

GM626

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Rehabilitation Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, FRANCINE KENYON, for a term to expire 6-30-2016.

Report Title: State Rehabilitation Council

Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: HMS

Introducer(s):



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 19, 2013

MEMORANDUM:

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **G.M. 626 - Gubernatorial Nomination of Francine Kenyon to the
State Rehabilitation Council**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 19, 2013, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the nomination of Ms. Francine Kenyon to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The SRC was established in the 1992 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The SRC acts in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on services that address employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Francine Kenyon is seeking an appointment for her first term to the SRC.

Ms. Kenyon has over 40 years of advocacy and education, bringing her experience for the integration into society and the success of her disabled peer's quality of life to the council.

Ms. Kenyon seeks out opportunities to serve her peers with disabilities, continuing to educate the public and advocate at both local and national levels for the rights and quality of life for people with disabilities.

Ms. Kenyon was raised in Hawaii, leaving to continue her education in the Washington D.C. area in Psychology and ministry. Ms. Kenyon's professional life began in the nation's capital giving her an excellent opportunity to learn and practice her advocacy skills. Ms. Kenyon is one of Hawaii's leaders in the deaf community, acting as the chair for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board and an active member of the Aloha Association of the Deaf.

Ms. Kenyon currently works at Honolulu counties office of Parks and Recreation; primarily in the area of physical education for people with disabilities ensuring access to Hawaii's parks, beaches, and great outdoors.

Ms. Kenyon is an excellent example of an individual with a disability taking the opportunity, training and tools, to achieve the same level of education and employment that her non-disabled counterparts do.

Ms. Kenyon will provide representation to the SRC as an advocate and previous recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Honolulu County.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this Committee.



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

February 19, 2013

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services

Governor's Message 626 - Gubernatorial Appointee Francine Kenyon

I am submitting testimony in **support** of Gubernatorial appointee Francine Kenyon to the State Rehabilitation Council.

Ms. Kenyon was Coordinator of the Hawaii State Coordinating Council on Deafness, a program under the Commission on Persons with Disabilities, currently called the Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB). She also served as a Board member on the Disability and Communication Access Board from 1999 to 2007.

Ms. Kenyon is currently a member of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing Advisory Board and serves as their Legislative Chairperson.

Ms. Kenyon is a vocal advocate and would bring a wealth of knowledge on disability-related issues with an emphasis on deaf and hard of hearing issues. She will be an asset to the Council, if selected.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

**SENATOR SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND, CHAIR
SENATOR JOSH GREEN, VICE-CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

**GM626, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE FRANCINE KENYON
TO SERVE ON STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013 AT 1:15 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 016**

My name is Deborah T. Makahanaloa and am deaf. I work as contracting clerk at Fort Shafter Army Base for over 20 years.

I **strongly support** GM626, Gubernatorial Nominee Francine Kenyon, to serve on State Rehabilitation Council for a term to expire 6/30/2016, because she has been very active in the Deaf community since she returned to Hawaii from the mainland where she lived for 19 years.

I have known her ever since I was about 11 years old when I went to YMCA Camp for the Deaf where Francine then was a junior and senior camp counselor for a summers. We had a great time, having fun at Camp Erdman and she was a great teacher.

Now I attend Harris United Methodist Church where Francine volunteers teaching Sunday School classes for the deaf and interpreting for deaf congregation every Sunday mornings

Thank you very much for your accepting the governor's appointment of Francine Kenyon to serve on State Rehabilitation Council.

Sincerely,

Deborah T. Makahanaloa
Deaf Consumer
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ELENA M. RESPICIO
98-400 KOAUKA LOOP, APT. 406
AIEA, HI 96701

**GM626, FRANCINE MAE KENYON
NOMINEE TO SERVE ON STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2016**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

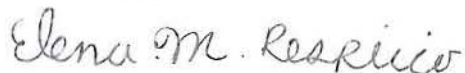
My name is Elena M. Respicio and I am deaf.

I testify in **support** of GM626, nominating Francine Kenyon to serving on State Rehabilitation Council. I have known her since 1988 when she was a Literary Coordinator of Hawaii Services on Deafness. She helped me how to read and to learn American Sign Language. I did not talk much until Francine taught me. I go to Harris United Methodist Church where Francine signs for me and my deaf friends every Sundays since 1990 when I joined as a member. She is very helpful. Also, she helped my mom and dad when they wanted to talk to me with her signing. After my mom and dad were gone, she continues to help me when my sister and I need her to sign for me.

Please approve the nomination of Francine Kenyon to serve on State Rehabilitation Council because I know she will do more to helping the Deaf community in the state.

Thank you very much for the opportunity for me to testify on her behalf.

Sincerely yours,



Elena M. Respicio

NATASHA M.K. OTANI
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**GM626, FRANCINE MAE KENYON
NOMINEE TO SERVE ON STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2016**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

My name is Natasha M.K. Otani and I am deaf, growing up in Hilo and now residing in Honolulu. I work as launderer and dishwasher at Dave & Buster's. Prior to this, I worked as baggage clerk and stock clerk at Safeway.

I testify in **support** of GM626, nominating Francine Kenyon to serving on State Rehabilitation Council. I have known her for over 3 years. Francine has helped me a lot in many ways such as teaching me to be independent, giving me some tips of being a good voting citizen, encouraging me to stay at job and be financially, and so forth.

Please approve the nomination of Francine Kenyon to serve on State Rehabilitation Council because I know she will do more to helping the Deaf community in the state.

Thank you very much for the opportunity for me to testify on her behalf.

Sincerely yours,

Natasha M.K. Otani



GM626

**FRANCINE MAE LEHUANANI AONA KENYON
GOVERNIAL NOMINEE TO SERVE ON STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2016**

I wish to be a member of the State Rehabilitation because of three reasons: (1) Interest in serving on board/commission; (2) Better VR services; and (3) Experience.

- a) I have always been interested to participate in any board and commission so that I can provide more input to help other board/commission members to be aware of what those with disabilities, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing can do in the general community;
- b) I strongly believe that consumers with disabilities, including those who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind, receive satisfactory services provided by Vocational Rehabilitation division, service providers contracted by Vocational Rehabilitation, and public and private entities, and that consumers with disabilities are capable to work in any fields of work; and,
- c) I would gain more experience and knowledge as a member with the State Rehabilitation Council and what the SRC can do for us people with disabilities, including those who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind.

I perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Rehabilitation Council by involving myself to participate in one or two subcommittees, such as transition or legislative, and providing some inputs and ideas what can improve the Vocational Rehabilitation Division, VR service providers, public and private entities, and other programs.

Given my understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Rehabilitation Council, I believe that I am qualified for the position as follows:

- a) Working within Deaf community for over 50 years here and on the mainland, including National Association of the Deaf as co-editor of Dee Cee Eyes; Delta Epsilon Sorority as active honorary member; Aloha State Association of the Deaf as past board member & editor; Washington United Methodist Church of the Deaf as Deaf church leader; Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf as Deaf pastor;
- b) Being a recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation services, providing me many assistances such as higher education, hearing aids, job placements; and many others here and on the mainland;
 - 1. For example, in Maryland, Vocational Rehabilitation supported the Deaf clients, wishing to pursue the doctoral studies whereas in Hawaii, Vocational Rehabilitation doesn't. Thus, it gives me the perception of how, what, and why Vocational Rehabilitation in Hawaii should do more for those with disabilities, including those who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind
- c) Being a sole proprietor and business owner of Kuli Ike Kokua, teaching American Red Cross classes to those who are deaf and hard of hearing as well as to those hearing people interested in improving their sign language skills; encouraging them to sustain better jobs for such good reasons as financial independence and freedom; helping them start their own business; recruiting them to help me do the volunteer

work with American Red Cross and with many other agencies and to participate in disaster preparedness exercises; recruiting interested individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing to work as part-time recreation aides for children and adults with disabilities in City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation; and many others; and

- d) Most importantly, being appointed by four governors in the past to serve on boards such as Hawaii State Coordinating Council on Deafness, Disability and Communication Access Board, and Statewide Independent Living Council of Hawaii is a great honor and is an enriching, rewarding experience for me. Thus, this may help me to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council, enhancing better quality of life among people with disabilities including those who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind. I hopefully plan to expand my knowledge and experiences, serving on other boards and commissions that deal with emergency preparedness, domestic violence, aging or many others as a goal of encouraging those within the Deaf community to participate in such boards and commission as future Deaf leaders someday to ensure full access to services and programs statewide.

I hope to accomplish during my term of service by enhancing better Vocational Rehabilitation services for those who are deaf and hard of hearing and deaf-blind in order to be financially and socially independent and establishing the Comprehensive Deaf Center that has been long overdue and is greatly needed within the Deaf community statewide.

The qualities that best describe me and that would make me stand out are as follows:

- 1) Individual with perseverance & assertiveness
- 2) Leader with many hats
- 3) Advocate willing to speak up as advocate for the rights of deaf and hard of hearing as well as people with disabilities
- 4) Team worker
- 5) Public speaker on various issues such as domestic violence for deaf and hard of hearing or deaf ministry locally, state and nationally

I believe that these qualities would benefit the State Rehabilitation Council by putting strong input on how to enhance and improve the Vocational Rehabilitation services so that more deaf and hard of hearing can become fully financially independent and have good self-esteem when having better salaried jobs.

My past and current experiences include as follows:

- a) As a recreation assistant II of City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation Therapeutic Unit to fostering independence and encouraging full participation of children, youth, and adults with disabilities in recreational activities and programs; to teaching ASL to summer fun kids at various parks during the summers (2003 to present);
- b) As a vice-chair and chair of Access Advisory Council of City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation Therapeutic Unit to promote access to recreational services and programs for people with disabilities (2007 to 2011);
- c) As a program specialist-coordinator of Hawaii State Coordinating Council on Deafness (now as Disability and Communication Access Board) to coordinating with public and private entities to improve better access in services and programs for

those who are deaf and hard of hearing and to testifying on behalf of Deaf community on deafness-related bills and resolutions (1989-1992);

- d) As an executive director of Hawaii Services on Deafness to providing independent living and interpreter services contracted by Vocational Rehabilitation Division and to promoting deaf awareness to public and private entities, including hotels (1992-1993);
- e) As vice-chair and pro tempore chair of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board, Vocational Rehabilitation Division, for a numerous years to enhance better Vocational Rehabilitation services and programs for Deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind (since 2000)
- f) As secretary-treasurer of national United Methodist Congress of the Deaf (1977-1980)
- g) As member of the steering committee and writer of By-Laws and Incorporation with General Board of Global Ministries, Health and Welfare Division, and with Bob Mather, deaf lawyer, of Gallaudet University Law Center on developing and establishing the national United Methodist Congress of the Deaf (1975-1977)
- h) As a At-Large member of Commission on Status and Role of Women in the United Methodist Church (1976-1980) to speak on the provision of sign language interpreters for those seminarians who are deaf and hard of hearing

This would benefit the State Rehabilitation Council by:

- a) Informing those who are deaf and hard of hearing to be fully aware what State Rehabilitation council can do for them for the betterment of Vocational Rehabilitation services and Vocational Rehabilitation contracted service providers, public and private entities, etc.;
- b) Encouraging and promoting to them to actively participate as future leaders of Deaf Community in State Rehabilitation Council or in any other governor-appointed board or commission to represent the Deaf community;
- c) Recruiting any interested deaf people to be part of State Rehabilitation Council or of any board/commission in the near future;

No, I don't foresee any possible conflicts that would arise during my service on the State Rehabilitation Council.

Submitted By:

Francine Mae Lehuanani Aona Kenyon
Francine Mae Lehuanani Aona Kenyon

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