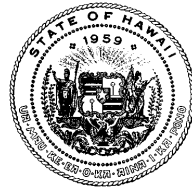


HTH HEARING

GM735

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. 735, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the
Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board, Gubernatorial Nominee,
SULMA GANDHI**

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

Wednesday, April 10, 2013, 1:30 p.m.

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports the confirmation of Sulma Gandhi
2 to serve on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board (HSAB) for a term to
3 expire June 30, 2016.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose is for the consideration and confirmation of Gubernatorial
6 Nominee, Sulma Gandhi for her initial appointment on the HSAB. Pursuant to Chapter 334-11 of the
7 Hawaii Revised Statutes on Service Area Boards, the members of the Service Area Board are service
8 area residents who are consumers or non-providers of mental health services and service area providers
9 with a majority being non-state employees and non-providers of mental health or other health services.

10 **Sulma Gandhi (G.M. 735)** is currently a professor at the University of Hawaii at Hilo and is the
11 Director for Student Health and Wellness programs. Dr. Gandhi has a doctorate in Business
12 Administration and also received a certificate in Health Administration. Her vast experiences in private
13 non-profit agencies, as well as in state and federal government in Hilo and Canada, has provided her

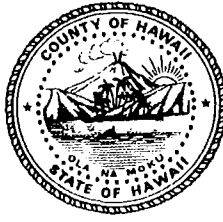
1 with valuable insights in working with various populations, from youth to kupuna, specifically in the
2 areas of mental health, child abuse, domestic violence and substance abuse. She is very involved in her
3 community and currently participates in suicide prevention efforts in Hilo.

4 The DOH respectfully requests your favorable consideration in confirming Dr. Gandhi to the
5 Mental Health and Substance Abuse, HSAB.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Dr. Gandhi who brings a wealth of
7 knowledge and experience that will contribute to board deliberations.

MITCHELL D. ROTH
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

March 26, 2013

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM735
Confirmation of Dr. Sulma Gandhi to the
Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board

Dewar Senators Green, Baker, Oakland, Nishihara and Representative Slom,

It is with great pleasure that I am writing this letter of recommendation for Dr. Sulma Gandhi's nomination to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Area Service Board. I have known and worked in the community with Dr. Gandhi for at least 10 years.

I first met and worked with Dr. Gandhi while she was working for Turning Point for Families, which addresses domestic violence on Hawai'i Island. In that role, Dr. Gandhi played a key role in addressing and educating people on the subjects of: domestic violence, mental health and drug related issues on the Big Island of Hawai'i.

Our paths crossed again while she was working as a health instructor at Kamehameha schools Keaau campus. She invited me to speak to her students about drugs and other social ills in our community. While at the school, I was able to observe the way Dr. Gandhi addressed her students and how they looked up to her with great respect as a role model.

In her latest position at the University of Hawai'i I have been fortunate to work with her again as she addresses various issues relating to health and wellness on the University of Hawai'i Hilo campus.

Through all of these interactions I know Dr. Gandhi to be a person of the highest moral and ethical caliber. She is extremely intelligent, while at the same time is very humble and helpful to everyone that she deals with. She is a proactive and creative problem solver who works tirelessly to come up with the best solutions for any challenge put in front of her. She is a real team player that treats everyone with dignity and respect.

It is for these reasons that I whole heartedly support and recommend Dr. Sulma Gandhi's nomination to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Area Service Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

MITCHELL D. ROTH
Prosecuting Attorney

April 8, 2013

State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Health
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Dr. Sulma Gandhi's Nomination to **Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board.**

Dear Senators Green, Baker, Oakland, Nishihara and Representative Slom,

As an aspiring mental health and substance abuse counselor in the state of Hawai'i, I am excited to learn that Dr. Sulma Gandhi has been nominated by Governor Abercrombie to serve on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Hawai'i Service Area Board. I am honored to work with Dr. Gandhi in my capacity as a counselor at the University of Hawaii at Hilo Student Health and Wellness Programs. The Director for Student Health and Wellness is a new endeavor at UH Hilo that Dr. Gandhi serves to develop into a comprehensive and multi-disciplined unit that will deliver medical and mental health counseling services. Her leadership in this venture has been extraordinary to witness.

Dr. Gandhi holds pertinent experience as a health educator and in prevention programming to our unit's work in mental health and substance abuse counseling. Her experience has provided me with much needed guidance as we develop our unit to encompass not only direct treatment modalities but to explore meaningful prevention strategies to address the areas of mental health wellbeing and substance abuse on our campus.

I strongly support Dr. Sulma Gandhi's nomination to serve on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Hawaii Service Area Board based on her experience in the field of prevention programming and health education and her demonstrated leadership at UH Hilo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Polloi', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Andrew Ngiratewid Polloi, M. A.
Counselor
Student Health and Wellness Programs

April 9, 2013

State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Health
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senators Green, Baker, Oakland, Nishihara and Representative Slom,

RE: Dr. Sulma Gandhi's Nomination to **Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board.**

I am writing to you as an employee of Dr. Sulma Gandhi, who has been nominated by the Governor to hold a position on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board. I have just started working with Dr. Gandhi this past year and from my experience with working with her, I highly support her nomination for this position. She is currently the Director of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Student Health & Wellness Programs. Student Health & Wellness Programs had just started in Fall 2012, and we are very fortunate to have a Director like Dr. Gandhi. Even though our unit is still new, we have come a long way since then, and have progressed over the months thanks to Dr. Gandhi.

Dr. Gandhi is an excellent leader. Taking on a leadership role has allowed her to form strong relationships with many people on our campus. She has a strong passion for health and wellness and the determination to help our students. I feel that she has a lot of experience in the health field, but she also has the passion for it which balances each other out. I feel that the State would truly benefit from an appointment of Dr. Gandhi to this position.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Yuw

April 8, 2013

To Senate Committee on Health:
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara
Representative Sam Slom

Aloha, I am writing in support of Sulma Gandhi a gubernatorial nominee to serve as a committee member on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service Board.

I have worked professionally with Sulma when she was hired as a Health and Wellness teacher at our school here on the island of Hawaii. Sulma was employed at our school from July 2004-July 2012. She was recruited to work at the University of Hawaii, Hilo campus therefore ended her teaching career at our high school in the summer of 2012. I was the acting principal at the time and was honored to work with her.

Sulma is a highly knowledgeable and well skilled professional in the field of Health Education. Thanks to her leadership our Health and Wellness academy is the highest sought after academy in our school program. While employed at our school, Sulma was appointed to leadership positions due to the fact that she demonstrated significant leadership skills that were necessary in helping to shape a new high school that required vision and a high level of commitment.

In addition to her exceptional expertise and skills, Sulma has the ability to work well with others from various backgrounds and is able to make sound decisions based on what is best for the stakeholders she represents.

I have no doubt that Sulma will serve this board with the highest level of integrity and commitment.

I recommend her without hesitation and believe she will be an asset to your work.

Ninia M.E. Aldrich

April 4, 2013

State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Health
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senators Josh Green, Rosalyn H. Baker, Suzanne Chun Oakland, Clarence K. Nishihara and Sam Slom,

RE: Dr. Sulma Gandhi's Nomination to **Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board.**

As a resident of the County of Hawaii, I was pleased to learn that Dr. Sulma Gandhi has been nominated to serve on the Hawaii Service Area Board on Mental Health and Substance Abuse. I have known Dr. Gandhi for several years.

I first met Dr. Gandhi as she worked for Turning Point for Families which addresses domestic violence on Hawaii Island and I was a Program Coordinator with the Hawaii County Jail Diversion Program for mentally ill offenders. Under the direction of Dr. Gandhi, the staff of Turing Point for Families understood and recognized the issues of domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse.

Most recently and as the Director of Student Health and Wellness at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, Dr. Gandhi was and is a key partner as the community work together to develop a coordinated response to the student victim of domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

I strongly support Dr. Sulma Gandhi's nomination to the Hawaii Service Area on Mental Health and Substance Abuse based upon her knowledge of mental health and substance abuse and related issued and of the Hawaii Island and her willingness to serve our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Roxanne L. Aburamen
1221 Oihana Street
Hilo, HI 96720

April 5, 2013

State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Health
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senators Green, Baker, Oakland, Nishihara and Representative Slom,

RE: Dr. Sulma Gandhi's Nomination to **Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board.**

Dr. Sulma Gandhi has asked me to provide testimony on her behalf and I am delighted to do so. I have known Sulma for 12 years, initially through her public service work with the Rotary Club of Hilo and subsequently through her work as our Kamehameha Schools Hawai'i Health and Wellness Academy Team Leader and faculty member. During her tenure with the Kamehameha Schools Hawai'i I was serving as the founding Headmaster of the campus and had the good fortune to be able to hire Dr. Gandhi!

My information and observations are as follows:

- ** Sulma has extensive training and background in the mental health and substance abuse arena
- ** Sulma is a recipient of the Athena Award which is perhaps all that needs to be said to support her nomination, but there is more to be said
- ** Sulma earned her doctorate in business administration while serving as Kamehameha Schools Hawai'i Health and Wellness Academy Team Leader
- ** Sulma is extremely bright and has moxie
- ** Sulma is effective in her interactions in group situations
- ** Sulma is a hard worker and would be a welcome member to any team

If I had the opportunity to include Sulma in this Hawai'i Service Area Board I would do so with alacrity.

It has been my pleasure to provide you with this testimony.

Respectfully,

Dr. Stan Fortuna, Jr., Founding Headmaster
Kamehameha Schools Hawai'i

TESTIMONY
OF
SULMA GANDHI
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
HEALTH
ON
March 25, 2013
G.M. 735

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawai'i Service Area Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, SULMA GANDHI, for a term to expire 6-30-2016

Chair Green and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

I want to thank Governor Neil Abercrombie for nominating me. I am honored to be considered for this post.

Mahalo nui to the colleagues that submitted letters on my behalf in support of this nomination.

I have been privileged to serve Hawai'i Island in various capacities for the past 14 years. My entire career work has focused on the health and wellbeing of our community, and I am passionate about it. I have worked in various hospitals, hospice, and within diverse health and human service fields from child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, health education to infection control. As a leader in the health and human service industry and the recipient for the Chamber of Commerce Athena award (female community leader), I am deeply passionate about contributing to servant leadership, the health welfare of our community, education, and development. I bring to the committee a unique combination of 18 years of health and human non-profit experience, 6 years of work experience in the University setting, 8 years with K-12 Education, community awareness, teaching experience, strong professional

relationships with diverse community members, Hawaiian cultural knowledge/practice and administrative and management experience which involved development, promotion and project implementation.

I have a Doctorate in Business with a focus in Health Care Management and Leadership. In addition to my Masters degree in Health Information Science and a Certificate in Health Care Administration, I have 16 years of experience as an administrator in the health and human service field, which includes development, promotion, implementation and evaluation of programs/services, grant writing, and research activities. All of these positions required excellent written and oral communication skills. I possess an ability to perform effectively under pressure and practice strong organizational skills when faced with multiple time-sensitive priorities. In addition to my desire to expand beyond the University and healthcare setting, you will find that I am a dedicated and driven professional.

My vision for our community includes one of social responsibility and care. Mental health and substance abuse issues do not simply reside with the individual. There are factors that contribute to a healthy society which expands beyond the individual, to the family, school, health and human services, media, social services, neighbors and even attitudes and ideologies of the culture in which we live in. I am dedicated to prevention and intervention efforts and look forward to being able to contribute to the committee.

In closing, I would like to thank this Committee for the hard work you do for the State of Hawaii and for considering my nomination.

Sincerely,

Sulma Gandhi