



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

Friday, April 12, 2013, 1:15 PM
State Capitol Room 414

Testimony of
Honorable Neil Abercrombie
Governor, State of Hawaii

To the Senate Education Committee
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

GM779 Confirmation of **Brian De Lima** to the
State of Hawai'i Board of Education

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

I am pleased to support the confirmation of Brian De Lima to the State of Hawai'i Board of Education (BOE). I have reappointed De Lima to represent the County of Hawai'i for a full three-year term ending June 30, 2016.

I appointed De Lima in 2011 following the 2010 constitutional amendment which established an appointed BOE. During the past two years, De Lima has been the BOE's Vice-Chair and a member of the Finance and Infrastructure, Human Resource, and Audit committees. De Lima has also engaged the community, particularly in East Hawaii and special education.

The BOE has met my expectations. In difficult circumstances, including fiscal and labor, the BOE has remained steadfast in its attention to student achievement. The BOE approved a new strategic plan last summer which focuses the work of the Department of Education and is resulting in clear targets of performance at the student, personnel, and system levels. Other significant actions by the BOE include new, more rigorous high school graduation requirements, directing the DOE to establish an Educator Effectiveness System, delivering on the principals' performance contract required by Act 51 (Session Laws of Hawaii, 2004), reviewing special education services, and reallocating resources to support DOE priorities.

Professionally, De Lima is an attorney in private practice based in Hilo. He has been practicing law in the State of Hawai'i since 1983 after graduating from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa William S. Richardson School of Law. His practice includes family law, personal injury, criminal defense, and civil and business litigation.

De Lima has a long-standing interest in improving public education. As a Hilo High School student, De Lima was the first student representative to the Board of Education in 1972. Subsequently, from 1980 to 1983 De Lima worked in the Legislature as House Education Committee Clerk under Chair Charles Toguchi who later became Superintendent of Schools.

De Lima also brings to the BOE experience in local governance. He served on the Hawai'i County Council from 1990 to 1996.

I remember De Lima from his days at University of Hawai'i at Manoa back in the 1980s. I am impressed that he is willing to extend his service on the BOE and that he continues to approach his BOE responsibilities with enthusiastic optimism.

I am confident that the life and professional experiences that he brings to the BOE will continue to serve our children and the state well. I know that you will find De Lima well qualified for the BOE and encourage you to confirm him.