



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS

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To: Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair
Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukoro, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

From: Serafin Colmenares Jr.
Executive Director, Office of Language Access

Hearing: April 10, 2013, 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 016

Re: **Testimony in Support of GM571 (LITO ASUNCION)**
Language Access Advisory Council

Good morning, Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, the Executive Director with the Office of Language Access (OLA). The OLA strongly supports the confirmation of Lito Asuncion to the Language Access Advisory Council as a member-at-large.

Mr. Asuncion is a returning Council member who was a member for five years representing the County of Hawaii. As a Council member, he has been very supportive of the programs and activities of the Office of Language Access and has worked to promote language access on the Big Island. He holds a Master's in Public Health in Gerontology and Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Sociology from the University of Hawaii-Manoa. He received his High School Diploma from Kohala High School on the Big Island.

He currently lives on Kauai and works for the Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs as a Program Specialist/Grants Manager. He has previously worked as a Program Planner and Program Specialist for the Hawaii County Office of Aging; an Immigration Information Specialist with the Hawaii County Office of Management; and as a Program Evaluator/Trainer

for the Hawaii-American Samoa Bilingual Education Support Center. He is a Certified Information and Referral Specialist in Aging with the Alliance of Information and Referral System; and member of both the American Society of Aging and the Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society. His community service includes positions as President of the Big Island Filipino Community Council; Chartered member of the Filipino Chamber of Commerce- Big Island; member of the Board of Directors with Hospice of Hilo; and Board Member of the Hawaii Rural Health Association.

For these reasons, Mr. Asuncion has been an excellent addition to the Language Access Advisory Council and should be confirmed as a member.



**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 571:
LITO ASSUNCION FOR THE LANGUAGE ACCESS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
April 10, 2013, 10 a.m. | Hawai'i State Legislature | Room 016

To: Honorable Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair
Honorable Sen. Maile S. L. Shimabukuru, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor: Sen.
Mike Gabbard, Sen. Les Ihara, Jr.; Sen. Sam Slom

From: Amy Agbayani, Vice Chair, NaFFAA Region 12
3432 B-1 Kalihi St. Honolulu 96819
Amy_agbayani@yahoo.com

The National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA) strongly supports Mr. Lito Asuncion for the Language Access Advisory Council. NaFFAA is a national organization and Hawai'i is one of the 12 regional chapters. NaFFAA promotes civic participation of Filipino Americans and seeks to increase awareness of Filipino American contributions to social, economic, cultural and political life in the United States. NaFFAA actively support policies that promote equal access and non-discrimination.

I have known Mr. Lito Asuncion for over forty years. He has been an early and effective advocate for social justice and diversity. His academic training in Ethnic Studies and Sociology gives him a good foundation and understanding of issues relating to immigration and our multicultural community. In addition, he has hands on experience with language access issues. As an undergraduate, he was among the first bilingual tutors with Operation Manong program at UH Manoa. He is one of the founders of Sariling Gawa, a community organization that provides workshops to develop and mentor Filipino youth. As an immigrant educated in Hawaii and a professional working with a state agency, Mr. Asuncion understands the need to provide appropriate language assistance as well as support and resources for service providers. I am very impressed with his integrity, knowledge, professional experience and community service. He is a very responsible individual who will make a positive contribution to this advisory council. He will take the time to read materials, participate in committee work, and actively develop policies that will assure equal access to government services for persons with limited English proficiency.

I respectfully ask you to support Mr. Lito Asuncion's nomination to the Language Access Advisory Council.

1205 Puhau St.
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

2012-2013

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Sariling Gawa Youth Council, Big Island

Big Island 
FILIPINO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

April 9, 2013

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on
Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Room 016
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: GM571 – Lito Asuncion
Language Access Advisory Council

Dear Chair Hee and Members:

The Big Island Filipino Community Council, an umbrella organization of community-based Filipino-American associations in Hawaii Island, supports Mr. Lito M. Asuncion's confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council for a term to expire June 30, 2016.

Mr. Asuncion is an active and well-known leader in the Filipino community on the Big Island. He has been president several times of the Big Island Filipino Community Council and former president of the Filipino Chamber of Commerce in Hawaii Island. In addition to his interactions with the members of the Filipino community, Mr. Asuncion had served other ethnic groups on the Big Island in his past capacity as the Immigration Information Specialist of the Hawaii County Immigration Office. In that role, he provided advice, referrals and information to people of varied ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Subsequently, in his current position as Program Specialist for the County of Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs, he assists our many elderly constituents in accessing government programs and services. Due to their limited English proficiency, many of these people may not otherwise access these invaluable programs and benefits without his assistance.

During Mr. Asuncion's first term as member of the Language Access Advisory Council, he was instrumental in helping organize informational meetings and workshops for residents of the Big Islands to learn about Hawaii's Language Access Act, the functions of the Office of Language Access and how people of limited English speaking abilities can access interpretation or translation services to receive benefits and services they are eligible for.

Mr. Asuncion will be a great asset in the Council because of his extensive experience and expertise in dealing with people with varied languages and cultures. We urge your Committee to confirm Mr. Lito M. Asuncion to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Christina T. Ranan
President

hee2 - Kathleen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, April 05, 2013 11:23 PM
To: JDLTestimony
Cc: Lardizabal@local368.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM571 on Apr 10, 2013 10:00AM

GM571

Submitted on: 4/5/2013

Testimony for JDL on Apr 10, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Al Lardizabal	Hawaii Laborers' Union	Support	No

Comments: Mr. Asuncion will be a tremendous asset to the Language Accessibility Advisory Council. He came to Hawaii as a penniless immigrant and became one of Hawaii's outstanding construction company with many awards. He understands and can help overcome problems faced by immigrants. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

hee2 - Kathleen

From: Romel Dela Cruz [ahufarm@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 12:20 PM
To: JDLTestimony
Cc: litoasuncion@hotmail.com
Subject: GM 571 -Confirmation Hearing of Lito Asuncion to LAAC

Senator Clayton Hee, Committee Members, Senate Judicial/Labor Committee

My name is Romel Dela Cruz, a retired state hospital administrator with the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HSHSC), and a resident of Honokaa, Hawaii.

I have known Lito Asuncion for almost 40 years as a fellow student at UH Manoa and as a professional colleagues in the educational, social, and health field on Oahu and the Big Island. As in individual he very well versed in the cultural and history of the Philippines and the local Filipino experience in Hawaii. He is also multi-lingual in several Filipino languages.

His addition and confirmation as a member of LAAC will enhance the ability of the Council to address the comprehensive needs of residents of our State whose primary language is not English. His perspective as a previous immigrant himself whose primary language was not English and his educational and work experience are valuable skill sets that is invaluable and necessary to be a contributing member of the LAAC.

Your positive support and confirmation is greatly appreciated.

If you require additional information please email me at ahufarm@gmail.com or contact me at 808-775-0768. Aloha and mabuhay.

Romel Dela Cruz