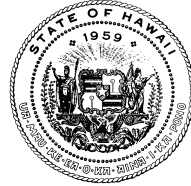


**GM547**

**TESTIMONY**



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

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

### Senate Committee on Health

**G.M.547, G.M. 548, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the  
Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board, Gubernatorial Nominee,  
ELIZABETH COOL and JAMAL WASAN, for terms to expire 6-30-2016**

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

**Wednesday, February 27, 2013, 1:30 p.m.**

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health strongly supports the nomination and confirmation  
2 of Elizabeth Cool (G.M.547) and Jamal Wasan, Ph.D. (G.M.548) to serve on the Mental Health and  
3 Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board (HSAB) for terms to expire on June 30, 2016.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose is for the consideration and confirmation to the HSAB,  
6 Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Cool and Jamal Wasan, Ph.D. representing the consumer and  
7 provider segments of the community. HSAB appointees represent service area residents who are  
8 consumers or nonproviders of mental health services, and service area providers with a majority being  
9 non-state employees and nonproviders of mental health or other health services.

10 **Elizabeth Cool (G.M.547)** brings varied experiences and interests to the HSAB. She has been  
11 very involved with the Kona Paradise Clubhouse and at times assists with clerical support in the office.  
12 Ms. Cool is a strong advocate for people living with mental illness and shares her experiences of living  
13 with mental illness with other consumers. She is also involved with the suicide prevention efforts on  
14 Hawaii island. Ms. Cool fulfills the role of consumer on the HSAB.

1           **Jamal Wasan, Ph.D. (G.M.548)** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Lokahi Treatment Center  
2 with five locations throughout the islands. Dr. Wasan previously served on the HSAB during the early  
3 2000's. On a professional level, he provides a well-grounded view of the nature and level of service  
4 called for in providing effective mental health services and substance abuse treatment. His résumé  
5 reveals a wealth of experience and training that will inform effective planning, analysis and strategic  
6 thinking in services to people living with mental illness and substance abuse addictions. In addition to  
7 his experience and training in the mental health and substance abuse field, Dr. Wasan brings personal  
8 qualities of genuine concern for the well-being of others and a sincere desire to use his skills to help  
9 those in need on a voluntary basis; qualities that add immeasurably to his professional qualifications.  
10 Dr. Wasan fulfills the provider role on the HSAB.

11           We respectfully request your favorable consideration on confirming Elizabeth Cool and Dr.  
12 Jamal Wasan, Ph.D. to serve on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board.

13           Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of these nominees.

February 25, 2013

To Senator Josh Green and the Senate Committee on  
Health, and Boardmembers:

I would first like to take this opportunity to say thank you for your consideration of my nomination to the Hawaii State Area Board for Mental Health and Substance Abuse. I have long been interested in being involved in helping in some small area of the mental health community where I live.

I have been around mental illness since I was a small child. As I grew older and more curious, I realized that mental health had blazed a roadmap through my entire family. My grandfather, my uncle, my mother, my oldest brother, the middle brother, and myself. Even the next generation, my son. I never realized when I was young, but of course as I aged, all the signs and symptoms were all there. In my parent's home, these diagnoses were complimented more by alcohol abuse and drug use. Needless to say, this was a very toxic stew. I left when I was seventeen, and moved to Alaska when I was 25.

I was formally diagnosed with a dual diagnosis approximately 14 years ago in Montana. I attended a day program in Livingston, MT for about 4 years. I was active in helping to start a NAMI chapter in our small town, up until the time that I moved to Hawaii. I was an active group member in DBT (dialectic behavioral training) classes. We were also trying to expand mental health services to include a home-like environment that would include psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, etc., for consumers that needed short-term inpatient treatment in a nearby town, instead of the psychiatric ward at a hospital, 150 miles away from home and family. I understand that it has succeeded, and has become a wonderful addition to services in Montana.

I moved here in 2006, and got an appointment with the mental health office fairly quickly. Getting help from the satellite office in Na'alehu was a great experience. I got to see how a very small office works. I also started volunteering to help at the office, and started by weeding the flowerbeds in front of the building. My case manager quickly learned that I had office skills, and I was soon asked to do miscellaneous clerical jobs. I was thrilled! I found that I loved volunteering.

I moved closer to town, and soon found myself getting services at the Kealahou office.  
Then approximately 4 years ago there were cutbacks on the state level, and I found mys

elf volunteering once more. This time I helped out about 3 1/2 years. I still receive

services at the Kealahou office, but spend my time at the Kona Paradise Club as a very happy member, where I can enjoy a busy, but very fun day.

I would like to believe that I can help my community by being involved with the Hawaii State Area Board, Commission on Mental Health/Substance Abuse. At the age of 54, I really believe that we all need to take stock of ourselves and our lives, and we need to find what it is out there in our world that is our true passion. Mental health (the clients) just happened to become my true passion.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to apply for this position, and for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Cool