

TO: The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair
The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
The Honorable Senator Jill Tokuda
The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai
The Honorable Senator Greene Harimoto

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot
Nominee for the Hawai'i Director of Human Services

SUBJECT: GM 503 – Consideration and confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018.

Hearing: February 15, 2017, 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Thank you Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, Chair Tokuda, Senator Wakai, and Senator Harimoto for this opportunity to testify in support of my nomination for the Director of Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS). I am very thankful to Governor Ige for nominating me as the Director of Human Services. It is a great honor and privilege to serve our great State and lead the department and work with almost 2,300 plus colleagues on a daily basis to make a difference in the lives of 1 in 4 residents and almost half the children of Hawaii.

My comments will focus on my background, my career at DHS, and DHS' short and long term vision.

I was born into a middle class Indian family to Joginder Lal and Shashi Bhanot. My father was a lawyer and mother a musician with a master's degree in vocal and instrumental music. I also come from a long line of lawyers on my mother's side and educators on my father's side.

Both my parents stressed the importance of education and doing good in life. I was in awe of my father and maternal grandfather and their standing in the community in which they lived and practiced law. I wanted to be a lawyer just like them.

My dream of becoming a lawyer and practicing law faded in an instant after a brief but eventful fourteenth birthday dinner conversation with my maternal grandmother, Shakuntala. During the dinner, grandma suggested that I should pick a career where I could make difference in the lives of those who are struggling in life and having a hard time making ends meet. I was very confused and asked her as to what would she recommend as a career...she smiled and responded ... public service and I would be able to use my legal training to shape public policy and help a lot of disadvantaged people. I promised my grandma that I will pursue law and public service on completion of my education.

The next phase of my life between 1980-1995 really defined me as a person and professional. It tested my character, integrity, and discipline, and took a lot of love, care and support of my grandma and mom, hard work, and a relentless pursuit of excellence to have a career and success I am enjoying today.

After completing 10th grade education in Jalandhar, my home town, we were compelled to move to Delhi in 1980 due to my father's ill-health and personal issues. He was unable to work. We suddenly were on the verge of becoming homeless but with the help from our extended family we were able to survive. My father's health began to improve and he started to work again on a part-time basis but now we were no more than a hand to mouth low-income family with a father who began to abuse alcohol and resorted to domestic violence that arose out of his alcohol abuse, low-self-esteem and shock that he was unable to recover from his illness and regain his professional stature. This experience of living through poverty and domestic violence, and watching a perfectly good family man succumb to alcohol abuse, made me resolute to dedicate my life to work on human rights issues, including advocacy against domestic violence, child abuse, alleviation of poverty, and education for all. I also realized very early on that education is the only way out of poverty and a key to success at a personal and professional level.

I went on to graduate from a public high school with distinction, received a BA honors degree in political science, and a law degree with a distinction from the University of Delhi.

In 1990, I was admitted to the Cornell University, School of Law, to pursue public international law. I was awarded a full law school fellowship to pursue an LL.M. degree. This decision to leave India was based on number of factors; 1. pursuit of excellence; 2. gain international experience to further my career in public international law, human rights and human/social services; and 3. build a career to support my family. I graduated in 1991 with an LL.M. degree.

I was a visiting researcher at the Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California at Berkeley in 1991; and research associate at the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University, Washington DC, in 1992/1993. These research projects were related to international human rights law and policy.

From 1993-1997, I pursued post-graduate research in Public International Law at the School of Law, University of Nottingham, England. The focus of my work was on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families in International Law. I was awarded the University of Nottingham Law School and European Union fellowship to pursue studies in public international law. I was also invited to be a visiting researcher at the Center for Migration Studies on Staten Island, New York City in 1994/1995. I was unable to complete my Ph.D. due to family and health reasons.

In 1995 my father passed away at the age of 60 of brain cancer. A couple of years before his death, my father was able to overcome his anger, gave up alcohol, and reconciled with his family. Now, the responsibility of ensuring my family's future and overall well-being became my singular focus. I assisted my mother in raising my sister and supporting two brothers until they became self-sufficient.

My career in human and social services began in August 1998 when I joined the Kauai Economic Opportunity on the island of Kauai as their Family Development Director. I focused on the programs and services for immigrants, refugees, poor, and low-income families.

Finally, in September 1999, I fulfilled my promise to my maternal grandmother that I will pursue law and dedicate my career to human rights and public service. I joined the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services, as an emergency hire program specialist with the Employment and Child Care Program Office of the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division. I became a permanent civil servant in July 2000.

In July 2002, I was promoted to the Employment and Child Care Program Administrator position. In 2006, I was awarded the employee of the year by DHS and also recognized by the Governor for my public service and contribution to improving the lives of families on public assistance. In April 2007, I became the BESSD Administrator. In 2013, I was awarded the Manager of Year award for DHS and the State of Hawaii by the Governor recognizing my contribution to improving the government function and the well-being of and making a difference in the lives of Hawaii's disadvantage population. My success was made possible by the hardworking and dedicated colleagues across BESSD.

I served as the Deputy Director of the Department from December 2010-January 2012; and January 2015-August 2016. In September 2016, Governor Ige appointed me as the Director of Hawaii Department of Human Services.

The Department of Human Services is responsible for programs, benefits, and services for the poor, low-income and disabled populations, including financial assistance, food, employment programs, utility payments, child care, regulation of child care facilities, medical assistance, vocational rehabilitation programs, child welfare services, adult protective and community services, public housing, services for at-risk youth, promoting equality for women and girls, and promoting the role of fathers in their children's lives. We have 2,300 plus employees statewide and a budget of \$3.4 billion. Over the last 17 years, I have the pleasure and privilege of working with very talented and committed colleagues across our Department. The commitment of our employees to make a difference cannot be questioned. Our employees are the most important asset or resource we have.

Vision: Our Vision is to ensure that the people of Hawaii are thriving.

Mission: Our Mission is To encourage self-sufficiency and support the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Hawaii.

Core Values: We are -

T Team-oriented – We acknowledge that internal and external partnerships are critical to the success of DHS.

H Human-centered – We develop strategies and make improvements as necessary from the client's perspective.

R Respectful – We recognize the inherent value of each person as well as the diverse cultures of Hawaii.

I Intentional – We are mindful of our decisions and actions in our collective work.

V Visionary – We strive to support our clients by co-creating generative, forward-looking strategies.

E Evidence-based – We make decisions that are based on data and take actions that we know will have sustainable outcomes

Strategic Goals: Our goals address the various social determinants of health and well-being, which include employment, education, healthcare, safety, housing, and food security – all of which contribute to an individual’s self-sufficiency, social capital, and well-being.

I want to emphasize to everyone that prevention of child abuse and neglect, adult abuse, neglect and exploitation, domestic violence, sex and human trafficking, is our priority and such violation of human rights is not acceptable.

We will continue to invest in children between 0 to 5, promote equal rights for women and girls, particularly paid family leave, promote the role of fathers in raising their children, address homelessness, and increase housing stability.

Prof. Heckman, a Nobel laureate in economics from the University of Chicago, concluded in one of his latest research study, that our investment in children ages 0-5 yields 13% return on investment for society.

Our goals and commitment to the well-being of Hawaii’s children, families, and communities are the same as articulated by our Governor, Senate and House leadership.

Our work is also guided by the Aloha Spirit, section 5-7.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes:

Aloha is more than a word of greeting or farewell or a salutation. Aloha means mutual regard and affection and extends warmth in caring with no obligation in return. Aloha is the essence of relationships in which each person is important to every other person for collective existence.

Furthermore, Article IX, Section 3 of our State Constitutions provides that the State shall have the power to provide financial assistance, medical assistance, and social services for persons who are found to be in need of and are eligible for such assistance and services as provided by law.

Over the last couple of years, the field of human services is living through an era of disruption. In our human services environment, major changes in demographics, policy, and technology are driving a surge of new service demands and upending outdated human services delivery models. While disruption is bringing formidable challenges for human services organizations, it is also

creating an unprecedented opportunity to deliver improved individual, family and community outcomes.

When disruption is the new normal, we must think very differently and position ourselves to be in the most ideal position to serve the ever changing and dynamic clientele. Business as usual, or admiring the status quo, is not acceptable. We must be very strategic, innovative, creative and intentional in all our efforts if we want to make a difference in the lives of residents who knock on our doors on a daily basis seeking assistance to get themselves out of the cycle of intergenerational poverty and despair.

We began 2016 with the introduction of 'Ohana Nui, a multigenerational framework that invests early and concurrently in children and families. 'Ohana Nui framework is the vision my good friend and our former Director Rachael S. Wong and I developed collaboratively with the Aspen Institute and Dr. Ginny Pressler and her team at the Department of Health. We continue to work diligently to incorporate and 'Ohana Nui deep into the Department to improve health, education, employment, and other outcomes for Hawaii residents. This approach allows us to more efficiently align programs and funding to make a greater impact on the whole person and the whole family. In 2017, we continue to integrate 'Ohana Nui within our department and with other state agencies, particularly the Department of Health, and community stakeholders.

In support of this new framework, we look forward to emphasizing two other department priorities during the current fiscal year and the next biennium: reengineering DHS business processes and developing the DHS Enterprise System. These priorities support the development of 'Ohana Nui by enabling us to serve residents across programs and divisions with an integrated eligibility and case management application and a vision for the future that connects residents quickly to all the resources we offer.

We can't accomplish these goals and objectives without the support of my DHS colleagues; my colleagues across the executive, our traditional community partners, our non-traditional community partners, and our Legislature.

I urge my colleagues across DHS to support our 'Ohana Nui effort, participate in the strategic planning, business process reengineering, and DHS enterprise system efforts. It is our opportunity to create a health and human service ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of our families, children and communities and allows us to meet families where they are. Let's work together to make a difference.

I urge my colleagues across the executive to bust the silos and work collaboratively to integrate funding, service delivery, and achieve positive outcomes for families. Let's make a difference through our collective will and work.

I urge my non-profit community partners to collaborate with us to redesign the health and human service delivery system by focusing on our strengths to address the social determinants of well-being across our communities. Government resources are getting scarce and it would not be possible to fund many programs and services at the level we were able to fund in the past. We must

streamline and find new and efficient ways to deliver services and I request you to support and use 'Ohana Nui framework to redesign and deliver services to make a difference.

I invite our non-traditional partners, such as for profit businesses, philanthropy, and banks, to join our efforts to streamline the health and human services delivery models. You all have the resources to fill the gaps government is unable to address. We also want to learn from your creativity, innovation, and success in business and apply the same principles to make government more efficient and responsive to the needs of our community. Let's partner to make a difference.

Lastly, I urge our Legislature to work with us collaboratively to craft a budget that is affordable and promulgate effective policies to make a difference in the lives of residents of Hawai'i. We know our economy is not growing at the rate we expected and all our requests can't be funded. We are standing-by to work with you to make a difference.

Being appointed as the Director of Human Services is the culmination of a 14 year old boy's dream to pursue law and career in public service; and fulfillment of a promise I made to my maternal grandmother to pursue a career in public services to make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged and poor.

Nothing would have been possible without the loving support, care, and encouragement provided by my family; listening to and learning from elders; pursuit of education and excellence; self-belief; commitment to making a difference; courage to challenge the status quo and bring about change; and not ever quitting.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and considering me for the Director of Hawai'i Department of Human Services.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

Testimony of
David Y. Ige
Governor, State of Hawai'i
Before the

Senate Committee on Human Services

February 15, 2017
2:45 p.m., Conference Room 016

In consideration of
Governor's Message 503

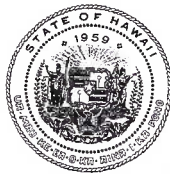
Submitted for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Pankaj Bhanot

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and committee members:

I respectfully request your support in confirming the appointment of Pankaj Bhanot to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). Mr. Bhanot brings a wealth of experience to the job, having held various leadership positions in the department for the past 17 years. In his current capacity as interim Director, he has been effectively leading the department in implementing its mission of providing timely, efficient and effective programs and services for the most vulnerable in our State to help them expand their capacity to attain self-sufficiency, independence, and an improved quality of life.

Mr. Bhanot is well-qualified for the position, having earned a B.A. degree in Political Science and a LL.B. degree from the University of Delhi in New Delhi, India. He also has a LL.M. degree in International Human Rights Law from Cornell Law School, New York.

Pankaj Bhanot is highly regarded and respected by his staff. His collaborative approach and commitment to serve is the kind of leadership that is needed at DHS and I humbly ask for your consideration of my nomination for the position of Director of Human Services.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 13, 2017

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

HEARING: 2:45pm, Wednesday February 15, 2017, Room 016

RE: GM 503 - NOMINATION AND CONFIRMATION OF PANKAJ BHANOT AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

I am pleased to provide, with highest recommendation, my testimony in support of GM 503, to confirm Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as the State Director of the Department of Human Services.

I have known Mr. Bhanot for many years, as the Interim and Deputy Director at the Department of Human Services. He has worked with me and our House Committees on Health and Human Services by providing essential information to ensure rock solid policy in the areas of health and human services.

Mr. Bhanot has displayed admirable qualities of dedication and sincerity in his work while serving the state, community, and the legislature. He has always been considerate to other legislators, government and private employees, staff, media, businesses, and the public. His knowledge and experience with programs and systems in the Department of Human Services will benefit and serve the Department well. Additionally, his analytical intellect, reasoning and organizational skills with an expertise in community service are attributes which will move the Department of Human Services in the right direction. His ability to collaborate and seek solutions is of great value in the legislative arena.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is with great pleasure that I provide strong testimony in support of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot's confirmation, with complete confidence that he will be successful in serving the State and Department of Human Services with compassion and proper insight in ensuring appropriate essential services.

Sincerely,

Representative John M. Mizuno, Vice Speaker

Representative John M. Mizuno – VICE SPEAKER of the House of Representatives

District 28, Kamehameha Heights, Kalihi Valley, portion of Lower Kalihi

State Capitol, Room 439 – Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 586-6050 – Fax: (808) 586-6051

Email: repmizuno@capitol.hawaii.gov

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
PANKAJ BHANOT
For Director of Department of Human Services

(GM503)

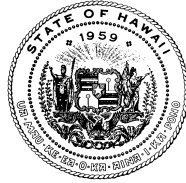
Before the Senate Committee of Human Services:
Wednesday, February 15, 2017
2:45 p.m., Conference Room 016

Testimony of Douglas S. Chin and Russell A. Suzuki:

We wholeheartedly support the confirmation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services ("DHS").

Through his many years of working within the DHS, Mr. Bhanot has gained a keen understanding of the Department's mission and its awesome responsibilities. His intelligence, positive attitude, and good sense make him an outstanding leader and manager. He excels in motivating people in giving their best efforts and is always aware of the difficult work his employees perform on a daily basis. Above all, he is a good human being in whom we can know will competently look after the needs of Hawaii's children and families.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of his confirmation.



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM503
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Director Of The Department Of
Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-
03-2018.**

SENATOR JOSH GREEN, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: February 15, 2018

Room Number: 016

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health strongly supports the confirmation of Mr.
3 Bhanot for Director of the Hawaii Department of Human Services.

4 Mr. Bhanot's professional accomplishments are numerous, and include the recognition of his
5 peers, colleagues, and staff as statewide Manager of the Year as well as accolades from the
6 private sector.

7 Under the Ige Administration, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health
8 are collaborating more closely than ever with the 'Ohana Nui/2-Generation framework that
9 address the social determinants of health and well-being at a family level. This model is based
10 on a strong foundation of research and emerging science related to, for example, the negative
11 consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences. Mr. Bhanot's dynamic leadership, talent for
12 administration, and personal touch will help propel 'Ohana Nui towards success.

13 As the Director of Health, I respectfully urge the swift and unanimous confirmation of Mr.
14 Bhanot.

15 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.

16



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 2:45 P.M.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

**RE: GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 503 SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND
CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PANKAJ BHANOT**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** the confirmation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot to the Director of the Department of Human Services.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 1,600+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Pankaj Bhanot brings 17 years of committed service to the Department of Human Services and has served as the department's deputy twice — under Gov. Ige and from Dec. 2010 to Jan. 2012. He has experience in implementing large information technology and human services projects. Bhanot previously led a business transformation initiative that won national recognition. He is an attorney by training who has dedicated his professional life to human rights and human services.

Mr. Bhanot's record shows extensive experience and great success in implementing human services projects on a scale that will help move the department to the next level of service to the community. He possesses both the professional discipline and depth of compassion needed for this role. He will provide the kind of leadership needed in this time of high demand for human services.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support for this nomination.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEKOA KALUHIWA
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
HUMAN SERVICES**

**Wednesday, February 15, 2017
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 503
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
PANKAJ BHANOT, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-03-2018**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports Governor's Message 503, nominating Pankaj Bhanot to serve as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a term to expire on December 03, 2018.

Mr. Bhanot has given 17 years of committed service to DHS. Having served twice as Deputy Director in 2010–2012 and 2015–2016, and as Director since September 2016, Mr. Bhanot has the administrative experience, institutional knowledge, and dedication to continue as an effective leader for DHS.

An attorney by training, Mr. Bhanot has dedicated his professional life to human rights and human services. He also has experience in implementing large information technology and human services projects that demonstrate his ability to administer this critical state agency. With Mr. Bhanot's leadership at DHS, the Department continues to enjoy an effective working relationship with DHS in dealing with the homeless crisis on state lands.

The Department strongly endorses Mr. Bhanot for the position of Director of the Department of Human Services.



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR
SHAN S. TSUTSUI
LT. GOVERNOR

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. Box 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: 586-2850
Fax Number: 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI COLÓN
DIRECTOR
JO ANN M. UCHIDA TAKEUCHI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**PRESENTATION OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN SERVICES

THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2017

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2017
2:45 p.m.

**TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 503, SUBMITTING FOR
CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PANKAJ
BHANOT, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 3, 2018**

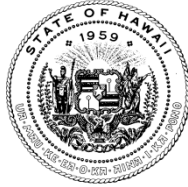
TO THE HONORABLE JOSH GREEN, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Catherine Awakuni Colón, and I am the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. I am writing in **support** of the appointment of Pankaj Bhanot to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Over the last two years, I have had the opportunity to work with and closely observe Mr. Bhanot, as he served as the Department of Human Services' Deputy Director and also as the Department of Human Services' Director. I found Mr. Bhanot be a dedicated and passionate public servant who is collaborative, thoughtful, and tireless in his approach to his work. With nearly two decades of working for the State of Hawaii, Mr. Bhanot has demonstrated he possesses the skills, tenacity, temperament, and aptitude needed to lead the Department of Human Services and to maintain and improve Hawaii's programs and services that serve as safety nets for our most vulnerable residents.

I firmly believe Mr. Bhanot will continue to be a valued and highly productive member of Governor Ige's cabinet, and respectfully request that you recommend approval of his nomination as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to support GM No. 503. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have.



Testimony by:
FORD N. FUCHIGAMI
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
JADE T. BUTAY
ROSS M. HIGASHI
EDWN H. SNIFFEN
DARRELL T. YOUNG

IN REPLY REFER TO:

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 15, 2017
2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 016

G.M. 503

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018.

Senate Committee on Human Services

The Department of Transportation (DOT) strongly **supports** Pankaj Bhanot's nomination as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Mr. Bhanot was born and raised in India and came to the United States in 1990 and has called Hawaii home since 1992. He received his bachelor's in political science (1986) and law degree (1990) from the University of Delhi, India; received master's in law from the Cornell University School of Law (1991); and conducted four years (1993-1997) of post-graduate research at the University of Nottingham School of Law in Nottingham, England.

Prior to joining DHS, Mr. Bhanot served as the Family Development Director of the Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc. (KEO), a non-profit agency on the island of Kauai, from 1998-1999. Mr. Bhanot served as the Division Administrator of the Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division of DHS from 2007 to 2010 and was the department's Deputy Director from 2010 to 2012 where he led a business transformation initiative that garnered national recognition.

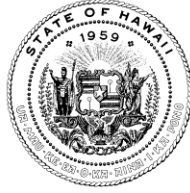
Mr. Bhanot is an excellent choice to lead DHS. He has proven himself as an effective and dynamic leader in each of his capacities at DHS. He has provided a steady hand since August of last year as Acting Director. If you're looking at qualifications, his are impeccable. If you're looking at experience and how he has served in every job he has held, he is without blemish.

We strongly urge his confirmation. DHS is in very good hands, and we look forward to DHS continuing to make the significant progress which it has made over the recent years.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



LINDA CHU TAKAYAMA
DIRECTOR

LEONARD HOSHIJO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

www.labor.hawaii.gov

Phone: (808) 586-8844 / Fax: (808) 586-9099

Email: dlir.director@hawaii.gov

February 15, 2017

To: The Honorable Josh Green, Chair,
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Time: 2:45 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 016, State Capitol

From: Linda Chu Takayama, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: G.M. 503 Confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot

On behalf of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, as well as myself personally, this testimony is provided in strong support for the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services.

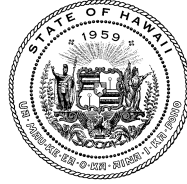
DHS has among the toughest issues in our state – issues of homelessness, food and medical assistance, domestic violence, child protection and others that even the strongest, wealthiest states in our nation are struggling to solve.

It is a tribute to the courage and commitment of this man that he has stepped up to take on these challenges. And it is because of his dedication, experience, intelligence and heart that I believe he will succeed.

We strongly urge you to confirm him.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SHAN TSUTSUI
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

MARIA E. ZIELINSKI
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

DAMIEN A. ELEFANTE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

To: The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017
Time: 2:45 P.M.
Place: Conference Room 016, State Capitol

From: Maria E. Zielinski, Director
Department of Taxation

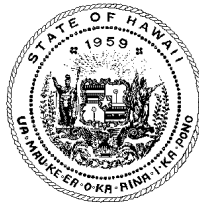
Re: G.M. 503, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the
Director of the Department of Human Services
Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT
for a term to expire 12-03-2018

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot for Director of Human Services.

I have known Pankaj Bhanot for approximately three years. During this time Pankaj has demonstrated professionalism, a strong commitment to Human Services and its programs and initiatives. Most importantly, Pankaj has always shown dedication to serve the people and State of Hawaii.

I urge you to confirm Pankaj Bhanot for the nomination of Director for the Department of Human Services.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

NOLAN P. ESPINDA
DIRECTOR

Cathy Ross
Deputy Director
Administration

Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata
Deputy Director
Corrections

Renee R. Sonobe Hong
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 503
RELATING TO
CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE
PANKAJ BHANOT

by
Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 15, 2017; 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) strongly supports the nomination of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) and urges the Legislature to confirm his nomination.

Mr. Bhanot brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to DHS from his various positions in DHS as well as his legal background prior to joining the Department. He is an exemplary public servant, who not only works tirelessly for DHS and its clients, but also for the larger community and sister agencies. Mr. Bhanot led a DHS team to inspire process improvement and technology innovations to advance operations at his Department, then willingly shared that expertise and experience to inspire PSD staff to utilize the same processes and innovations to assist improvements at PSD.

Additionally, Mr. Bhanot is one who sees opportunities where others may see problems. His adept leadership and managerial skills were instrumental in the revolutionization of the DHS Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD) case management system – overwhelmingly improving access to critical social service benefits and providing seamless customer service to some of Hawaii's most vulnerable populations. His professionalism, dynamic leadership, and compassion, make him an excellent Director for the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



RODERICK K. BECKER
Comptroller
AUDREY HIDANO
Deputy Comptroller

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

TESTIMONY OF
RODERICK K. BECKER, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
ON
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2017
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 016

G.M. 503

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PANKAJ BHANOT, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-03-2018.

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on G.M. 503. I support the nomination of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot to the position of director of the Department of Human Services (department).

The extent of Mr. Bhanot's relevant experience with the department has few parallels, and his professional accomplishments are both numerous and noteworthy. I have known Mr. Bhanot to strive to best provide important services to the department's clients in a manner consistent with a good understanding of both the needs of those seeking help and the fiscal context of the State. Mr. Bhanot's background and character should serve the State well in his execution of the duties of director.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



RODERICK K. BECKER
Comptroller
AUDREY HIDANO
Deputy Comptroller

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

TESTIMONY OF
AUDREY HIDANO, DEPUTY COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
ON
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2017
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 016

G.M. 503

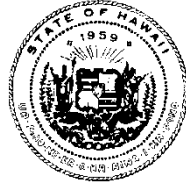
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PANKAJ BHANOT, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-03-2018.

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on G.M. 503. I support the nomination of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services (department).

Mr. Bhanot has the background and experience to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services. He also has the leadership skills necessary that will benefit the department to achieve the department's goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 17907
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017
2:45 PM
Room 016, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
GM 503

**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFORMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PANKAJ BHANOT,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-03-2018**

Honorable Chair Green and Members of the Committee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 503, reappointing Pankaj Bhanot to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services.

Since his confirmation as Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS), Director Bhanot has proven to be knowledgeable, experienced, and dedicated. With over seventeen years spent working within DHS, Director Bhanot has both an extensive understanding of all programs being implemented by the department and its attached agencies and how to work within the legislative system to effectuate comprehensive legislation and departmental appropriations.

Since becoming the Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), I have worked closely with Director Bhanot on a broad spectrum of issues. The Director is a man of great integrity, knowledge, high moral character, care and vision. His open and honest nature and approach to confronting, and ultimately solving issues, has proven to be most effective when working with diverse personalities and achieving goals.

The HPHA urges the Committee to pass GM503 and appoint Pankaj Bhanot to the position of Director of Human Service.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Senate Committee on Human Services with the HPHA's comments regarding GM 503. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR

LAUREL A. JOHNSTON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

AND BY LAUREL A. JOHNSTON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
ON
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. GM 503

February 15, 2017

2:45 p.m.

Room 016

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
PANKAJ BHANOT

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee,

We strongly support the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot to the position of Director of the Department of Human Services (Department).

Governor Ige's administration is committed to addressing the many issues facing our State in a direct and forthright manner. We will strive to do the right thing, the right way to achieve our shared goal of a healthy, sustainable economy to support our kupuna, ourselves, and our children.

Mr. Bhanot has extensive experience working in the Department in various capacities, which makes him extremely knowledgeable of the operations and policy issues. After working with him for these past two (2) years, we find Mr. Bhanot to be honest, intelligent, hard-working, diplomatic, responsive, and team-oriented. Those characteristics has enabled him to be successful at different levels within State government.

Mr. Bhanot has an excellent educational background, that coupled with his experience and characteristics, will continue to be a tremendous asset to the Governor's team. It is for these reasons and more that we strongly support his confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for Mr. Bhanot.



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: www.hawaii.gov/dbedt

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
Luis P. Salaveria
Director, DBEDT
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017
2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

in consideration of
GM 503
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Director of the
Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee,
PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018.

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang and Members of the Committee on Human Services.

I respectfully urge your **strong support** for the confirmation of **Pankaj Bhanot** to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I have worked with Director Bhanot for over six years and he has the passion and energy needed for improving the health and safety of Hawaii's families and children. I have seen his devotion to his family, especially his son, and without question find him to be a man of true compassion and caring.

Pankaj involves all the stakeholders in finding solutions that make the most of the State's scarce resources to deliver life-saving services.

Pankaj and the DHS team work together to solve the difficult challenges. Pankaj has the combination of energy, empathy, and leadership that are needed for this tough job.

I respectfully urge you to recommend advise and consent to the nomination of Pankaj Bhanot for the Director of the Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Statement of
Mary Alice Evans
Deputy Director, DBEDT

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017
2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

in consideration of
GM 503
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Director of the
Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee,
PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018.

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang and Members of the Committee on Human Services.

I respectfully urge your **support** for the confirmation of **Pankaj Bhanot** to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I have had the pleasure of working with Director Bhanot for over six years and I have observed his passion and energy for improving the safety net for Hawaii's families and children.

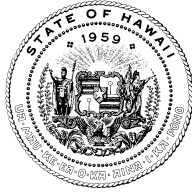
Pankaj takes a fresh look at problems that arise and involves all the stakeholders in finding a solution that maximizes services while conserving scarce resources.

Hawaii is lucky to have Pankaj and the DHS team to tackle the difficult challenges that human services present. Pankaj has the combination of apparently endless energy, empathy for people, and analytical skill that are needed for this tough job.

I respectfully urge you to recommend advise and consent to the nomination of Pankaj Bhanot for the Director of the Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



TODD NACAPUY
CHIEF INFORMATION
OFFICER

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HI 96810-0119
Ph: (808) 586-6000 | Fax: (808) 586-1922
ETS.HAWAII.GOV

Testimony of
TODD NACAPUY
Chief Information Officer, State of Hawai'i

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Wednesday, February 15, 2017; 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 503
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PANKAJ BHANOT,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-03-2018

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members:

I am Todd Nacapuy, State Chief Information Officer (CIO) and head of the Office of Enterprise Technology Services (ETS), offering testimony in **strong support** of Governor's Message No. 503, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) gubernatorial nominee Pankaj Bhanot.

In our information technology (IT) governance role, ETS works closely with Mr. Bhanot and the DHS IT team in maintaining and upgrading the Kauhale On-Line Eligibility Assistance (KOLEA) online Med-QUEST eligibility system. His extensive knowledge from 17 years of service at DHS, along with his practical experience in implementing large organizational change programs with complex IT components, have proven invaluable to our collaborative efforts, and we find his leadership and sense of teamwork to be exceptional.

We have utmost confidence in his ability to continue to lead DHS as we partner with the department in support of its overall mission, which includes providing timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits for the purpose of achieving the outcome of empowering Hawai'i's most vulnerable people.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in strong support of this nomination.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

BRIDGET HOLTHUS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Social Services Division
810 Richards Street, Suite 400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 13, 2017

TO: The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Mona Maehara, Department of Human Services
Social Services Division Administrator

SUBJECT: **GM 503– DIRECTOR OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION POSITION: The Department Human Services, Social Services Division comprising of staff offices and the Adult Protective and Community Services and Child Welfare Branch administrations, strongly supports the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot, as Director of the Department of Human Services.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is for consideration and confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS), Gubernatorial Nominee, Pankaj Bhanot, for a term to expire 12-03-2018.

Mr. Bhanot has faithfully served the State of Hawaii for over 17 years. Most recently as the Benefit Employment and Support Services Division Administrator, he streamlined and improved the timeliness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program services which earned Hawaii a six-figure financial bonus from the Federal government. In the short period of time he has served as the interim Director of DHS, Mr. Bhanot has instill a far-reaching vision and provided effective leadership in serving the needs of Hawaii's families. His vision for the betterment of Hawaii's families, is the initiation of "Ohana Nui," an approach for delivering human services to multi-generational families, ensuring services are seamless, efficient, and effective.

We believe in Mr. Bhanot's leadership and his vision, which is supported by his genuine aloha for his employees and Hawaii's people. We encourage the Senate Committee on

Human Services to confirm Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as Hawaii's Department Of Human Services Director.

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

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 4:57 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: mlopes@hscadv.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM503 on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM

GM503

Submitted on: 2/8/2017

Testimony for HMS on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marci Lopes	Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Support	No

Comments: The Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence would like to support the consideration and confirmation of the Nominee Pankaj Bhanot as the Director Of The Department Of Human Services.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

91-1841 Fort Weaver Road
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706
Phone 808.681.3500
Fax 808.681.5280
Email cfs@cfs-hawaii.org
www.childandfamilyservice.org



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Joseph A. Young

February 15, 2017

To: Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Change, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Howard S. Garval, President & Chief Executive Officer
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 (2:45 p.m., Room 016) State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, HI

RE: **In Strong Support of GM 503** Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, **Pankaj Bhanot**, for a term to expire 12-03-2018

Child & Family Service (CFS) has a long history of providing human services to the people of Hawaii. We provide services in 4 core areas: Caring for Keiki, Healing from Trauma, Empowering Youth, and Honoring Kupuna. We provide over 50 human service programs statewide that include prevention, early intervention, and treatment services. Our largest government funder is the State Department of Human Services here in Hawaii. We have enjoyed a great working partnership as we share many of the same families who need the services of DHS and CFS.

It is my distinct honor to submit this testimony in **strong support of Pankaj Bhanot** for confirmation as Director of DHS.

I have known Pankaj ever since I came to Hawaii in 2006. He has served the state well in those years and before I arrived. He has worked closely with at least three different DHS directors and has been a steady force for the department in all these years. I have known him in his role as Director of BESSD within DHS but also in his two stints as Deputy Director for the whole department. Pankaj has tremendous knowledge and understanding of this critical state agency that affects the lives of so many of Hawaii's citizens. He also has a continued passion for the work of DHS and will be an outstanding leader as Director. Pankaj is very committed to partnering with the nonprofit human services community and recognizes how important these partnerships are in supporting DHS to carry out its critical and challenging mission. I have also felt that Pankaj has been receptive to working with the various DHS providers with whom DHS contracts for important services to children and families, domestic violence victims and survivors, seniors, and those with various disabilities. He is a critical thinker and is deeply committed to DHS being the best it can be for the people of Hawaii.

For all of the reasons above, I ask for your endorsement of the Governor's nominee Pankaj Bhanot for confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am delighted to submit my testimony in support of this nomination. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

ACCREDITATIONS

Council on Accreditation
Better Business Bureau

AFFILIATIONS

Alliance for Strong Families and
Communities
Kauai United Way
Maui United Way
Hawaii Island United Way



“We’re all about FAMILY”

Mission: Strengthening Families and Fostering the Healthy Development of Children



February 15, 2017 at 2:45 PM
Conference Room 016

Senate Committee on Human Services

To: Chair Josh Green
Vice Chair Stanley Chang

From: Paige Heckathorn
Senior Manager, Legislative Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**
GM 503, Submitting for consideration and confirmation Pankaj Bhanot to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 160 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 20,000 people statewide.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to **support** the nomination of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). We have thoroughly enjoyed working with Mr. Bhanot these past years in his role as Deputy Director and, now, as the Interim Director of DHS.

Running an agency as large and important as DHS requires a level of dedication and skills that are difficult to find. With Mr. Bhanot, the state has found an individual whose life work has demonstrated his commitment to serving the most vulnerable. Further, Mr. Bhanot's education and time at DHS—including in his role as Deputy Director—have amply prepared him to take on this important leadership role. We believe that he will continue to serve the state with integrity and fidelity if confirmed.

Without reserve, we support Mr. Bhanot's nomination to this position. We would ask that you favorably consider him and support his confirmation as Director of DHS. Thank you for your time and consideration.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services
Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conf. Room 016**

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 503 -- SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE PANKAJ BHANOT, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-03-2018.

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Hirokawa and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA strongly **SUPPORTS** the nomination of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot for the position of Director of Human Services.

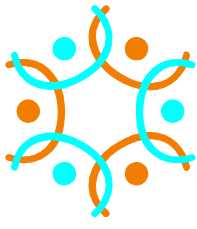
The HPCA has long held that the social determinants of health -- more than any other factor -- contribute to the overall wellbeing of our people. Persons who experience homelessness, language barriers, and poverty are more likely to suffer persistent, chronic health issues and have shorter life expectancies than those who do not. As demonstrated throughout his career, Mr. Bhanot fully understands the importance of socio-economic equity in the pursuit of optimal health outcomes for our citizens.

For more than seventeen years, Mr. Bhanot has selflessly devoted himself to the most vulnerable populations of our State through his outstanding work at the Department of Human Services (DHS). Starting as a Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Employment and Training Specialist in 1999, Mr. Bhanot quickly rose through the ranks to become DHS' Employment and Child Care Administrator in 2002, and DHS' Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division Administrator in 2007. He also served as Deputy Director under two different Administrations during his tenure.

In recognition of his professional accomplishments, Mr. Bhanot was named the DHS Employee of the Year and recipient of the Governor's Award for Distinguished State Service in 2006, as well as the DHS Manager of the Year in 2013.

For these reasons, the HPCA urges your confirmation of the nomination of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot for the position of Director of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Hawaii
Children's Action Network
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

February 10, 2017

To: Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **GM 503 – Consideration and Confirmation for the Director of The Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Pankaj Bhanot**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016, February 15, 2017, 2:45 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to support GM 503 – Consideration and Confirmation for the Director Of The Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Pankaj Bhanot.

HCAN fully supports the confirmation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). With over 17 years of experience working for DHS including serving as Deputy Director twice, Mr. Bhanot brings a wealth of knowledge and hands-on understanding of the vital services the Department provides. From his many years of service, he has a unique perspective on the potential ways to improve government processes and services to better assist the community.

Mr. Bhanot's extensive knowledge of DHS programs such as SNAP, child care subsidies, quality child care, child care licensing, and TANF First To Work Program, provide him knowledge and understanding of key issues facing our community. His experience within DHS has included implementing business transformation initiatives, information technology updates, and human services projects.

HCAN has worked with Mr. Bhanot on numerous initiatives over many years. I have found that he is always willing to work with community partners to get the best results for the community. Mr. Bhanot is a smart administrator and a visionary leader. I have no doubt that he will run the Department effectively and efficiently but also with a wicked sense of humor and a deep calling to serve the underserved.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee confirm his appointment.



TO: Senator Green, Chair, Senator Chang, Vice Chair, And Members of the
Committee on Human Services
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President/CEO Parents And Children Together
RE: **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF PANKAJ BHANOT FOR
DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
(GM 503)**

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, February 15, 2017; 2:15 PM; Conference Room 016

I feel privileged to submit this letter of support and enthusiastic recommendation for the consideration and confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot to the Director of The Department of Human Services. Mr. Bhanot comes to this position with an excellent repertoire of educational and administrative skills, which makes him extremely valuable. He is also knowledgeable about the culture that exists here in Hawaii and can speak with authority about the various issues surrounding human services.

I offer my full support of Mr. Bhanot as he will look out for the best interests of our social service system and ultimately the well-being our children and families.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 16 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

February 14, 2017

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Joanne Lundstrom, Emeritus

TO: Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Natalie Okeson, Interim Executive Director, PHOCUSED

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of Confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as DHS Director, GM503

Hearing: February 15, 2017 at 2:45pm
Conference Room 016

PHOCUSED is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to increasing the safety for, visibility of, and investment in the children and adults in Hawaii who are marginalized, impoverished, and under-served. With members representing major human service providers across the state, we understand how important it is to have an experienced and esteemed leader at the helm of the Department of Human Services. PHOCUSED strongly supports the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as that leader.

As the interim director since September of 2016, Mr. Bhanot has already shown a keen ability to administer DHS, while working to innovate how the divisions and programs work together. His passion to increase value to the consumers of DHS services through the Ohana Nui initiative should be given the opportunity to be fully implemented.

Mr. Bhanot's long history in the department, including two stints as Deputy Director, has allowed him to develop the relationships necessary to fulfill his duties and the mission of DHS. He is respected by his employees and a variety of stakeholders, including nonprofits such as PHOCUSED. Mr. Bhanot has been a trustworthy and competent partner to our organization.

Again, we fully support the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director of DHS. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on his behalf.



949 Kamokila Boulevard, 3rd Floor, Suite 350, Kapolei, HI 96707
808.675.7300 | www.ohanahealthplan.com

February 13, 2017

To: The Honorable Chair Josh Green
Senate Committee on Human Services

From: 'Ohana Health Plan
Danny Cup Choy; Director, Government Affairs

Re: GM 503, Relating to the Nominee for Director of the Department of
Human Services; **In Support**
February 15, 2017; Conference Room 016

'Ohana Health Plan ('Ohana) is a member of the WellCare Health Plans, Inc.'s ("WellCare") family of companies and provides healthcare for Hawai'i residents statewide. Since 2009, 'Ohana has utilized WellCare's national experience to develop a Hawai'i -specific care model that addresses local members' healthcare and health coordination needs. By focusing on the state's Medicaid and Medicare population, 'Ohana serves Hawaii's most vulnerable residents: low-income, elderly, disabled, and individuals with complex medical issues. Our mission is to help our members' lead better, healthier lives.

'Ohana Health Plan offers our **support** of GM 503 and the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

As a Medicaid health plan that works closely with Hawaii's Department of Human Services (DHS), we are very encouraged by the many years of experience that Mr. Bhanot brings to this position. We look forward to continuing our relationship with DHS under Mr. Bhanot's leadership and working with the Med-Quest division on behalf of our members.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

SanHi Government Strategies

a limited liability law partnership

Gary M. Slovin
Mihoko E. Ito
R. Brian Tsujimura

c/o Ashford & Wriston • 999 Bishop Street, Suite 1400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
(808) 539-0400
governmentaffairs@awlaw.com

gslovin@awlaw.com
mito@awlaw.com
rtsujimura@awlaw.com

DATE: February 14, 2017

TO: Senator Josh Green
Chair, Committee on Human Services
Submitted Via Capitol Website

RE: **GM 503 – Confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Pankaj Bhanot**
Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room: 16

Dear Chair Green and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

We submit this testimony in **strong support** of the nomination of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

It is hard to imagine anyone being more qualified to be the Director of DHS than Pankaj. He has very broad experience in the Department and topped that off by being the deputy director under Rachael Wong, a time of extraordinary accomplishment. Together they proved how valuable a true partnership can be. Rachael was an inspired leader, but she would not hesitate to credit Pankaj for the critical role he played in the accomplishment of great things during her tenure as Director. Because they were true partners it does truly make sense for Pankaj to have the role of continuing to build on what they started.

It should also be noted that, in addition to the many advances made within the department over the past two years, the standing of the department in the community has escalated as well. Pankaj shares in the credit for that, and it is important. As a board member of organizations that serve disadvantaged residents I can attest to the brighter light that DHS now shines in the community.

Gary M. Slovin
Mihoko E. Ito
R. Brian Tsujimura
C. Mike Kido
Tiffany N. Yajima
Matthew W. Tsujimura

Page 2

Pankaj has abundant qualifications that suit him for this position. But his approach and personality are also critical talents that he brings to this very challenging position. He is a very friendly, kind and upstanding person, a person that people he works with both in and out of the department trust. He is approachable, and he is a listener. He is smart but also has good instincts. He is a problem solver. He could be taking on an easier task, but he is motivated to try to make things better. As a former department head I know that heading an agency is much more difficult than it once was, and that is not a good thing and something that must be addressed at some point. But, at DHS, we have had an exceptional person in Rachael Wong and now we have another as her successor in Pankaj Bhanot.

Therefore, and accordingly, we strongly and without reservation ask your support and confirmation of Pankaj as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 7:08 AM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: scmorishige@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM503 on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM

GM503

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for HMS on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Morishige	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am testifying as an individual, and am in strong support of Mr. Bhanot's confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services. I have known Mr. Bhanot for nearly a decade, and have worked with him in a variety of different roles -- as a Program Director for a nonprofit, as a funder at the Hawaii Community Foundation, as a community advocate, and most recently as a colleague. He has consistently demonstrated his ability to lead, and to develop and sustain programs that support the community. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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James K. Nishimoto
2405 Halekoa Drive
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96821

February 13, 2017

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 016
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Green and Vice Chair Chang;

It is my honor to **STONGLY SUPPORT** the confirmation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

I have had the pleasure as the Director of the Department of Human Resources Development to work with Pankaj in his capacity as Deputy Director and as Interim Director of the Department. His extensive administrative experiences with DHS beginning with service as a Food Stamp Employment and Training Program Specialist, then as the Employment and Child Care Program Administrator, followed by service as the Division Administrator of the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division and most recent services as the Deputy and Interim Director of DHS have all well prepared him to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

From my personal experiences working with Pankaj I use the following descriptors: articulate; able to maintain focus on a vision while being attentive to details; a compassionate, caring and attentive advocate for the members of the community that he serves; grounded; approachable; a consensus builder; a successful program administrator and manager; and an individual with whom I am honored to serve.

It is my hope that Mr. Bhanot will be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Human Services as our State will be well served by his leadership and commitment to service.

Sincerely



James K. Nishimoto

The Honorable Senator Josh Green, Chair
The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Support for GM503, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for the Director of the
Department of Human Services

My name is Catherine Scardino. I am currently the Program Administrator of the Employment and Training Program Office (ETPO) with the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD), under the Department of Human Services (DHS). I have twenty-one years of service, all served with DHS.

I first met Director Pankaj Bhanot in April 2007 when he was the BESSD Acting Assistant Division Administrator during the Lingle administration. I learned Pankaj is a very intelligent, energetic and passionate person which extends to his professional position. During this period, I saw first-hand, Director Bhanot's strong belief and commitment to protect the valuable services that the Department provides; his strong support to maintain the well-being of the staff who delivers the services on a daily basis; and his perseverance to overcome the many challenges BESSD faced. The Department needs a director with these characteristics and experience.

Director Bhanot's commitment is evidenced by continuing 'Ohana Nui, an initiative started by his predecessor, Director Rachael Wong. 'Ohana Nui is the State's approach for delivering human services that capitalizes on our unique, multi-generational family structure, to improve the support we provide to our neediest children and families. As a champion of 'Ohana Nui, Hawaii families will greatly benefit having Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2017 3:31 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: lho@hawaiiublicpolicy.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM503 on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM

GM503

Submitted on: 2/9/2017

Testimony for HMS on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melissa Pavlicek	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My name is Melissa Pavlicek. I am an attorney and business owner and have known Mr. Bhanot for over 10 years in connection with my work in the area of early learning and health policy. I am writing to support Mr. Bhanot's appointment as director of the Dept. of Human Services. Mr. Bhanot is a very diligent and dedicated public servant. He is knowledgeable and a staunch supporter of people who may not otherwise have a voice. I believe he has the people of Hawaii as his top priority. Please support his nomination.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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February 11, 2017

The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
The Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 407
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM 503 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Director Of The Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018

Dear Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support of GM 503 for Pankaj Bhanot's nomination to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

My name is Jo Ann Uchida Takeuchi and I am the Deputy Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

I have known Mr. Bhanot for several years through our work at our respective departments. Mr. Bhanot has had a long, distinguished and remarkable career at DHS, and I have always admired his ability to take on monumental challenges and effect measurable improvements in his organization through strategic planning, and teamwork. He is thoughtful, friendly, highly intelligent, and generous of his time and expertise. Mr. Bhanot is a tireless advocate for the people of Hawaii, and exemplifies the best qualities of public service.

I urge you to recommend confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director of DHS. Thank you for the opportunity to provide my strong support of his nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo Ann Uchida Takeuchi', written in a cursive style.

JO ANN UCHIDA TAKEUCHI

Susan M. Chandler
1617 Quincy Place
Honolulu, HI 96816

Testimony in Support of Confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot, for DHS
Director, GM 503

Committee on Human Services
State Senate Hearing
February 15, 2017
Conference Room 016, 2:45

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang and members of the Human Services Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Susan Chandler, and I am testifying as a private citizen.

I am submitting this strong testimony in support of Pankaj Bhanot for the Director of the Department of Human Services. Mr. Bhanot has served as the interim director of DHS since September, 2016 and has already proven himself to be an excellent leader. As you know well, the DHS is an extremely large and complex department. Its mission includes improving the lives of Hawai'i's most vulnerable people. The DHS administers benefit, employment and support service (known as welfare); MedQUEST (known as Medicaid), social services including child and adult protective services; and vocational rehabilitation and services to the blind. DHS also oversees the attached agencies of the Office of Youth Services, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Fatherhood and the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority.

Mr. Bhanot has long experience within DHS from his early position at DHS in the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program in 1999. He has progressed up through the ranks within DHS to the BESSD Division Administrator in 2007. He has also served as the Deputy Director previously twice. Clearly he is qualified and has not only the skills to administer this

complex agency, but has earned the respect of its employees, its private sector partners and its constituents.

I know a little about the challenges that the Director of DHS faces since I was the Director from 1995-2002 under Governor Cayetano. I feel confident that Panjak is up to the challenge and will succeed as the new Director of DHS.

Mr. Bhanot brings his long experience of problem-solving to the Director's Office. He is leading the DHS Enterprise System Initiative which is designed to integrate all of the eligibility and social services programs, services and benefits onto a single information and technology platform. Work is on-going to plan, design and implement a new and extremely important initiative called `Ohana Nui which focuses on the needs of all members within families, not just an individual "client" who may get stuck in a silo yet may (and usually does) need a more comprehensive array of preventative and support services for his or her family. This unified information system will help DHS better coordinate its services; insure better management and accountability; forge better collaborations with the DOH, DILR, the nonprofit sector and others and better focus on the needs of children and their families.

This focus on an improved coordinated, efficient and effective service system has been an interest of Pankaj's for a long time. Now he is in a position to implement this needed innovation.

Mr. Bhanot has a long history in the public sector and at DHS. I cannot think of a more qualified, more competent and more compassion person to lead DHS.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions you may have.

Sum M Chandler

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2017 9:50 AM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: hiev2006@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM503 on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM

GM503

Submitted on: 2/12/2017

Testimony for HMS on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dana Balansag	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My name is Dana Balansag, and I am an individual testifying in strong support of Pankaj Bhanot being confirmed as the Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS). Mr. Bhanot has been a dutiful civil servant for DHS for almost two decades under the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD). Because Mr. Bhanot has worked for DHS, he understands the mission of the department, the importance of the services the department provides, and the essential role the department's employees have in ensuring DHS fulfills its mission. Mr. Bhanot is not afraid of implementing improvements needed to ensure effective and efficient services are provided to families and children receiving DHS services, as evidenced by the reengineering of the business processes completed within BESSD under his leadership to ensure that applications for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and financial assistance benefits are processed and eligibility determinations are completed in a timely manner in compliance with federal requirements. Mr. Bhanot has been a key proponent of moving DHS into the 21st century technology by driving the implementation of the electronic case file content management within BESSD as well as pursuing capital improvement project funds from the Legislature to bring BESSD's and Social Services Division's legacy data systems onto the same platform as the Med-Quest Division's KOLEA system. The DHS Enterprise initiative for the upgraded data systems within DHS will result in increased efficiencies amongst the divisions in DHS, tracking of access to and utilization of services within DHS for families and children, and better outcomes for families and children. Mr. Bhanot is also continuing the `Ohana Nui initiative for DHS to align and streamline existing programs and funding to improve efficiencies and outcomes to achieve the greatest return on investment for Hawaii's multi-generational communities and families. Mr. Bhanot will continue his dedication to work toward improving DHS with the infrastructure and support needed to serve Hawaii's families and children and ensuring DHS is accountable to the Legislature, Governor, and the people of Hawaii. Please confirm Mr. Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services.


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the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Submitted via email: HMStestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

To: The Honorable Josh Green
Chair, Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Rachael Wong 

Re: GM 503 – Confirmation as the Director of Department of Human Services,
Gubernatorial Nominee, Pankaj Bhanot

Hearing: February 15, 2017 at 2:45 PM
State Capitol, Room 016

Dear Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services:

I am writing in **strong support** of Pankaj Bhanot's nomination to the position of the Department of Human Services (DHS) director.

I recently served as the department director but am writing in my personal capacity, which is a former colleague, current community supporter, and friend of Pankaj. My service in DHS and positive time working with him provides a unique perspective to share.

When Pankaj and I learned in late 2014 that we would be working together, we met and quickly discovered our similar values—respect for each individual, belief that life cannot be quantified, honesty and open communication, doing the right thing, taking the extra step, prioritizing loved ones and health, and living aloha—and committed to a partnership from day one. This partnership never wavered during the 20 months we worked together, and it grew into a friendship that remains strong today.

Pankaj is one of the smartest people I know, and his subject matter expertise continually deepens from his seeking out new information within the department, at the federal level, from best practice research, and throughout the community. I do not think there is anyone who understands DHS and believes in it more than him. But all of that is not enough to be the perfect person to lead the department at this time.

Pankaj serves in DHS for its clients and families, yet it is also for all Hawai'i residents (including anyone reading this), the 2000+ members of the DHS team, and the larger executive branch. He is both a true public servant and a visionary leader, who is driven by his commitment to social justice and grounding in empathy and generosity. Pankaj is fueled by deep intelligence

and unflagging energy, supported by his loving family and innumerable friends, respected by colleagues, and known for his quick wit and easy laugh.

I transitioned out of DHS last year knowing that the department was not only in good hands: it was in the best person's hands to lead the integration of the multigenerational 'Ohana Nui framework, complete the build of the DHS Enterprise System, and streamline the department through business process reengineering. And this is what's happening.

Pankaj brings 17 years of experience in DHS, and he taught me about it. Because of him, I quickly saw the dedication of people who work in state government and the good work they do. The public sector workforce merits our support and respect. So many people work tirelessly (during late nights and long weekends) to ensure that programs run, services stay open, and benefits get to those who need them—and those outside may never know their mission-driven commitment.

It can be easy to think of human services as "just a safety net" and that it merely necessitates appropriations. However, the higher-level, progressive thinking—of which Hawai'i has a long history—is that human services is the foundation for our state's ability to succeed in health, education, employment, housing, and other outcomes. Rephrasing this: our shared communities across the islands can only thrive if we have a strong Department of Human Services. DHS provides services and benefits to one in four people in the state—and half of all kids—and if the department receives needed resources and support, it can truly springboard residents to well-being and self-sufficiency.

In the same way, DHS needs leadership who can make this happen. Pankaj Bhanot is the best person at this critical time—a period during which there is uncertainty about federal policy. More than ever, we as a state—all three branches of government, the private sector, and individuals—must work together to serve our neighbors and each other. Now is not the time to position ourselves one against another when we have a shared goal of making Hawai'i a better place for all who live here. We must be creative and efficient with our energies and resources to co-create for our shared communities. This can actually be a great opportunity for Hawai'i to highlight what can be achieved collaboratively, and DHS can demonstrate how to do this under Pankaj's leadership.

Pankaj brings hard-earned experience, deep knowledge, a strong network, expansive vision coupled with successful implementation experience, a grounding in true commitment to service and social justice, and a big heart. I cannot think of a better person to lead DHS to its potential than him. He and the DHS team are making each other a better place for all of us.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit this testimony. I respectfully ask the HMS Committee to support the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the director of the Department of Human Services.

Human Services Committee
Hawai'i State Senate
HMS 016 Feb. 15, 2017

Aloha kākou,

I submit this testimony in my personal capacity in full support of Pankaj Bhanot serving as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I have known Pankaj for a year and a half. Our relationship is professional, but it has also been personal in a meaningful way that I think speaks volumes about his ability to serve as DHS Director.

Pankaj's leadership at the department embodies an empathy I think is not often characteristic of government bureaucracy. Whether he is leading the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division or the department as a whole, Pankaj believes it is his personal mission to ensure the people of Hawai'i who need our programs and services are able to access them. As he says, the department's mission is to serve everyone who knocks on our doors on a daily basis. He truly means it for each individual and family who goes to DHS for help.

Pankaj's personal mission is supplemented by nearly two decades of work in this system. His career at the Department of Human Services make him uniquely positioned to understand the systems he works within so that he may make the greatest impact for the children and families. The various divisions, programs and agencies in the department often require highly technical understanding of laws, rules and regulations at different levels of government. Pankaj's experience working among these levels of government and areas of law makes him adept at finding creative solutions to help all of Hawai'i.

Beyond his professional experience though, Pankaj's leadership style, whether with his own team or with the clients served, is a truly personal one that inspires. I will always remember the time I came to him frustrated. I told him I felt like I was at the end of my rope with a specific situation. While he did have some tough love words of wisdom for me, it was his words about my priorities that moved me to tears.

He reminded me that my first priority was my son and my second priority was my husband. He reminded me that my work, no matter how important or stressful, always came after my family.

Pankaj's words meant a lot to me in my work, but I think they're also telling that when he says he's here to take care of Hawai'i's children and families, he means it...even for his own team. I have worked for very few people who say our families come first and actually meant it in practice. It gives me the confidence to support Pankaj in his vision of leading DHS to help the children and families of Hawai'i.

E mālama pono,
Ke'ōpū Reelitz

Statement of: Joel Bongco, Individual

Testimony presented before the

House Committee on Human Services

Monday, February 13, 2017

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
**GM503 RELATING TO
CONFIRMATION DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I offer my **Strong Support** for GM503 for the consideration and confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of Department of Human Services, (DHS).

Pankaj Bhanot has been in a leadership capacity at DHS for many years and under his leadership he has provided efficient, effective and innovation in the services that the department provides to the citizens of the State of Hawaii.

His confirmation will ensure that the department continues to provide much needed services to the people of Hawaii, while maintaining a strong and effective working relationship with federal government programs including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This directorship position is critical to the wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of constituents in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Joel Bongco
(808) 382-8151
joel_bongco@yahoo.com

Aphirak Bamrungruan
411 Hobron Lane
Honolulu, HI 96815
Phone: (808) 271-2137
Email: aphirakb@gmail.com

February 13, 2017

The Honorable Josh Green
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Testimony in strong support of GM 503

Dear Chair Green, Vice-Chair Chang, and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee:

My name is Aphirak Bamrungruan and I am an LEP Project Manager at the Department of Human Services. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity in strong support of PANKAJ BHANOT's appointment to the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

I have known and worked with Mr. Bhanot for several years in his various roles at DHS. During my time at DHS, I have had the opportunity to witness first-hand Mr. Bhanot's passion for providing public services to those in need. Mr. Bhanot understands the importance of diversification and the positive impact diversification has had on the people of our state. Mr. Bhanot has also consistently demonstrated his passion for advocating on behalf of those in need. In my years working with Mr. Bhanot, I have found him to be a committed and caring public servant.

Mr. Bhanot has continued to be an approachable and invaluable resource at DHS because he's committed to the importance of public services and the people of Hawaii. I strongly believe that Mr. Bhanot's years of experience and dedication will be a great benefit to both the Department of Human Services and the people of Hawaii should he be appointed Director of the Department of Human Services.

Respectfully submitted,

Aphirak Bamrungruan

Statement of: Steven Sakata, Individual

Testimony presented before the

House Committee on Human Services

Monday, February 13, 2017

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
**GM503 RELATING TO
CONFIRMATION DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I offer my **Strong Support** for GM503 for the consideration and confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of Department of Human Services, (DHS).

Pankaj Bhanot has been in a leadership capacity at DHS for many years and under his leadership he has provided efficient, effective and innovation in the services that the department provides to the citizens of the State of Hawaii.

His confirmation will ensure that the department continues to provide much needed services to the people of Hawaii, while maintaining a strong and effective working relationship with federal government programs including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This directorship position is critical to the wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of constituents in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Steven Sakata
ssakata@gmail.com

Statement of: Steven Mizokawa, Individual

Testimony presented before the

House Committee on Human Services

Monday, February 13, 2017

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
**GM503 RELATING TO
CONFIRMATION DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I offer my **Strong Support** for GM503 for the consideration and confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of Department of Human Services, (DHS).

Throughout the years Pankaj Bhanot has demonstrated his leadership skills and concern for the health and welfare for the citizens of the State of Hawaii through his service at the Department of Human Services. His unwavering dedication to the less fortunate in Hawaii can serve as a role model for all of us who live in this wonderful State.

His confirmation will ensure that the less fortunate in our State have a clear and forceful voice in government who is looking out for their best interest and well-being. The relationship he has nurtured and fostered with a number of federal agencies throughout the years will continue to pay dividends for the State of Hawaii. His confirmation as Director is critical to the health and welfare of hundreds of thousands of citizens in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Steven Mizokawa

To: The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

From: Dean Senda

Date: February 13, 2017

Subject: **Governor's Message No. 503 Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-3-2018**

Aloha, Chair Green, Vice-Chair Chang and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services. I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen before the Committee to testify on Governor's Message No 503, Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-3-2018.

I have known Pankaj personally since 2010. He has demonstrated during his tenure with the State in various leadership positions at the Department of Human Services that he has the abilities not only to lead with a passion to empower Hawaii's most vulnerable people but to be able to do it in an effective, efficient and innovative ways.

His confirmation will ensure that the department continues to provide much of the needed services to the people of Hawaii, while maintaining a strong and effective working relationship with federal government programs including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Pankaj has the education, work experience, desire, and capacity to be an excellent director for the Department of Human Services. He represents the type of leadership I believe the State will need to help develop and implement solutions to address the State's challenges for the upcoming years.

I urge the Senate to confirm the appointment of my friend, Pankaj Bhanot, as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:39 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: Phyllis.Shimabukuro-Geiser@hawaii.gov
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM503 on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM

GM503

Submitted on: 2/13/2017

Testimony for HMS on Feb 15, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Chairperson Green, Vice Chair Chang and Members of the Committee: I respectfully request your confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services. I have worked with Pankaj as a fellow Deputy for almost 2 years before he was appointed by Governor Ige to be the Director. Pankaj has a vast experience with the realm of Human Services. I have witnessed his passion as an advocate for the vulnerable and socially disadvantaged members of our communities, especially our keiki and kupuna whether as the Deputy Director of DHS, the Governor's representative to the Kaimuki Neighborhood Board and a team member for community service. Pankaj has received numerous merit awards and recognition for his outstanding service to the people of Hawai'i. Please favorably consider and confirm Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser Deputy to the Chairperson Hawaii Department of Agriculture 1428 S. King Street Honolulu, HI 96814

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Personal Testimony of
Alfredo Lee
820 Mililani Street, Suite 606
Honolulu, HI 96813

DATE: Wednesday, February 15, 2017
TIME: 2:45 P.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 016
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

GM 503

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to
the Director Of The Department Of Human Services,
Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018

Chair Green and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I am in STRONG SUPPORT of this nomination.

Mr. Bhanot has worked in the Department of Human Services for many years and in various capacities. He is well versed on the needs of the communities and the underserved citizens of our State. He possesses the right kind of experience and leadership skills to lead the second largest department in the State of Hawaii. Not only does he understand the culture of the Department, he has the uncanny skills to bring the best out of its employees.

Mr. Bhanot will be a great leader for the Department of Human Services. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Alfredo Lee

Statement of: Bhanu Vellanki, Individual

Testimony presented before the

House Committee on Human Services

Monday, February 13, 2017

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
**GM503 RELATING TO
CONFIRMATION DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I offer my **Strong Support** for GM503 for the consideration and confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of Department of Human Services, (DHS).

I have closely worked with Pankaj while I worked at the State ICSD while supporting various technology systems at DHS. During this time, I observed his dynamic leadership abilities and his strong business acumen. Pankaj used these abilities to improve the business processes and efficiencies at DHS.

Pankaj is a very well respected leader at the State, DHS and within the community including work with cultural charities.

His confirmation is important to continue the level of leadership, strategic direction and continuity for DHS and the constituents across the State being served.

I urge the senate to confirm the appointment of Pankaj Bhanot, as the director of Department of Human Services.

Best Regards,

Bhanu Vellanki
808-225-0652

FROM: James W. Walther
TO: Senate Committee on Human Services
DATE: February 14, 2017

RE: GM503
Consideration and Confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director, Department
of Human Services
Hearing before the Senate Committee on Human Services
February 15, 2017

CHAIR GREEN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

I write in support of Pankaj Bhanot for your consideration to be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Human Services. Mr. Bhanot is uniquely qualified to lead the Department based on his long experience as an administrator for the Department and is the perfect candidate to lead it.

I have had the pleasure of providing legal advice and counsel as a Deputy Attorney General assigned to Mr. Bhanot and his team at DHS for many years. He is incredibly smart and passionate about his work and truly believes that the Department can provide valuable services to help Hawai'i's neediest populations. He always looks to improve the delivery of the services so that they are efficient and, more importantly, meet the needs of the Department's clients in a meaningful way.

Whenever I am called on to provide legal assistance to Mr. Bhanot, he is knowledgeable about the facts of the situation and the laws that he is charged with implementing, and he often has several proposed solutions to whatever problems he is encountering, before he even calls on our office. In addition, he expects the same level of knowledge and preparedness from his staff, so that the level of discourse starts out at a high level, which leads to speedy resolutions. I have no doubt that Mr. Bhanot will maintain and expand upon his reputation for excellence as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Finally, I would like to say that besides being an exemplary administrator and public servant, Pankaj is also a kind and funny person with a big heart. He cares genuinely about the people who work for him, and about the people who they all work together to serve. It is those personal qualities, maybe even more than his outstanding work history and credentials, that make him so well-suited to the task of leading the agency responsible for helping the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you,
James W. Walther

February 14, 2017

TO: Senator Josh Green
Chair Senate Committee on Human Services

Members Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Kathleen (Kate) Stanley
Private citizen
7171 Kukii St.
Honolulu HI 96825

Kathleen G. Stanley

RE: Consideration and confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services

Chair Green and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services, I am testifying as a private citizen urging the Committee recommend to the full Senate confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Mr. Bhanot came to work for the Department during the time that I served as Deputy Director. I remember that the administrator of the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division in 1999 was very excited to have found an enthusiastic person to work as a food stamp employment and training specialist. Pat Murakami, the administrator, knew that she had found a talented person who would serve the division and department well.

Mr. Bhanot performed so well that in 2002 he was promoted to Employment and Child care Program Administrator, and as the years passed he served as Division Administrator and Deputy Director.

Over the years Mr. Bhanot has demonstrated his dedication to serving the clients of the department. He is committed to serving those most in need of health benefits, child care, employment services and cash benefits. He is

knowledgeable about the programs and their legal requirements. He works with others to find solutions to problems and challenges. He is forthright and honest in his dealings with all.

What has impressed me most over the many years that I have worked with Mr. Bhanot is his enthusiastic commitment to Hawaii. We are fortunate that we have a person so willing to serve the least fortunate of our citizens.

I urge you to recommend confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Statement of: Siu Tong Yau, Individual

Testimony presented before the

House Committee on Human Services

Monday, February 13, 2017

State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
**GM503 RELATING TO
CONFIRMATION DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen before the Committee to offer my strong support for Governor's Message No 503, for the consideration and confirmation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of Department of Human Services, (DHS).

I have known Mr. Pankaj Bhanot since 2000. He is a very dedicated, sincere, and caring person. Mr. Pankaj Bhanot has extensive experience and knowledge in Human Services. He has been in a leadership capacity at DHS for many years. Under his leadership he has provided efficient, effective and innovation in the services that the department provides to the citizens of the State of Hawaii.

His confirmation will ensure that the department continues to provide and improve much needed services to the people of Hawaii. He will lead the department to maintain a stronger and more effective working relationship with federal government programs including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This directorship position is critical to the wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of constituents in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Siu Tong Yau

Written Statement of
Ani Martirosian

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

IN SUPPORT OF:

G.M. 503 Confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT

To: Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee on Human Services
Re: **Testimony in Support of G.M. 503**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my strong support of the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services (“DHS” or “the Department”).

Pankaj Bhanot has the experience, vision, and dedication required to effectively lead DHS. He has served as the Interim Director of DHS since September 2016, as the Deputy Director for over two-and-a-half years combined, and as a Division Administrator for the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (“BESSD”), the largest division in the Department with over 700 employees and 200 contractors providing direct and indirect services to Hawai‘i residents.

In each of his capacities at DHS, Mr. Bhanot has not only made a strong impact on the Department’s successful ability to provide effective services to Hawai‘i residents, but he has been an innovative leader with a vision toward an even more efficient future for the Department, and ultimately our State.

Mr. Bhanot is currently leading the charge on many fronts at DHS. He is at the helm of the DHS Enterprise System build to integrate all eligibility and social services programs, services and benefits; he is creating the first comprehensive strategic plan for the Department; is leading the effort to plan, design, and implement ‘Ohana Nui - a new and comprehensive service delivery model that invests in children and families early and concurrently to improve outcomes for residents; is directing the business process transformation efforts to create more efficient and effective government; and he is at the forefront of DHS’ budget and legislative package for 2017.

Pankaj Bhanot’s confirmation will not only ensure that the Department continues to provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits to Hawai‘i residents, but will instate a leader for DHS who is forward thinking, innovative, has a track record of successful delivery for our State, and who is passionately committed to our community. **I ask that you join me in supporting Pankaj Bhanot’s confirmation to Director of the Department of Human Services.**

Mahalo nui.

Ani Martirosian
animartirosian@gmail.com

TO: Senate Human Services Committee

FROM: Wilfredo Tungol (Phone 387-7412)

RE: GM 503 (Confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot for Director of DHS)

Date of Hearing: February 15, 2017, 2:45 pm

Chair Green and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of your confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the director of the Department of Human Services. I have the privilege of working with Pankaj when I was assigned to the Director's Office as a Projects Specialist from 2011 to 2014. Pankaj was then the deputy director and later returned to his position as the BESSD Administrator. Pankaj was well respected in the department as a leader and as an administrator. As the lead manager for the Business Process Reengineering (BPR), he improved the processing time for SNAP applications, thus meeting the federal requirements and avoiding further sanctions by the federal government and also meeting the federal court's injunction arising from a lawsuit on delays of SNAP processing.

Pankaj is a collaborative leader who will help Governor Ige's administration in battling the homelessness crisis that the state is under. He will also collaborate with the Department of Health to ensure that every resident of the state gets the proper services that they need from cradle to grave through the 'Ohana Nui vision of the administration. In my almost three years of working with him, I have observed his ability to lead and inspire those around him. He is well respected and liked by both colleagues and subordinates in DHS. I am certain that he will make a difference in the quality of life for our impoverished residents of the state.

I respectfully ask you to act favorably to confirm Pankaj as DHS director.

TESTIMONY

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services

MEASURE: GM 503, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Director Of The Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018.

DATE: Wednesday, February 15, 2017

TIME: 2:45 pm

TESTIFIER: Bridget Holthus

Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the nomination of Panjak Bhanot as Director of the Department of Human Services.

I have worked closely with Mr. Bhanot since my appointment as the Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services in September 2016. (I am testifying today as a private citizen.) I also had the privilege of collaborating with Mr. Bhanot in other roles over the past ten years, on a range of public service initiatives.

During this time, I have had an opportunity not only to form my own opinion of Mr. Bhanot, but also to hear the frank comments of many others. In the course of my work, many community leaders, partner agencies, and clients – even if they disagreed with Mr. Bhanot’s decisions – have commended his ability and diligence, his integrity and fairness, and his civility.

Mr. Bhanot has an exceptional ability to bring about collaboration among individuals and groups with divergent interests. As an administrator, he is innovative and resourceful in finding ways to maximize limited resources. Those who work closely with Mr. Bhanot have witnessed his dedication to the department and his inexhaustible work ethic – and have seen that his primary concern is to do the right thing and get the right result for the people he serves, no matter who gets the credit.

With more than 17 years of service in the department, Mr. Bhanot has demonstrated an enduring commitment to the well-being of the people of Hawai’i. His deep experience and his personal qualities make him exceptionally well-qualified to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Services, and I respectfully urge the Committee to recommend confirmation.

February 12, 2017

To: Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Scott Nakasone, Individual

RE: GM 503 - Consideration and confirmation to the Director Of The Department Of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire 12-03-2018

Position: Strong Support

Comments: Since Pankaj's arrival to the Department of Human Services (DHS) in 1999 as an emergency hire, he has gone about his duties with the passion to make a positive difference in the way clients are serviced and how these services are delivered. Through the progression of duties and responsibilities he has undertaken in the Department, from a Program Specialist, to a Program Administrator, Assistant and then Division Administrator, a Deputy Director, to now a nominee for a Director's appointment, Pankaj has never wavered in his passion to make a positive difference and to look for better ways to get things done.

Pankaj's passion is acutely aligned with the DHS mission, "To provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits for the purpose of achieving the outcome of empowering Hawaii's most vulnerable people; and to expand their capacity for self-sufficiency, self-determination, independence, healthy choices, quality of life, and personal dignity." And his experience and understanding of how State, Counties, Federal and community partners all interact for the purposes of servicing the people of Hawaii makes him a logical choice for the appointment of Director of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this nomination.

Written Statement of
Zubin Adrian Menon

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, February 15 2017, 2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF:

G.M.503: Confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services,
Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT

Dear Chair Green, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to offer my **STRONG SUPPORT** for GM503 – confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Pankaj Bhanot has served as the Interim Director of the DHS since September 2016, as the Deputy Director for over two-and-a-half years combined, and as a Division Administrator for the Benefit Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD), the largest division in the Department with over 700 employees and 200 contractors providing direct and indirect services to Hawai'i residents.

Mr. Bhanot's confirmation will ensure that the Department continues to provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits to the 300,000+ Hawai'i residents that need assistance the most. Mr. Bhanot is a leader who is forward thinking, innovative, has a track record of success, and who is passionately committed to our community. I ask that you support Pankaj Bhanot's confirmation to Director of DHS.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of his confirmation.

Aloha,

Zubin Menon
zmenon@gmail.com

February 14, 2017

The Honorable Josh Green, Chairman

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Honorable Members of the Committee on Human Services

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in strong support of confirming Mr. Pankaj Bhanot, Esq., as Director of the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services.

Let me first say that I checked with the Hawaii State Ethics Commission and they said it was fine if I submit testimony. My thanks to Virginia at the Ethics Commission.

My name is Mark Forman and I am writing in my capacity as an individual. Full disclosure: I was hired 9/1/16 to work in the DHS Director's office (under a two year and several months-long special project. My thanks to you, the Legislature, for that). Some of you know me because I recently worked at the Capitol as a legislative aide and concurrently in corporate philanthropy. I also served in the past as Hawaii State Democratic Party Chairman, as the Director of the State Office of Community Services, as Legal Aid staff, and as a longtime member of U.S. Senator Dan Inouye's Washington, D.C. staff.

The year 2017 must be the Year of The Good Guy, notwithstanding craziness in national politics. I say this because Pankaj Bhanot has heartwarmingly been appointed to direct DHS. I cannot think of anyone better for this difficult job in challenging times. He is uniquely qualified. As you may know, DHS assists and supports one in every four adults in Hawaii, and about half of all children. The Director is also charged with overseeing \$3.5 billion in yearly expenditure (but the amount is likely to be reduced due to decreased tax revenue and/or federal block-granting).

I witnessed first-hand Mr. Bhanot's extraordinary temperament and ability to stay calm in the face of chaos. He has seventeen (yes, 17, --count 'em) years of experience at DHS and I must not neglect to mention that he seems to relish the opportunity to work tirelessly (and without much thanks) on very difficult things for many, many, other people. I have never been more impressed with any one person's sincerity and drive to be a public servant/leader. He walks the walk and talks the talk. He is the real deal. He is a damn good guy.

I should stop right here. But no, because there is more: By now you already know from his resume that he studied post-graduate law at the University of Nottingham, England, School of Law. But his resume does not reveal he is a great family man. Lynn, his wife, and Satya, his son will attest to that. My point is you have to know him to fully appreciate him. For example, he will not brag about the fact that he very recently added \$717,000 in bonus funds to federal

funding available to Hawaii recipients through a national award for SNAP outreach excellence. Nor will he tell you that he also won national awards for business process reengineering, and dozens of other awards in recognition for superior performance, merit and/or appreciation. You just have to know, or somebody else has to tell you by singing his praises. Thank you again for the opportunity to do just that. I enthusiastically urge you to confirm his appointment.

Thank you,

(signed)

Mark L. Forman

Private Citizen

Lori H. Wada, Esq.
1109 Lunahelu Place
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

Re: GM 503 Confirmation hearing regarding Pankaj Bhanot for Director of Human Services

Dear Chair Green and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Pankaj Bhanot for the position of Director of the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services

I have known and worked with Mr. Bhanot since March of 2011 until the present. Mr. Bhanot is presently employed by the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services as the Interim Director. When Mr. Bhanot was the Division Administrator of the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD), I worked with him on a regular basis when I handled a complex litigation case in federal court. That lawsuit was filed against the State of Hawaii, BESSD for failure to comply with federal mandates of compliance in determining the eligibility of applicants for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). At one point, BESSD was one of the lowest ranked states in the nation for determining SNAP eligibility. As a result, a class action lawsuit was filed against the State. This case was assigned to me as the Deputy Attorney General to handle the case after it had been in litigation before the Honorable David E. Ezra for a number of years,

Prior to the filing of the lawsuit, Mr. Bhanot had astutely assessed there was a problem and had begun working on implementing new procedures and establishing new programs in processing the SNAP applications. These new system changes were already in its infancy stages to improve the system statewide. Under Mr. Bhanot's tutelage, his extensive knowledge of the law, his brilliant mind and supreme efficiency, he and his superior team achieved the near impossible task of raising the State's very low ranking nationwide (in the bottom three) to being almost the best and ranked in the top three in the nation! As a result, BESSD was awarded the recognition of being the most improved state in the nation in processing the SNAP applications. This recognition also included a monetary award to the State of approximately three quarters of a million dollars. That year Mr. Bhanot won the Manager of the Year award by Governor Ige. As Mr. Bhanot is not one to rest on his laurels, he achieved this same recognition for a consecutive year, again resulting in a substantial monetary award to the State.

Not surprisingly, Mr. Bhanot's successes in improving the SNAP eligibility rates was integral to the settling of the class action lawsuit. One of the settlement terms was for BESSD to be in compliance at 96% in processing the applications. Every year to the present, BESSD has met or surpassed the 96% rate up to 98%! I am confident in attributing the successes of BESSD to the tireless and innovative efforts of Mr. Bhanot as he established the groundwork for BESSD's perpetual success in the SNAP program.

I have worked with Mr. Bhanot less frequently after his promotion to Deputy Director and now Interim Director of the State's Department of Human Services. I will attest that when I do work with him in these roles, Mr. Bhanot has maintained the highest level of professional decorum and professionalism, remains notably humble, and dedicated worker for the best interests of the State. I have no doubt if he is confirmed for the position of Director of the State of Hawaii's Department of Human Services it will be the start of great changes for future successes for the State of Hawaii. I fully

endorse and without reservation submit my recommendation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot for the position and he be confirmed by the Committee.

GM 503

From:

Kathleen Fujimoto

3462 Hardesty Street

Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

RE: GM 503 Pertaining to Confirmation of Health & Human Services

I am writing in support of confirming Mr. Pankaj Bhanot for the position of Director of Human Services. He has been a dear friend to myself and my two sons and our extended family since 2007 when I was employed in the Benefits Employment and Support Services Division of the Department of Human Services.

During my two year employment in the capacity of Secretary of the Employment and Child Care Program, I have seen Mr. Bhanot create an exceptional team of specialists and clerical that worked collaboratively to accomplish the numerous projects that served the needy population of the State of Hawaii.

On a personal level he has exhibited unending support to everyone who he came into contact with. His knowledge and generosity was extended to my family in the manner of advice and support. He has a gift of bringing out the best in all and always expecting 110% effort, keeping focus on a better future. His generosity and energy and passion for creating a better world is contagious and has been the model for not only myself but also my two children.

Pankaj Bhanot is a valuable asset to the State of Hawaii and I have every confidence that he will accomplish great things for the residents of Hawaii through his passion, knowledge, exceptional work ethic and ability to bring people together to work for good. Thank you kindly.

Kathleen Fujimoto



HAWAI'I PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCATES

Hawaii Public Policy Advocates, LLC

1099 Alakea Street, Suite 2530
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Tel: (808) 447 1840
Email: info@hawaiipublicpolicy.com
Website: www.hawaiipublicpolicy.com

February 15, 2017
2:45 p.m.
GM 503 Pankaj Bhanot

Aloha Chair Green, Vice-Chair Chang and members of the Senate Human Services committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support to the nomination of Pankaj Bhanot to be Director of the Department of Human Services. I have known and worked with Pankaj for over 12 years, and I have always found him to be an honest and hard-working public servant.

In my dealings and conversations with Pankaj, I admired that he never gave up and always kept looking for a solution to a problem. It is this passion for the job and for making Hawai'i a better place for all, that I believe will make Pankaj an outstanding Director of the Department of Human Services, and I'm proud to submit this testimony today for such a fine individual.

Sincerely,

Stephen Teves
Chief Consultant
