I have personally known Ms. Kawamura for over five years, and have been impressed by her intelligence, diligence and integrity.

I believe Ms. Kawamura's extensive experience in both civil and criminal matters, as well as her tenure as a Per Diem Judge for the District and Family Court of the First Circuit make her uniquely qualified for this position. I have no doubt that Ms. Kawamura possesses the ability, temperament and character to be an excellent District Court Judge.

I fully support Ms. Kawamura's nomination to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii and look forward to your favorable consideration of her nomination. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Owen T. Iida

**BEFORE THE**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR**

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

**JC6 RELATING TO CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION  
TO THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT,  
STATE OF HAWAII, JUDICIAL NOMINEE  
SHIRLEY M. KAWAMURA**

**TESTIMONY OF  
PAUL B.K. WONG, ESQ.  
Bar No. 6014**

Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 10:00 am  
State Capitol Conference Room 016

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Committee Members:

I hereby submit my support for Shirley Kawamura's appointment as District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

I have known Ms. Kawamura since the beginning of her legal career as Law Clerk for Circuit Court Judge Dexter Del Rosario. She later became adverse counsel to me when she began work as a Deputy Public Defender. As her opposing counsel, I was witness to Ms. Kawamura's skills as a trial lawyer and her diligence as a counselor. She represented her clients vigorously, and provided them with excellent legal representation.

More recently, I have appeared before Ms. Kawamura when she served as a *per diem* District Court Judge. On the bench, she was fair, open-minded to the positions of all parties, and ran her courtroom efficiently. In other words, she was an excellent jurist and the kind of judge that all litigants want presiding over their cases.

As adverse counsel and an attorney that has appeared before her, I fully attest that Ms. Kawamura is well qualified for the position of District Court Judge. She will be an excellent addition to the Judiciary and I respectfully urge her confirmation. Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide this statement.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul B.K. Wong



# KAWASHIMA LORUSSO

LLP

Sender's Information:  
Direct: (808) 275-0325  
E-mail: [ryamamoto@klhlpp.com](mailto:ryamamoto@klhlpp.com)

April 9, 2012

**VIA E-MAIL: [JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)**

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: JC6 - Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of  
the First Circuit, Judge - In Support**

Dear Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro and Committee Members,

The undersigned Randall Y. Yamamoto supports the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, and welcomes the opportunity to have input into this process. I am a partner at the firm of Kawashima Lorusso, LLP.

Shirley joined our firm (Kawashima Lorusso, LLP) near the end of 2005 and has been a substantial contributor and compassionate advocate, working very long hours to put out a significant amount of efficient, quality work product. She brought an apparent limitless amount of energy and focus to every case and client, and this has not gone unnoticed nor unappreciated by our clients as well. She has been a true asset to our firm but more importantly a respected colleague. It has been a true pleasure working with her and witnessing her progress as an attorney and as a person.

Her credentials of course are impeccable, and her resume and educational background reveal the dedication and commitment to excellence that she always strives for in her life and in her practice. If she has a fault, perhaps it is that she always works toward perfection and "just getting it right". Shirley no doubt would shy away from stating these attributes, but again that is just part of her character to downplay her achievements and her abilities.

But the most important traits that she brings to our profession is her compassion and her desire to give back to the community. That may sound like a cliché but it is Shirley, as demonstrated and proven by her life choices.

She began her legal training by interning with the Legal Aid Society and then with the Office of the Public Defender. Upon

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
April 9, 2012  
Page 2

graduation from the Stanford Law Center in 1997, she then clerked for one year with Judge Dexter D. Del Rosario. Though she worked with a prominent Hawaii law firm early in her career, she again felt the calling to do more for her community and for the People of Hawaii. So though she enjoyed working with that firm (and more importantly with the people in that firm), her innate desire and compassion to represent her community took her back to the Office of Public Defender, where she worked and tried cases for over six years. Those six years of course gave her the background in criminal litigation. But at that point, luckily for our firm, she wanted to hone her skills in civil litigation; fortunately, she chose our firm.

She had been with our firm for over six years, and it was a great loss to see her leave us at the end of 2011.

Of course, Shirley has served as a per diem judge and has no doubt proven her capability and ability. Clearly that is her true calling. That is the next logical step in her progress and development not only as professional but as a person. She has worked hard to get to this point and to this level- to be, in her mind, hopefully qualified to wear that judicial robe and more importantly to serve her community. Some might say that she is a bit too young and that there are more experienced applicants on the list. But Shirley has practiced in both the criminal and civil arenas and has "seen it all."

In my opinion, there are none more qualified and dedicated to fulfill the obligations and requirements of such an honor and position. Her compassion and desire to be fair and judicious would not allow her to do anything less. It is safe to say that she has clearly demonstrated that throughout her life and her career. Shirley is most definitely qualified for this appointment.

For these reasons, I strongly urge and wholeheartedly support Shirley M. Kawamura for appointment as a judge for the District Court.

Very truly yours,

KAWASHIMA LORUSSO, LLP



RANDALL Y. YAMAMOTO



April 9, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
And Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: JC6–Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge  
In Support

Dear Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro and Committee Members:

This letter is in support of Shirley M. Kawamura for Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit.

I am general counsel for Goodfellow Bros., Inc., a general contracting company. I have been practicing law in the State of Hawaii for the past 31 years. In the course of my practice, I have worked with Ms. Kawamura on a matter involving a major complex commercial dispute. In addition, the Honolulu corporate offices of Goodfellow Bros., Inc. is located on the fifth floor of Topa Tower, on the same floor that Ms. Kawamura has practiced law with the Kawashima Lorusso law firm.

I have found Ms. Kawamura to be extremely intelligent, diligent and dedicated. She is perceptive and deeply cares about protecting the rights of everyone. She is funny, a good mother and cares deeply about her family and instilling strong family values.

In my opinion, Ms. Kawamura will make an excellent judge and will enhance the reputation of the judiciary for the State of Hawaii. It is without any hesitation that I submit this letter in support of Shirley Kawamura.

Sincerely,

ROBERT T. TAKAMATSU  
General Counsel for  
GOODFELLOW BROS., INC.

Rowena S. Eddins  
1003 Bishop Street, #1320  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-428-7066

April 10, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: JC No. 6: Shirley M. Kawamura District Court of the First Circuit Judge – In Support  
Hearing: April 11, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

Testimony from Rowena S. Eddins

Dear Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee:

I would like to state my strong support of Ms. Kawamura for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

Ms. Kawamura and I worked alongside each other in the “trenches” of the Office of the Public Defender’s for several years. In a daily work environment that could be alternately volatile or mundane, she was unfailingly prepared and professional. Her ability to skillfully manage a sometimes-crushing caseload was supported by her considerable analytical prowess, excellent work ethic and ability to work constructively with everyone involved in each case (from defendant to probation officers). Ms. Kawamura further appreciated and was a part of the tremendous sense of collegiality and humor in our office that was necessary to balance out the intensity of our jobs.

Thank you for your favorable consideration in the appointment of Ms. Kawamura as District Court Judge for the First Circuit. I am confident that she will be a stellar addition to our Judiciary.

Very truly yours,

Rowena S. Eddins

Ryan E. Sanada, Esq.  
1212 Nuuanu Ave # 311  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
[ryansanada@gmail.com](mailto:ryansanada@gmail.com)

April 9, 2012

VIA EMAIL: [JDLTestimony@Capitol.Hawaii.gov](mailto:JDLTestimony@Capitol.Hawaii.gov)

Senator Clayton Hee  
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Subject: Testimony in Support of JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura

Dear Chair Hee:

I write in **strong support** of the appointment of Shirley M. Kawamura to serve as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit of the State of Hawaii.

I have practiced law in the State of Hawaii since 2000. During that time, I worked in the public sector (Department of the Prosecuting Attorney), in the private sector (Imanaka Kudo & Fujimoto), and at my current position with a non-profit trade organization (Hawaii Employers Council.)

While working at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, I attended court sessions in the State District Courts and Circuit Court on a daily basis. While in private practice, I regularly litigated cases in State Circuit Court and the Federal District Court. From my experiences, I have learned that the best judges are those who possess the intelligence, legal abilities, temperament, and decision-making abilities necessary to run and manage a courtroom.

Ms. Kawamura possesses all of these characteristics – in abundance.

Her intelligence is manifest by her superior education (Brown University and Stanford Law School) and her success as an attorney at the Office of the Public Defender and the law firm Kawashima Lorusso, LLP. While she worked at the Office of the Public Defender, my colleagues (and I) at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney held Ms. Kawamura in very high regard for her legal abilities, her judgment, and her ability to properly evaluate a case and negotiate reasonable plea deals for her clients. Ms. Kawamura also possesses the proper temperament that is necessary of a judge; she is patient with others and has always treated her colleagues with the utmost respect. Finally, I have known Ms. Kawamura to be a solid decision-maker; she is able to make decisions quickly, decisively, and with solid reasoning.

I believe these are all qualities and traits that are required of somebody who serves as a judge in our court system. For these reasons, I strongly support the appointment of Ms. Kawamura to serve as a District Court Judge.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan E. Sanada". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent vertical stroke on the left side.

Ryan E. Sanada, Esq.

April 9, 2012

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 407  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – In Support

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I am writing in support of Shirley M. Kawamura for confirmation to District Court Judge of the First Circuit. My name is Sharyn Sakuda Fong. I am a stay-at-home Mom, and a former elementary and middle school teacher. I have known Shirley for 28 years, ever since we entered Iolani School in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Together we have experienced our greatest joys, most trying times, and every ordinary thing in between. Shirley's particular qualities of integrity and hard work, empathy for others, and grace, as well as her knowledge and skill, make her an outstanding nominee for full-time District Court Judge.

Although we are peers, I admire Shirley for all she has accomplished while staying true to what she believes. I believe this requires both strong moral character and a strong work ethic, not to mention simply being sharp as a whip. I often confide in her to provide guidance in troubling matters when there is no single right solution, only the best solution given the situation. Perhaps most important is the fact that Shirley lives up to what she believes in everyday.

As a big picture thinker, Shirley has the ability to understand a situation from multiple perspectives and can empathize with all walks of people. This empathy took root during her undergraduate years at Brown University, and continued to grow during her time as a Public Defender. With her spirited personality, Shirley's empathy and respect for others allows her to connect with many different people, everywhere she goes, gaining even more perspective along the way.

I recently joined Shirley in the ranks of motherhood last year. With this new role came a new outlook on everything, including my friends. Understanding first-hand the sheer joy, the awesome responsibility, and especially the stress of being a mother, I appreciate how graceful Shirley is with regard to her conduct in challenging situations. Now I realize I have always experienced her graciousness, but I never appreciated it in this way before. I imagine the pressure under which judges must make life altering decisions.

Being able to calm your mind and still your heart with grace allows you to think more clearly.

Although I must admit that I am not closely acquainted with many judges, when I envision the kind of person I, as a citizen, would want to stand before, these qualities of integrity, empathy, and grace comfort me. This position carries a tremendous responsibility to our public, one with which I am confident Shirley will fulfill and even carry out with a little extra flair. I enthusiastically offer my support for confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura to District Court Judge of the First Circuit. Mahalo for your time and consideration, and for the opportunity to testify in favor of her nomination.

Sincerely,

Sharyn Sakuda Fong



**From:** [Stacey](#)  
**To:** [JDLTestimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for Shirley M Kawamura  
**Date:** Thursday, April 05, 2012 6:06:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [Shirley Kawamura letter 4.5.12](#)

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This testimony is in support of Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge

Measure: JC6

Time and Date of Hearing: April 11, 2012 10:00am

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April 5, 2012

RE: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First Circuit, Judge – In Support

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

I have known Shirley Kawamura since elementary school. Over the years, we have been different things to each other: giggling teenagers, athletic teammates, best friends and confidants.

As far back as I can remember, Shirley has had her career goals in order: she wanted to be a judge. Every educational choice, every employment path, every calculated next-step, has been with this in mind.

Whenever I need advice on a matter, I know that I can count on Shirley to hear my situation. Sometimes her advice is in support of me, sometimes it is not what I had hoped to hear, but it is *always* dependable and trustworthy.

Recently, I went over to Shirley's house and saw photos of African children next to other family photos on the refrigerator. When I inquired about them, she told me that those are her family's sponsor children. She wanted to teach her kids that not all children are as fortunate as we are to live on this beautiful island with access to all that we need and want. Shirley is not one to wax poetic on how to make our world a better place; she is a woman of action.

Even though I have known her most of my life, Shirley continues to amaze me. She somehow manages to squeeze 28 hours out of each and every day, balancing the role of career woman, mother, wife, and daughter. She not only gets the job done, she does it with grace.

Sincerely,

Stacey Lee  
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Stacey Lee

[stacey@staceyleedesigns.com](mailto:stacey@staceyleedesigns.com)

[www.staceyleedesigns.com](http://www.staceyleedesigns.com)

**Testimony of Timothy Ho, Chief Deputy Public Defender  
State of Hawaii to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor**

April 10, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

RE: JC 6: Nomination of Shirley Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit

Chair Hee and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to recommend that Shirley Kawamura be confirmed as the next judge of the District Court, First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I have known Shirley since her graduation from law school in 1997. Shirley clerked for the Honorable Dexter D. Del Rosario, a sound legal jurist and an excellent mentor. After clerking for Judge Del Rosario, Shirley came to work for us at the Public Defender's office. While at our office, I had the opportunity to supervise Shirley in the district court section. Shirley impressed me with her legal intellect and passion for justice.

Shirley Kawamura has both the educational and legal background which makes her highly qualified to preside over cases in the district court which are of a wide variety and sensitive in nature. As a per diem judge, Shirley has impressed attorneys who have appeared before her with her judicial temperament and fairness to both sides.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

April 9, 2012

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair  
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Re: Nomination of Shirley Kawamura to the District Court of the First Circuit  
Hearing: April 11, 2012 10:00 a.m.


I write in strong support of Shirley Kawamura's nomination to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Shirley is a top-notch courtroom litigator and extraordinarily well versed in both civil and criminal law. For years, my practice entailed criminal defense work. It now almost exclusively encompasses civil litigation. Thus, I feel I have a great appreciation for the legal skill set necessary to excel as an attorney and judge in the civil and criminal justice systems. Shirley has the practical nuts and bolts courtroom knowledge, as well as the legal acumen attendant to successful pretrial litigation, that will serve the judiciary well. I see her as seamlessly transitioning between the many disparate calendars in the district courts.

Shirley is extremely bright, quick thinking, and hard working. I have found these to be key attributes associated with sound judicial rulings and efficient courtroom management. She is an honest, open-minded person. She does not tackle issues with preconceived ideas or biases. Shirley has a vast reservoir of perspective (perhaps the most underrated of judicial traits). I believe that she will undertake her judicial responsibilities by listening to the competing viewpoints and employing a balanced, common sense approach to decision-making.

Above all, Shirley is a good person. She has a solid marriage and is a loving and inspirational mother to two fine children. She is a person who is always supportive and encouraging to her many friends. In my view, there is no wiser choice for the District Court of the First Circuit than Shirley Kawamura.

Sincerely,



Todd Eddins

Tracy S. Fukui, Esq.  
4211 Waialae Ave., Box 9050  
Honolulu, HI 96816

April 9, 2012

TO: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

VIA EMAIL: JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

RE: JC6 – Shirley M. Kawamura for District Court of the First  
Circuit, Judge – In Support

Dear Senators:

This letter is to express my strong support for judicial nominee, Shirley M. Kawamura. Shirley is a close friend and former colleague, whom I have known for twelve years. Shirley is very well respected by those who know her, both for her intellect and integrity. Those who have the privilege of calling her “friend” also know her to be compassionate, giving, and dedicated. I continue to be amazed by Shirley’s unconditional commitment to her responsibilities. Whether it be her role as an attorney, per diem judge, mother, or friend, Shirley continually gives all of herself and values the importance of each role. Shirley epitomizes the attorney and person that I strive to be.

Additionally, based upon my twelve years of practice as a criminal and civil trial attorney, in both federal and state courts, I have absolutely no doubt Shirley also epitomizes what a judge should be. Shirley has extensive litigation experience; and her knowledge of both criminal and civil law is quite comprehensive. In the past, I have sought her opinion and assistance on complex civil and criminal legal issues. I value Shirley’s insight and ability to analyze legal issues from the perspective of both parties, and her ability to formulate an independent and well thought opinion. I have also observed Shirley consistently treat others with fairness, respect, and dignity. Based on these traits that I have personally observed embodied in Shirley, I have no doubt that Shirley will prove to be a valuable asset to our judiciary. Thank you for your consideration of her nomination.

Very truly yours,

/S/ Tracy S. Fukui, Esq.