

GM597

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Health Planning Council, Honolulu Subarea, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH SIMON-TUIOLOSEGA, for a term to expire 06-30-2019.

Report Title: Health Planning Council, Honolulu Subarea

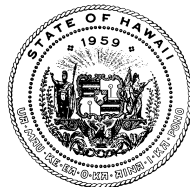
Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

GM 597, Gubernatorial Nominee to the Honolulu Subarea Health Planning Council

Testimony of Romala Sue Radcliffe SHPDA Administrator

Tuesday, March 1, 2016
9:30 a.m.

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health supports the nomination and confirmation
2 of Ms. Elizabeth Simon-Tuiolosega to the Honolulu Subarea Health Planning Council
3 (HONSAC).

4 **Fiscal Implications:** None

5 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose is for the consideration and confirmation of the
6 HONSAC Gubernatorial Nominee, Ms. Elizabeth Simon-Tuiolosega.

7 Ms. Simon-Tuiolosega is currently a Public Information Specialist with the Honolulu Fire
8 Department. She has worked for more than twenty-years in broadcast and print journalism in
9 Hawaii and has won recognition from the Hawaii Chapter of the Society of Professional
10 Journalists for her feature coverage of cultural phenomena. She has served seven years as a
11 public affairs specialist for the State of Hawaii. Her special interest in public service lies in the
12 field of health and human services. At the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, she researched and
13 published articles on equity in healthcare affecting Native Hawaiians. At the Hawaii State
14 Department of Health, she was responsible for outreach and information dissemination related

1 to pandemic prevention in accordance with a public health initiative and training from the
2 Centers for Disease Control.

3 Ms. Simon-Tuiolosega attended Bernard College on full scholarship majoring in creative
4 writing and comparative religion. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English summa cum
5 laude from the University of Hawaii. She is currently a Master's degree candidate in
6 Educational Foundations at the University of Hawaii.

7 We ask for your support on the confirmation of Ms. Elizabeth Simon-Tuiolosega to the
8 Honolulu Subarea Health Planning Council.

GM 597 - Liza Simon-Tuiolosega

HONSAC nominee

Feb. 25, 2016

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

I have professional experience in public affairs outreach and communications and I like to apply this background to a meaningful purpose. I consider healthcare a very good purpose because it is the integral issue of our time. Access to quality healthcare defines all other measures of well-being. It subsumes everything else, - money, fame, power, or, as my Dad used to say whenever I complained about anything, (and he so annoyed me with this), “As long as you got your health.....”

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

Primary responsibility to be present and render an opinion at a Certificate of Need hearing, if called upon. However, I have not been called upon for a CON hearing. Other responsibilities include attending monthly meetings featuring speakers who share their expertise pertinent to healthcare issues affecting Hawaii’s elderly healthcare consumers—defined as HONSAC’s target population. Additionally, monthly meetings require HONSAC members to confer and collaborate on chosen projects intended to protect and advance healthcare of Hawaii’s elderly. The diverse makeup of the current HONSAC board has yielded creative projects with successful outcomes. Of course, that is my biased opinion.

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

I will advocate to put an end to our nation’s two-tiered medical system, which frames quality healthcare as a privilege for the wealthy. In other democratic societies, quality healthcare is a basic right and not a privilege. The fact that America is not on board with this erodes our democracy by preventing people who live in poverty from fulfilling their potential and contributing to society at large. When the high prices of pharmaceuticals or the workforce shortage of medical professionals in poor or rural neighborhoods force people to struggle daily with preventable or treatable illnesses, we all suffer the consequences, because in this global world we are all connected. The challenge is to capitalize on the connectivity with compassion and not exploit it with greed. I can help the consumer by supporting policies and political leaders who support the objectives of Obamacare—even if the ADA requires massive amendments to make it viable—and will advance healthcare which is not predicated on the profit motive of pharma and insurance companies but rather on the expression of compassion, respect and kindness towards all living beings.

(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 would aid you as a member of the Board.

I have a wide-ranging knowledge base of socio-economic and policy issues affecting healthcare based on the following:

- College level coursework in public health
- Work experience as DOH's Pandemic Outreach and Education Specialist
- Work experience at the JABSOM's Area Health Education Center (AHEC). Under contract wrote the text for a guide to healthcare careers in Hawaii.
- 25 years as a writer-reporter-journalist with a strong focus on aspects of Hawaii culture and related human interest stories
- Three years as Public Information Specialist for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, where I regularly researched and wrote news stories for *Ka Wai Ola* addressing disparate health status of Native Hawaiians and efforts to reduce the disparities with education and prevention
- Four years of matriculation and certification in Sacred Path Healing, a school for hands-on energy healing under the mentorship of Dr. Ruey Ryburn
- Unassailable marketing and social media skills using new channels and platforms to disseminate clear and compelling information on healthcare tailored to various demographics
- Ability to write messages and stories for print and TV that compel people to sit up, take notice and even take action on behalf of quality healthcare

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

I look forward to collaborating with HONSAC members on a chosen project, which aims to raise public awareness of elder abuse and provide prevention information to stop the problem. Specifically, I can contribute awareness of the grants environment and grantwriting skills to help cover cost of this or any other HONSAC public awareness campaign.

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

Creativity, perseverance, compassion

With these qualities, I hope to do my part and sustain HONSAC projects that aim to prevent illness and disease before it starts.

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

Not sure what kind of experience you are asking about—but here's an experience which comes to mind: In my second year as a HONSAC board member, I collaborated on a project intended to help doctors and nurses increase early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. I was passionate about this project and so were other board members; like me, they had experienced a family member ailing with

Alzheimer's. For me, it had been 10 years since my mom slipped into dementia and died without recognizing me at her bedside. Sometimes it was difficult to concentrate on the HONSAC Alzheimer's project, because I was skeptical about how little impact any little project like ours would have. But there came a day when I walked into my faculty adviser's office at UH and found her distraught and holding back tears. She had just gotten off the phone with her Mom in Florida. The mom was raving crazy with Alzheimer's. I listened as Prof. P told me how her mom's behavior was so relentless and how alone she felt. A week later, I went to see another UH friend and found her in the midst of the same torrent agony. I went home and did some research for the next HONSAC meeting. I found that Japan and England were formally recognizing the impact of Alzheimer's disease in the workplace where middle-aged children of Alzheimer's patients were struggling to cope. These nations had created "compassionate communities" in the workplace. We discussed this prospect at our next HONSAC meeting but agreed that it was beyond our scope and stuck with the family physician training. Still, it was a good discussion and a good group and the HONSAC project for me—and I believe others—was a great experience in a one-step-at-a-time journey towards a healing solution within modest means.

- (8) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Board? Nope. How would you overcome conflicts of interest? Report them as required by statute and follow State regulations that apply.