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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 GM572 (PATRICIA HARPSTRITE)**  
Language Access Advisory Council

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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 of the Office of Language Access (OLA). The OLA strongly supports the confirmation of Patricia Harpstrite to the Language Access Advisory Council representing the County of Honolulu.

Ms. Harpstrite retired from teaching Spanish at the Leeward Community College campus of the University of Hawai`i in 1998 and became a Federally Certified Court Interpreter that same year. Since then, she has been an interpreter in Federal, State and Immigration Courts in Hawai`i. In 2007, her federal certification qualified her as a Hawai`i State Judiciary Master Certified Court Interpreter (Tier 6). She also works as a medical, community and conference interpreter, and has done legal, business and literary translation.

She is active in interpreter/translator professional organizations on both local and national levels. She served as secretary for the Hawai`i Interpreter Action Network (HIAN) from 2005 through 2010, and prior to that as secretary, vice-president and president of the Hawai`i

Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA). She is an associate member of the American Translators Association (ATA). She currently serves as HIAN's Vice President.

She is also a member of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) and a member of the NAJIT Advocacy Committee. She has co-authored several articles for national interpreter professional publications, including Proteus (NAJIT) and the Interpreter's Voice (ATA).

She has also been active in various OLA activities, including her participation as a presenter at OLA's annual conference and has assisted our work as a member of various OLA committees and subcommittees.

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

April 7, 2013

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

FROM: Tuan Jensen-Lech  
Interpreter-Translator (Vietnamese-English)  
Professionally Qualified Interpreter for Federal Court  
Certified Interpreter for the Hawaii Judiciary  
Tel.: 262-1903, E-mail: [tuandep@gmail.com](mailto:tuandep@gmail.com)

HEARING: April 10, 2013; 10:00 AM

RE: **SUPPORT GM572 Confirmation of Patricia J. Harpstrite's appointment to the Language Access Advisory Council**

Chair Senator Hee, Vice Chair Senator Shimabukuro, members of this Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Patricia Harpstrite's confirmation as the representative for the City and County of Honolulu to the Language Access Advisory Council.

During my two terms as President of Hawaii Interpreter Action Network (HIAN) (2005-06 and 2007-08), I was fortunate to have Ms. Harpstrite as Secretary. She is hardworking, dependable, an excellent communicator, and was a great help to me in building the professional association we helped to establish in 2002. Continuing her service to HIAN, Ms. Harpstrite currently serves as Vice-President. She is also a long-time member of professional organizations at the national level, including the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) and the American Translators Association (ATA).

Ms. Harpstrite has 15 years of experience interpreting and translating in Hawaii. In 1998, she became the first Hawaii resident to pass the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination. Since then, she has interpreted for the Federal, State and Immigration Courts in Hawaii, and was awarded the credential of Master Certified Court Interpreter by the Hawaii Judiciary in 2007. She has also worked as a medical, community and conference interpreter, and has done legal, business and literary translation.

With a background as Professor of Spanish at Leeward Community College, Ms. Harpstrite has provided interpreter training for the Hawaii Judiciary's Basic Orientation Workshops, and has been a presenter at numerous HIAN workshops, as well as at the 2012 Annual Conference Office of the Office of Language Access (OLA). She is currently preparing to teach Spanish 308, Introduction to Spanish-English Interpretation, at the University of Hawaii Manoa in the Fall Semester of 2013.

I believe Patricia Harpstrite will be a valuable contributor to the work of the Language Access Advisory Council, and I urge you to confirm her appointment as the representative for the City and County of Honolulu.

Thank you,

Tuan Jensen-Lech

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

FROM: Carol Beresiwsky  
Professor of Spanish/French, Emerita  
Kapi'olani Community College

HEARING: April 10, 2013, 10:00 a.m., Conf. Rm. 016

RE: **SUPPORT GM 572, Patricia J. Harpstrite**  
**Language Access Advisory Council, Oahu seat**

Pat Harpstrite is an outstanding choice to represent the City and County of Honolulu on the Language Access Advisory Council. I have known Pat Harpstrite for over thirty years since we were colleagues at Leeward Community College.

At Leeward Community College, Pat had the reputation of being a marvelous and effective teacher. Her classroom was totally *student centered*, emphasized a *natural approach*, *communicative proficiency*, *authentic materials*, and *content-based instruction* before our profession recognized the value of these aspects of foreign language instruction and the labels became part of the methodology jargon. Pat taught the transfer sequence of Beginning (101-102) and Intermediate (201-202) Spanish, but went on to develop curriculum for additional courses: Latin American Culture, Survival Spanish for Travel, and Business Spanish. An example of her creative and authentic approach was to have the Business Spanish students research an actual Hispanic company — its location, products, and business plan — and write business letters and documents as a virtual representative of that company. Leeward instructors took her courses. Pat rose quickly from Instructor to Full Professor through excellent teaching, consistent professional development, service to the College and community service related to Spanish.

In 1978 Pat won a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Grant for *Improving Foreign Language Instruction* for Leeward Community College — the largest NEH grant awarded in Hawai'i for that year, and the only one awarded to the community colleges. With the NEH grant we were able to establish the Hawaiian/Foreign Language Film and Media Resource Center, expand language offerings, sponsor four International Cultural Event Fairs showcasing European, Hawaiian, Japanese, and Filipino languages and cultures, and develop a course for "heritage" Spanish speakers, that is individuals who spoke fluently but needed additional instruction to improve reading and writing skills. The course for heritage speakers was among the first offered in the nation at the time. All of the teaching materials were developed on site at Leeward.

In the same way that that the NEH grant was inclusive of all languages, Pat demonstrated intelligent and effective leadership for all languages when she became Chair of the Language Arts Department. As the largest department in the University system, Language Arts included English Composition, Creative Writing, Speech, Reading, English as a Second

Language, Hawaiian, Japanese, German, French, and Spanish. As Chair of the Language Arts Department, Pat expanded the foreign language offerings to meet the needs and interests of Leeward students to include Mandarin, Russian, and Ilokano.

Along with the notion of broad support and interest and advocacy for languages, I should also mention that Pat completed additional study of French to teach Beginning French at Leeward, and in the mid 1980s, she was selected for a Fulbright Seminar to study Portuguese language in Brazil. As part of the Fulbright, Pat also completed a research project on the large Japanese immigrant community in Brazil.

When Pat took early retirement to pursue a second career in interpretation and translation, she applied the same dedication and professionalism she brought to her work as a community college professor. Already at near native fluency in Spanish, Pat took courses in interpretation theory from New York University. She attended National Conferences and training workshops on the Mainland and became the first Hawai'i resident to pass the challenging Federal Court Interpreter Certification Exam. She was elected president of the Hawaii Interpretation and Translators Association (HITA) and served for many years. Later, as a founding member and Secretary for Hawaii Interpreter Action Network, she lobbied to have more training and opportunities for professional development for Interpreters in Hawai'i and to have National Center for State Courts Consortium Court Interpreter Certification in a variety of languages recognized in Hawai'i.

As a professional translator/interpreter, Pat was the official translator of the poetry by Teresa Moorehouse, a gifted poet-in-residence, and Spanish professor at the University of Hawaii, and she interpreted from for the Guatemalan Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchú during Menchu's visit to Hawaii. In the 1980s she was a member of the Hawai'i's Governor's Special Council on the Teaching and Learning of Hawaiian and Foreign Languages.

Others may fill in the details of Pat's more recent accomplishments for HITA and community and court interpretation projects and successes, but I hope this letter sheds some light on the activities, professional development, and early accomplishments that established her as a leader and advocate for languages even before she began her career in community and court interpretation.

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

HEARING: April 10, 2013, 10:00 a.m., Conf. Rm. 016

RE: **SUPPORT GM 572, Patricia J. Harpstrite, M. A.**  
**Language Access Advisory Council, Oahu seat**

Patricia J. Harpstrite moved to Hawaii in the 1960s. She enrolled at UH-Manoa to obtain an M.A. so that she could pursue her passion for teaching. She started teaching at Leeward CC and remained there until retirement. From our many conversations about her teaching career, I know that she is very well aware of and committed to our community here. At Leeward she taught everyone, from young people coming into higher education at age 18, to older people from the community and the military who had decided to go to school after doing other things for many years. She taught local students, recent immigrants, and the children of recent immigrants—everyone. Pat was committed to the LCC vision of a school for the entire community.

During her time at LCC, she created new courses and supported new and incoming faculty members. She served as Language Arts Division Chair, 1984-86; Foreign Language Discipline Coordinator, 1987-90; and a member of the Faculty Senate and numerous academic committees. LCC recognized her with the Phi Theta Kappa award as Outstanding Instructor in 1992. In 1998, the Hawaii Association of Language Teachers gave her the Excellence in Teaching Award.

Pat and I met when she decided to start a new career path and become a Spanish court interpreter. She became the first Hawaii resident to pass the federal court interpreter oral exam—the most difficult court interpreting test in the USA. Pat has worked on a number of

federal and state cases, always doing her best to support professional standards and ethics. At the same time, she has served in a number of different leadership positions within the local interpreting community, as well as serving on Advocacy, one of the key committees within the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators. She is highly respected.

I asked Pat to please serve on the Language Access Advisory Council. Hawaii needs her kind of professional vision, dedication, and deep understanding of language access issues from the point of view of a language services provider, coupled with a profound sympathy for those immigrants who need language access to services. Her soft-spoken and diplomatic touch, combined with her research orientation to issues, will make her a tremendous, positive addition to the LAAC.

**Please support Patricia J. Harpstrite for a seat on the Language Access Advisory Council.**

*Mahalo, mil gracias, and thank you!*