

LATE

GM 586
APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Public Hearing – March 10, 2016 1:30pm, State Capitol, Conference Room 224

By
Michelle Tagorda, MPH

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Higher Education and the Arts Committee

I am writing to **support** the reappointment of Jan Sullivan to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

I am a recent graduate of the University of Hawai'i, earning both my undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I have had the pleasure and opportunity of working with Jan in her capacity as a regent. She is a strong advocate for the University of Hawai'i and brings thoughtful statements, thorough questions, as well as visions toward improvements of the complex issues facing the University of Hawai'i. She constantly encourages students to express their concerns and seeks input when opportunities arise. Her tireless efforts have resulted in many discussions to improve transparency and understanding of data and the functioning of the system.

I believe that Jan brings valuable perspectives, skills, and expertise to the board and I humbly request your support of her confirmation. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

March 8, 2016

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senate Committee, Higher Education and the Arts
State Capitol, Room 219
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
sentaniguchi@capitol.hawaii.gov

Re: GM586 Regent Jan Sullivan's nomination to serve on the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents for another term

Dear Senator Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

It is my honor to write a letter of support on behalf of Jan Sullivan's nomination to serve another five years as a Regent of the University of Hawaii. We are indeed fortunate to have Regent Sullivan agree to seek another five-year term as her institutional knowledge and the work she has begun--with fellow board members, the UH administration and staff, and members of the business community--can be further advanced.

During her first term, Regent Sullivan has been an advocate for students seeking an affordable education, financial and operational transparency and efficiency, and innovation and entrepreneurship within the University of Hawaii. She is not afraid to voice a contrary opinion or ask difficult questions in an effort to enhance the conversation and gain a better understanding of complex issues. She does her homework and holds staff accountable. These are qualities we need in our Regents as they work through difficult issues currently challenging the University.

I have had the opportunity to work with Regent Sullivan in my role as the Executive Director of the Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship (PACE) at the Shidler College of Business. During this period the University has made great progress in creating programs to assist with the commercialization of UH-generated research and fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem at the University. Over the past 24 months, the University has launched XLR8UH an accelerator focused on supporting UH startups; the iLab, a collaboration and co-working space inspired after a visit to Stanford University's design school, organized by Regent Sullivan; and, opening in late spring 2016, the PACE entrepreneurship and collaboration space at the Shidler College.

Working together with Vassilis Syrmos, the Vice President of Research and Innovation at UH Manoa, Regent Sullivan has shared her extensive knowledge and network of contacts in Silicon Valley. Her knowledge of technology transfer between the university and the private sector has also led to commercialization models and ideas currently being employed. It has been a joy to work with Regent Sullivan, Dr. Syrmos and Dr. Vance Roley, Dean of the Business School and Dr. Peter Crouch, Dean of the College of Engineering on new entrepreneurial efforts. It is safe to say that the University of Hawaii has never been more entrepreneurial or a more thorough understanding of the work needed to be done to become an economic driver of the innovation economy here in Hawaii. We MUST continue this good work.

Regent Sullivan is an important part of this innovation evolution. Her many years at Oceanit, the largest science and engineering company in Hawaii, is the practical guidance and understanding we currently need to achieve our innovation goals. She understands the challenges start-up companies face as capital is sought from outside investors, technology is developed and made market-ready, and operational issues are resolved. Her work experience in the technology industry, coupled with her start-up experience, makes her an ideal candidate to lead the University's innovation initiatives.

I would respectfully recommend Jan Sullivan to serve on the Board of Regents at the University of Hawaii for a second term. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Susan Yamada
Executive Director
Pacific Asian Center of Entrepreneurship
Shidler College of Business
University of Hawaii