

**Testimony of John M. Tonaki,  
State Public Defender to the Senate Committee on  
Judiciary and Labor**

April 14, 2016

GM 537: Nomination of Philip Lowenthal to the Defender Council

Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

It is a pleasure to support the nomination of Philip Lowenthal to be the Maui representative on the Defender Council for a second term. As a member of the Defender Council, Mr. Lowenthal will assist the Office of the Public Defender in fulfilling our mission of zealous and effective representation of indigent persons charged with criminal offenses.

Mr. Lowenthal is a prominent criminal defense lawyer who heads the Law Offices of Philip H. Lowenthal in Wailuku. He has represented clients in major cases in the state courts at all levels and in the federal courts. He is a recognized expert on the Rules of Evidence and currently serves on the State Judiciary's Standing Committee on Evidence. He also recently completed a lengthy tenure on the Judiciary's Disciplinary Board which oversees all of the members of the Hawaii Bar.

Mr. Lowenthal has served one term on the Defender Council and is a valuable member of this commission. We would be privileged to have him serve a second term on the Defender Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this matter.