

GM555

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants, Gubernatorial Nominee, VIRGILIO VIERNES, for a term to expire 06-30-2017.

Report Title: Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants

Description:

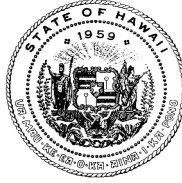
Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY**

Testimony in SUPPORT of GM555

**GM555, SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO
THE BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATING PERSONNEL IN
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
VIRGILIO VIERNES, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2017**

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date: March 1, 2016
Time: 9:30 AM

Room Number: 229

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The Department strongly supports the Governor's nominee,
- 3 Mr. Virgilio Viernes, to the Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater
- 4 Treatment Plants (Board). Mr. Viernes' confirmation will allow the Board to continue to operate
- 5 and perform its duties required under Chapter 11-62, Hawaii Administrative Rules, entitled,
- 6 "Mandatory Certification of Wastewater Treatment Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants."
- 7 Mr. Viernes has a Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology and Leisure Science from the
- 8 University of Hawaii. He has over twelve years of supervisory and operations experience in the
- 9 wastewater industry. He holds a Grade 4 wastewater treatment plant operator certificate and
- 10 currently works as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent for the County of Maui.
- 11 Mr. Viernes will serve in the capacity of Maui's representative on the Board.
- 12 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

RICHARD K. MINATOYA

TESTIMONY

ON

GM 555 - CONFIRMATION OF VIRGILIO VIERNES
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATING
PERSONNEL IN WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

March 1, 2016

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker

Chair

The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani

Vice Chair

and Members

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Richard Minatoya, and I STRONGLY SUPPORT GM 555, the nomination of VIRGILIO VIERNES to the Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants.

I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Viernes as a board member of the Maui Sister Cities Foundation for several years. I found Mr. Viernes to be hard working, caring, conscientious and knowledgeable. With this qualities, and his continued experience with the board of certification, I believe that he will continue to make positive contributions to the board.

I wholeheartedly request, without reservation, that the committee recommends CONFIRMATION to the full Senate.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

The Honorable Rosalyn Baker
Hawai'i State Senate
The Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i

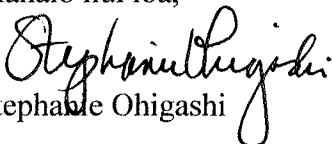
RE: Virgilio Viernes GM 555

Aloha Senator Baker:

It gives me great pleasure to send this letter of support for Mr. Virgilio Viernes to serve on the Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants. I have known Virgil (Virgilio) now for about seven years and have come to know and respect him very much. I have traveled with him and his family to promote Hawai'ian culture in Japan. . When you travel with people, you really find out what they are made of and I found that Virgil is a very dedicated and committed team player. Virgil and I serve on the Maui County Sister Cities Foundation together. I was the treasurer and Virgil succeeded me, however, we both work together on fiscal matters for the organization. We are also members of Halau Hula O Keola Ali'i O Kekai International Hula Exchange program. Virgil, his wife Courtney, their daughters Cameron and Ana have hosted many students from Maui County's sister city of Fukuyama for this exchange and the students from Japan have enjoyed the Viernes family very much..

On a professional level, Virgil is a County employee, who is serious about best practices in the workplace and providing quality services, effective management, safety and ongoing training are his top priorities. Virgil is dedicated to ensuring that employees have the proper training, credentials and experience to operate wastewater treatment plants. Virgil is not a flashy guy, he is humble, honest and enjoys working hard and doing a job well. Virgil would continue to serve on this board with all seriousness and commitment for the good of our community and state of Hawai'i. May I ask approval of Governor Ige's appointment of Mr. Virgilio Viernes to the Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants.

Mahalo nui loa,


Stephanie Ohigashi

SLO:wp

cc: Virgilio Viernes

GM555 – Virgilio Viernes

(1) Why do you want to be a member of the Board?

I've been a Board member for nearly six years and would like to continue in the role as the county of Maui representative on the Board of Certification of Operating Personnel in Wastewater Treatment Plants (BOC).

During these past years while on the BOC, the members have continued to strive in improving the professional image of the Wastewater Treatment Operating Personnel through regulating and enforcing the certification requirements of Hawaii Administrative Rules 11-61 and the overall knowledge of all operating personnel.

(2) What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Board?

The main role and responsibility of the BOC is to ensure that all operating personnel adhere to the requirements of the Hawaii Administrative Rule 11-61. These rules provide the minimum requirements for all level of operating personnel in wastewater treatment in the State of Hawaii.

(3) In what ways do you feel that you can help protect the consumer?

The members of the BOC ensure that all operating personnel adhere to Hawaii Administrative Rules 11-61 which provide the minimum requirements of all operating personnel. By doing so, the BOC members protect the waters and environment of the State of Hawaii.

(4) Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise and knowledge that aid you as a member of the Board.

As the previous Plants Operations Manager for the County of Maui and a Certified Grade IV Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, I provided assistance in ensuring the operations staff has the opportunity to gain the minimum knowledge and experience required to properly operate and maintain their respective treatment facilities.

I have also served in the US Navy as a Mechanical Operator for a nuclear propulsion plant, where the increasing requirements of my duties and responsibilities were achieved through the betterment of my knowledge of nuclear propulsion and associated skills in its maintenance.

(5) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

The main goal that I have set for myself is to provide the operating personnel of the State of Hawaii with a better understanding of the requirements and its purpose and to also provide better opportunities to enhance our knowledge of the industry – methods, techniques, and equipment.

(6) Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will benefit the Board.
Eager, Determined and Dedicated.

I'm eager to increase and enhance my knowledge of the industry and dedicated and determined to share what has been provided to me to the other operating personnel. I've been a trainer in the past and still continue to provide as much assistance to those that are willing to increase and enhance their knowledge of the industry.

(7) Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a Board member.

During the past years as a BOC member and as a Certified Operator, I've experienced the struggle that a person goes through as they evolve in their careers. Most of these are internal and can only be overcome as more people see the role of the Operator as a true professional and not just as a knowledgeable laborer.

(8) Can you foresee and possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Board? How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

The only conflict that I've encountered so far is of time. The amount of time required to ensure that what is discussed during executive meetings and the decisions from those meetings are towards the goals that I have set for myself. The only way to avoid or minimize these conflicts is to prioritize my schedule and allot sufficient time to ensure a high quality result.