

# GM657

**Measure Title:** Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, SUZANNE ZENG, for a term to expire 06-30-2019.

**Report Title:** Language Access Advisory Council

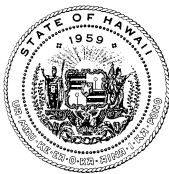
**Description:**

**Companion:**

**Package:**

**Current Referral:** CPH

**Introducer(s):**



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS**

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To: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Health

From: Helena Manzano  
Executive Director, Office of Language Access

Date: March 24, 2016

Re: Letter of Support for GM657 regarding the confirmation of **Suzanne Zeng** to the **Language Access Advisory Council** to represent an accredited institution of higher learning who provides professional training in interpretation and translation

(9am Agenda – Conf. room 229)

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My name is Helena Manzano, Executive Director of the Office of Language Access since February 2015. The Office of Language Access (“OLA”) appreciates the opportunity to provide this letter of support for the confirmation of Suzanne Zeng to the Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC) to fill the seat of “one representative from an accredited institution of higher learning who provides professional training in interpretation and translation” pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 321C-7(6).

Ms. Zeng has been involved with OLA since the 2006 passage of Hawaii’s language access law. As faculty at the University of Hawaii at Manoa’s Center for Interpretation and Translation, she teaches medical and court interpreting, interpreting skills and techniques, and translation techniques. She is also a small business owner of a local translation and interpretation company. She interprets at various conferences, in court, business and community settings. She is a certified trainer for the national Bridging the Gap medical interpreter training, a program that OLA has offered to the community in the past two years.

Ms. Zeng has provided numerous translations and interpretations for Hawaii, as well as workshops for state and non-profit agencies on the practical aspects of working with interpreters and working with LEP individuals. As a member of the Supreme Court Committee for Court Interpreters, she has helped established standards for Hawaii State court interpreters. Ms. Zeng’s work at both the University and in her private business has enabled Hawaii to be in greater compliance with both federal and state language access laws.

The purpose of OLA is to address the language access needs of limited English proficient persons (LEP) and ensure their meaningful access to services, programs, and activities offered by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government, including departments, offices, commissions, boards, or other state-funded agencies. OLA provides oversight, central coordination, and technical assistance to state agencies in their implementation of language access obligations – a civil right under both state and federal law.

OLA appreciates this committee for its commitment to language access and for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

March 22, 2016

Patricia Rolland, PhD  
1119 Aloalo Place  
Honolulu, HI 96816

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am writing this letter of endorsement in support of Dr. Suzanne Zeng to be on the Advisory Board of the Office of Language Access under the Department of Health.

Over the past year, I have taken four of Dr. Zeng's classes at the University of Hawaii's Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS), including Community Interpreting, Court and Medical Interpreting, and am very familiar with Dr. Zeng as a teacher and an expert in her field. Although I already hold a PhD and have been a professional translator for over 15 years, Dr. Zeng's wealth of knowledge and exceptional communication skills has provided me with outstanding mentorship in the areas of ethics, simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, and research skills. She is dedicated to the improvement of language interpreters in the community, and her influence due to that dedication can be seen taking affect as her former students enter the interpreting and translating profession in Hawaii. She is well aware of the existing challenges facing limited English proficient (LEP) speakers in Hawaii, and she motivates her students and fellow interpreters to strive for and achieve exceptionally high standards in interpreting.

Accordingly, I am writing this letter of support because it is my sincere belief that Dr. Zeng is eminently qualified to be an advisory council member on language access issues in Hawaii. I can think of no one more qualified than she to sit in this position, particularly representing an institution of education on this important subject of language access.

In conclusion, it is with sincere conviction that I enthusiastically support Dr. Zeng's nomination to the Advisory Board of OLA.

Sincerely,



Patricia Rolland  
Professional Translator

Office of Language Access Council Nominee:  
**Suzanne Zeng**

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

This is my field of expertise. I have devoted my life and career to language issues and to the training of interpreters and translators. I would be happy to contribute my knowledge and savoir-faire to a board comprised of others who are also passionate about Language Access issues in our community.

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

As a member of the board, I think it is our responsibility to use our individual expertise to help advise the Office of Language Access on issues relating to language access. We can help guide OLA's direction and assist the office in meeting these goals and in fulfilling their obligations under the law.

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

I feel I can promote equal justice to all citizens according to the Hawaii state Language Access law, covered under the Civil Rights law of 1964, by ensuring that Hawaii's LEP (Limited English Proficient) population is provided with equal access to social services. Consumers need to know and understand their rights, and agencies need to be educated and given tools to use, with which I would like to assist.

**(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 been doing research and teaching at the University of Hawaii's Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS) for over 20 years. I have conducted many workshops in Hawaii and the Pacific, including Micronesia, on interpreter training, working with interpreters, and language access. As a member of the Supreme Court Committee for Court Interpreters and Language Access for over a decade, I have actively worked with Judges, attorneys, court staff and interpreters in establishing higher standards for Hawaii State court interpreters. I think I can bring my expertise as a university instructor and as a community liaison to the Board. I am also serving as a Language Access Advisory Board member for the Department of Human Services, and a bilingual interpreter in the courts, hospitals and social service settings.

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

I look forward to working with the new Director of OLA, as she has a deep understanding of language access issues and has been an advocate in the real world in the past. I feel she understands what OLA's mission should be. The Director talked to me about conducting workshops in the near future for the benefit of state agencies, and I am excited to do so. I also wish to assist with the Language Access conference. In fact, I was the Chairman for the very first Annual Language Access conference in Hawaii.

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

My passion for language access issues shows my commitment as a volunteer. I am a dedicated educator and understand the key issues all states are facing. I have demonstrated strong leadership qualities over the years, and can help lead discussions as a work as a team player. I feel these qualities will be very beneficial to the Board.

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

As I mentioned above, I have been a member of the Supreme Court Committee for Court Interpreters and Language Access for over 15 years, and I have seen my commitment and involvement bring about important changes to Rules and procedures. I am also an interpreter myself with experience interpreting in various agencies and know the issues that arise. That experience is invaluable to me as a Board member of OLA.

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

A conflict of interest in a vote might arise if the Board would want to hire me to do a workshop of some kind that might bring some type of honorarium. I would need to abstain from voting on any such issue.