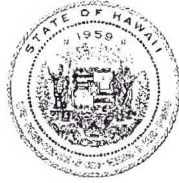


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



DOUGLAS S. CHIN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

RUSSELL A. SUZUKI
FIRST DEPUTY ATTORNEY
GENERAL

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
425 QUEEN STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 586 -1282

February 21, 2017

Attn: Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair and Committee Members
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Room 221
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: GM509 Keith Hiraoka Nomination for Circuit Court

Aloha, Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

The Department supports Governor Ige's nomination of Keith Hiraoka to serve as a circuit court judge in the first circuit.

Keith Hiraoka is one of the most experienced and well-regarded civil attorneys in the state today. Mr. Hiraoka has an excellent demeanor and is always respectful towards others. He will serve the State of Hawai'i well in this new capacity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doug Chin".

Doug Chin

From: [Fujimoto, Alan S.](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of the Appointment of Keith Hiraoka as First Circuit Judge
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 11:13:35 AM

From: Alan S. Fujimoto
Submitted on February 16, 2017

Testimony in Support of GM509 relating to the appointment of Keith Hiraoka as First Circuit Judge
Thursday, *February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.* in Conference Room 016 of the State Capitol

To: Members of the Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee

I support the appointment of Mr. Keith Hiraoka to the First Circuit Court.

I have known Mr. Hiraoka from the mid-eighties when we both started practicing law in the State of Hawaii. I have known Mr. Hiraoka to be an intelligent, fair-minded and caring individual in his legal activities. I also played softball with him on a City League slow-pitch softball team for several years, and he has shown a strong sense of teamwork to work towards team goals.

I am sure that all of these characteristics that make up this person will be strong assets as he becomes a First Circuit Judge, and I am sure that Mr. Hiraoka will render reasonable, fair and well thought-out decisions as a judge.

I urge you to support his appointment to the First Circuit Court.

Best Regards,

Alan S. Fujimoto

Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP LLP

First Hawaiian Center / Suite 1600 / 999 Bishop Street / Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
P. (808) 547-5631 / **F.** (808) 441-1228
E. afujimoto@goodsill.com
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From: [Alan L](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: In support of Mr. Keith Hiraoka for judgeship
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 11:48:43 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this email in support of Mr. Keith Hiraoka as Oahu Circuit Court Judge. I know Mr. Hiraoka for the past few years and I know he have the integrity to be fair and impartial and I truly believed he will serve well for the people in Hawaii.

Thank you very much,

Alan Leung

From: [Alan Van Etten](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 10:20:02 PM

Dear Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee:

This testimony is in support of the nomination of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court bench.

To give some basis for my position, I respectfully submit a little bit of background. I started my legal career by serving as a law clerk to the late William S. Richardson, when he was Chief Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court. I began practice in 1973, served my profession as President of the Hawaii State Bar Association in 1997, the as Bar Association Delegate to the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association, then Hawaii State Delegate to the ABA, for 9 years. I currently serve on the ABA Board of Governors of a 4-state district, including Hawaii.

I have known Keith for more than 20 years. We both began our careers as general litigators, he more on the defense side, I more on the plaintiffs side, and we both moved into litigation practices with focuses on insurance coverage and bad faith litigation. His practice approximates 50% , mine 90%, of that field.

I came to know him well by appearing on panels at seminars on Insurance litigation topics – he on the insurer side, I on the policyholder/plaintiff side. We did that for years.

In spite of the fact that we are on the opposing sides of the litigation spectrum, I have always admired his professionalism, intellectual acuity, generous and accepting nature (though able to be tough as nails when he needs to), and humble confidence.

My specific reasons for believing Keith will be an excellent Circuit Court Judge:

- Integrity – He possesses the highest integrity
- Diligence – He is always on time and has been a strong opponent in every case
- Legal Knowledge and Ability – At the highest level
- Professional Experience – He’s been a litigator for decades, which is excellent professional experience for a judge
- Judicial Temperament – Extremely even-tempered, even under pressure

In summary, based on my direct experience and knowledge of his reputation among his fellow attorneys, in my judgment he will be an excellent judge, fair to all sides, with excellent demeanor and very high knowledge of the law.

I respectfully submit this as my testimony.

Very Truly Yours,

Alan Van Etten

DEELEY KING PANG & VAN ETTEN
A Limited Liability Law Partnership



Pauahi Tower | 1003 Bishop Street, Suite 1550 | Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone - Direct : (808) 533-1754 | Telephone - Receptionist: (808) 533-1751

Cellphone: (808) 371-3765 | Direct Fax: (808) 369-8272 | Office Facsimile: (808) 599-2908

E-mail: ave@dkpvlaw.com | Website: www.dkpvlaw.com

February 17, 2017

Senator Gilbert SC Keith Agaran, Chairman
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Andrew (Andy) Miller, Citizen

Contact Number

Hearing Date: Thursday, February 23, 2017

Subject: Support GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka

I am a claims adjuster and have been handling litigated claims for over thirty-six years in the State of Hawaii. I have worked for several national insurance carriers over the years and have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Hiraoka for over Twenty-Five years.

I have retained Mr. Hiraoka as defense counsel and coverage counsel in my capacity as an adjuster. I have been impressed with his work product as our counsel and have found him to be very astute as a defense counsel and coverage counsel. His prompt evaluation and reporting h crucial in settling the cases he handled for me

While serving as my counsel over the years, Mr. Hiraoka on numerous occasions has brought to my attention potential conflicts of interest that may arise if he was to serve as my counsel. His honesty and integrity is beyond reproach and he has gained my trust and respect over the years.

In order to be on any insurance carrier's attorney approval list, you have to meet high standards of conduct. One of which is your professional competency and legal knowledge as an attorney. Mr. Hiraoka has exceeded those standards in my estimation.

Over the years, I have worked with several current judges while they were my counsels. One in particular is Judge Edwin Nacino, who also worked with Mr. Hironaka while working at the Roeca, Louie and Hiraoka law firm. Based on Mr. Hiraoka's credentials as an outstanding litigator, work ethic and trustworthiness, he would make an excellent judge and would be a tremendous asset to the Judiciary.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony to support GM509 – the appointment of Keith Hiraoka.

CHONG, NISHIMOTO, SIA, NAKAMURA & GOYA

ANN H. ARATANI
SAMANTHA M.Y. CHAN
ELAINE T. CHOW
ROBERT A. CHONG
STEPHEN G. DYER
PATRICIA T. FUJII
STEVEN L. GOTO
KENNETH T. GOYA
RYAN I. INOUE
GAIL M. KANG
RONALD T. MICHIOKA
GARY S. MIYAMOTO

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

1003 BISHOP STREET, SUITE 2500
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TELEPHONE (808) 537-6119
FAX (808) 526-3491

RICHARD F. NAKAMURA
JOHN S. NISHIMOTO
ZALE T. OKAZAKI
RONALD M. SHIGEKANE
JEFFREY H. K. SIA
PHILIP S. UESATO
MICHAEL J. VAN DYKE
J. THOMAS WEBER
DIANE W. WONG

Of Counsel: Gail M. Kang

RODNEY S. NISHIDA
(1949 – 2004)

February 15, 2017

Via Email Transmission Only

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawai`i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu Hawai`i 96813

RE: **GM509 Appointment Keith K. Hiraoka, Esq.**
Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai`i

Dear Senators Keith-Agaran and Rhoads:

This is to respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor confirm the appointment of gubernatorial nominee Keith K. Hiraoka as a Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai`i.

I first met Keith in the early 1980's when he began working at the law firm then known as Case, Kay & Lynch. During the past 29 years that I have been at my current law firm, I have had numerous cases with Keith's law firm Roeca Luria Hiraoka, LLP, fka Roeca Louie Hiraoka, LLP. Both of our law firms are defense civil litigation firms, and we often represent defendants in the same case or Keith represents my client's insurer in insurance coverage matters.

Keith is an exemplary example of a hard worker who rose to build a successful law firm. He graduated from Pearl City High School in 1976, and then graduated with distinction from the University of Hawai`i at Manoa in with a B.A. in Political Science in 1980. He also was inducted into the academic honor societies Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Beta Kappa. Keith subsequently attended one of the top law schools in the nation, Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California at Berkeley.

Upon graduating from Boalt in 1983, Keith immediately returned home to Hawai`i to practice law. In 1983, Keith was admitted to the Bar of the State of Hawai`i, the United States District Court for the District of Hawai`i, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. He has practiced in all Courts in the State of Hawai`i, and been recognized as among *The Best Lawyers in America* since 2011.

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
February 15, 2017
Page 2

Keith is highly respected among the litigation attorneys in Hawai'i as an attorney who is exceptionally intelligent and skilled in the analysis of complex legal issues. His legal practice has focused on the defense of attorneys, insurance representatives, accountants, and realtors. In addition, Keith is well known as an outstanding insurance coverage attorney, a subspecialty area of law involving detailed analysis of the language in commercial liability, professional liability, homeowners, auto, directors and officers, and excess liability policies. His diligent work ethic and quality law practice has made him a premier attorney in Hawai'i.

Apart from his legal practice, Keith has been active within the local community. As a father of two children, he was involved in their school and sports activities. Keith was a coach and referee for the American Youth Soccer Organization. In addition, he served the Hawai'i United Okinawa Association as the Chair of its Legal Defense Committee.

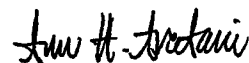
I can unequivocally attest that Keith is a person of integrity, who is honest and will not compromise his credibility or ethics for anyone or for any case. Keith also possesses the respectful demeanor necessary for a Circuit Court Judge. Litigation is inherently adversarial and can be stressful, but Keith always remains polite, calm, and rational.

Keith's 34 years of litigation experience will be invaluable as a Circuit Court Judge presiding over trials, holding hearings, rendering decisions, and conducting pretrial conferences and settlement conferences. Based upon my prior experience as a former Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for six years, I am confident that Keith also will be able to quickly master criminal law, if assigned to the criminal division. His strong sense of justice will be an asset in making rulings and imposing fair sentences.

Lastly, I note that despite our friendship over the years, Keith has never solicited a campaign donation for Governor David Y. Ige from me. I do not view Keith as a person with political motivations, but rather a supporter of his boyhood friend. Keith would not compromise any ruling as a Circuit Court Judge due to politics, and will fairly uphold the laws and the Constitutions of Hawai'i and of the United States.

The State of Hawai'i will be fortunate to have an attorney of Keith's caliber serving as a Circuit Court Judge. I respectfully request that the Senate confirm Keith's appointment to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. Thank you.

Very truly yours,



Ann H. Aratani

From: [Barbara Bledsoe](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Cc: [Barry Shain](#)
Subject: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 1:49:51 PM

To whom it may concern:

This is a task that is a pleasure for me. I do not know Keith Hiraoka as a lawyer or professionally in anyway.

My knowledge of Mr. Hiraoka comes as a friend and community volunteer. When you volunteer long hours with someone you view them from many different angles.

As a family man he makes me jealous. He has a great relationship with his wife Lisa. They are a true team who face the world side by side taking the good, the bad and all situations together. As a father he is superb and his two children appear to adore him. Even their dog Lucy (a rescue) has a special relationship with Keith.

As a community volunteer he is an outstanding role model. I have viewed him chair meetings that sometimes were contentious, but Keith was able to control them and in most cases the committee made a reasonable decision with most volunteers around the table at least accepting the group decision. One thing that stood out for me, is that when there was a meeting Keith was there early helping to set up tables and chairs and the rest that goes into preparing for a gathering. He won everyone's respect. He leads by example and deed, not with empty words.

As a friend I cannot say too much. I am a member of small ethnic/religious minority in Hawaii. He spent time learning about it, went out of his way to find out my special religious dietary needs and truly drilled down to find out who and what I was. There is an expression in my religion "that if you cannot shake a person's hand then you cannot do business with someone." Keith has unquestionable ethics, respect, and truly tries to do the right and correct thing. I would have no problem shaking his hand.

In conclusion, I would recommend Mr. Hiraoka for the position. He is fair, listens to all and is just a special person.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barry L. Shain
President and CEO

The Shain Group, Inc.

Testimony of Bert Sakuda
In SUPPORT of
Nominee KEITH HIRAOKA to
The Circuit Court of the First Circuit

Date: Thursday, February 23, 2017
Time: 9:30 am
Conference Room: 016

Chairman Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I am an attorney with a substantial practice involving insurance law. I have been involved in numerous claims with Keith Hiraoka beginning in the 1980s through the present in both the State and Federal courts. These have included cases litigated through the State Supreme Court and the Federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. I have personal knowledge of Keith's professional competence, integrity and personality based on 30+ years of working with him – usually as opposing counsel.

Keith Hiraoka has established a reputation as one of the leading lawyers in Hawaii in the areas of civil litigation and insurance disputes. My experience working with him has been that Keith practices with the highest level of legal knowledge and competence. I have no reservation in saying that he is one of the best in our field. Other lawyers and judges agree as reflected in Keith's award of the coveted recognition in the Best Lawyers in America and the Martindale AV rating. Only about 5-7% of lawyers attain these top recognitions – these peer review ratings are difficult to obtain and cannot be bought through purchase of memberships like some other “recognitions” or “certifications.”

What most distinguishes Keith and makes him especially suited for judicial service is his temperament and sense of fairness. We lawyers are trained to be vigorous advocates, which in many instances, results in what can be perceived as an “attack dog” mentality. This may serve us well in litigation but is hardly the model for a circuit court judge. Keith has a down to earth, calm and balanced demeanor that will enhance his effectiveness as a judge in assuring all parties that he has fairly and objectively considered everyone's concerns. This is how he has been as a lawyer for as long as I have known him.

Keith Hiraoka's combination of professional competence, calm demeanor, and sense of fairness makes him an excellent selection for the Circuit Court.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of Keith Hiraoka's nomination to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. Please feel free to call me should there be any questions.

From: [Charles Ferrera](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: [Chuck Ferrera](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 11:29:43 AM

Charles J. Ferrera
Attorney at Law

From: Charles J. Ferrera
Submitted on February 16, 2017
Testimony in support of: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Submitted to:
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
NOTICE OF HEARING
DATE: Thursday, February 23, 2017
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 016
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Dear Senators Keith-Agaran and Rhoads:

I am writing in support of the appointment of Keith Hiraoka as a Circuit Court Judge for the First Circuit.

I have known Keith since approximately 1986. I have handled a number of cases in which he was opposing counsel and have gotten to know him professionally, though I have no personal relationship with him. I have found Keith to be ethically impeccable, very conscientious and of the highest intelligence and ability. His legal analysis is excellent and he will be a great asset to the community as a circuit court judge. I have been practicing law in Hawaii for over 35 years and I have gotten to know a lot of lawyers and judges. I think Keith has the intelligence and temperament to be an excellent judge. Keith is thoughtful and humble and very articulate.

Thank you,
Charles J. Ferrera

From: [Charles Price](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 9:06:25 AM

Dear Committee Members:

This testimony is in support of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor confirming Keith Hiraoka's appointment to serve as a judge to the First Circuit Court. I have known Keith for approximately 12 years. Our interaction has been through our children's sports or as an opposing counsel in a couple of cases. Keith always makes an effort when seeing me in town to stop and ask about how my family is doing. He is warm, kind-hearted, humble, and family-oriented. As an attorney, he is knowledgeable, experienced, and responsive. He is a good communicator, both orally and in writing. He has the right disposition to be an effective judge. He'd be open and willing to listen to all sides on an issue while also commanding his courtroom and being decisive. He has extensive litigation experience and will be able to efficiently handle many different types of lawyers, parties, and cases. He has a reputation of being a smart, ethical, hardworking, honest lawyer who cares about his clients, is civil with opposing counsel, and does good work. For these reasons, he will make an excellent judge and the Committee is respectfully urged to confirm his appointment.

Charlie Price

Charles A. Price, Esq.
Koshiba Price Gruebner & Mau

From: [Charlotte Mukai](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 12:08:28 AM

Charlotte Mukai
3512 Akaka Place
Honolulu, HI 96822

Submitted on: February 22, 2017

Testimony in support of GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka, on February 23, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. Judiciary and Labor Committee In Conference Room 016 of the State Capitol.

Chairman Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee,

I support the confirmation of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii. The Hawaii Bar Association nominated him for consideration by the Governor and the Governor has selected him as one of his nominees for confirmation.

Mr. Hiraoka has always been respectful and fair in my dealings with him. I believe he will be an excellent judge and rule fairly and evenly from the bench if confirmed.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Mukai

Sent from my Macbook Air

Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks

Attorneys at Law, A Law Corporation

Paul F. Cronin
L. Richard Fried, Jr.
Gerald Y. Sekiya
Wayne K. Kekina
David L. Fairbanks
John D. Thomas, Jr.
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Patrick F. McTernan
Geoffrey K. S. Komeya
Sylvia J. Luke
Denise K. H. Kawatachi
Howard G. McPherson
Brian T. Toma
Gregory Y. P. Tom
Deborah A. Johnson

February 21, 2017

VIA EMAIL: JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

GM 509

Hearing: February 23, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: GM 509 Support for Keith K. Hiraoka for Judge of the
Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran and Senator Rhoads:

I am writing in support of Keith K. Hiraoka for the position of Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I am a partner in the law firm of Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks and have known Mr. Hiraoka on a professional level since he was admitted to practice in Hawaii in 1983. He is very intelligent, has developed excellent legal skills and is not afraid of hard work. Mr. Hiraoka is fair, a good listener, and very respectful of other people, which are very important qualities for a good judicial temperament and a good jurist. While Mr. Hiraoka has been an excellent advocate as an attorney in private practice, his extensive trial and litigation experience and innate fairness, civility and respect for others will make the transition to a jurist relatively easy and smooth.

In my opinion, he has all of the qualities, characteristics and legal ability to be an excellent judge and will be a credit to the judiciary.

If you have any questions, or if I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

David L. Fairbanks

DLF:saa

From: [David Lo](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Sunday, February 19, 2017 11:15:29 AM

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Chair, Judiciary and Labor Committee
Hawaii State Legislature

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran:

This is Judge David W. Lo (retired) submitting support for your committee's confirmation of Governor Ige's appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court bench.

I have known Keith for nearly thirty years, having had similar types of law practices, located in the same office building tower. We handled cases both with and against each other's clients. In all of my dealings, I consistently found Keith to display utmost professionalism, fair and respectful to other's positions, honest and even keeled. He is personable, caring, and friendly to all. He is intelligent, innovative, and keeps abreast with the ever changing laws.

Since my appointment to the District Court bench in 2000, I have been in charge of training per diem judges, as well as served as a mentor to newly appointed full time judges. Through this experience, I developed a sense as to which judge would mature and become a good jurist - those willing to be taught, flexible in their positions, firm yet fair in controlling the courtroom and calendar, willing and not afraid to make hard decisions, having had courtroom trial experience as a lawyer, and displaying a good temperament.

Knowing Keith from my many dealings with him, I can unequivocally say that he possesses these attributes to make a very good jurist. As such, I urge your committee's prompt confirmation of his appointment - he is ready to serve!

Thank you for your consideration and confirmation of this

extremely qualified candidate, who will be an asset to the Judiciary and State of Hawaii.

If there are any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

TESTIMONY OF DIANE K. TAIRA
IN SUPPORT OF GM 509
REGARDING THE NOMINATION OF
KEITH HIRAOKA
TO THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT
STATE OF HAWAII
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
Thursday, February 23, 2017
9:30 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 016

It is with honor and much pleasure that I submit this testimony in support of the nomination of Keith Hiraoka to the bench of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

Keith Hiraoka is a man of integrity, intelligence, and humility. He is fair minded, quick witted, and always with a positive attitude. His more than 30 years of successful trial and appellate practice has prepared him well to preside as an experienced, knowledgeable and fair judge. Mr. Hiraoka has to his credit published articles, served as a guest lecturer and has been a leader in bar association activities. He was the chair for the Hawai'i Bar Association's Insurance Coverage and Litigation section from 2009 to 2011. Among his many accolades, Mr. Hiraoka is listed by the Best Lawyers in America, has a Martindale Hubbel rating of AV Preeminent, the rating of "Super Lawyer" by the Super Lawyers rating service, and a rating as one of our Best Lawyers by Honolulu Magazine.

Importantly, Mr. Hiraoka is dedicated to any effort to which he pledges his support, and I know that he will be a great asset to the Judiciary and to the bar.

Most importantly, I know Keith Hiraoka as a dedicated husband and father whose family must be very proud.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM509 on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 2:32:02 PM

GM509

Submitted on: 2/16/2017

Testimony for JDL on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eden Hifo	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please accept this testimony supporting Senate confirmation of Keith Hiraoka for a First Circuit Court judgeship. He is an excellent attorney who can analyze and explain complicated business, contract and insurance issues including coverage plus has solid understanding of the law regarding underlying claims asserted. He always has been collegial, clear, practical and humble when appearing in court and/or during mediations. I have known Keith Hiraoka professionally for many years and believe he will be an excellent trial judge. I respectfully urge your confirmation of his appointment to the First Circuit Court. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. (My absence at his hearing is caused by a prior commitment which I cannot cancel.)

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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM509 on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM
Date: Monday, February 20, 2017 9:33:42 AM

GM509

Submitted on: 2/20/2017

Testimony for JDL on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edmund "Fred" Hyun	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I stand in strong support of Keith Hiraoka for Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit. My personal knowledge of Mr. Hiraoka is that he is a honest person of the highest integrity and moral values. He is diligent and detailed and will make an excellent judge. Before my retirement in 2003, I had the opportunity to work with numerous judges at the District and Circuit Courts. I am very familiar with qualities and capabilities needed to be an excellent judge. Mr. Hiraoka possesses the experience and temperament to be an outstanding judge. Mahalo.

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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM509 on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 6:00:17 PM

GM509

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for JDL on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Kent	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I write in support of the nomination of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court bench. I am sure he will be an asset to the Judiciary and that he will be a very good judge.

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

From: [eric seitz](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 9:48:04 AM

Chair and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I rarely express my views or become involved in confirmation or other legislative matters; however, I have known Keith Hiraoka for as long as he has been practicing law in Hawaii, and I am honored to commend him to you. Keith and I have been on the same and on opposite sides of litigation, and he has served as a hearing officer in one of my cases. He also has represented me on at least one occasion. I also know Keith as a musician, a soccer official, and as the Governor's friend and campaign manager. In all of those roles Keith has performed admirably and with great integrity. In my personal and professional opinion he will be an outstanding judge and a highly respected and valued addition to the First Circuit Court.

I encourage you to approve the nomination of Keith Hiraoka and to recommend his approval by the full Senate. I will be happy to provide any additional information that may assist you.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eric A. Seitz

From: [Cosgrove, Gail Y.](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc: "[Gail Cosgrove](#)"; [Cosgrove, Gail Y.](#); [Freshour, Bonnie A.](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 4:45:08 PM

My name is Gail Cosgrove. I am a partner in the law firm of Goodsill Anderson Quinn and Stifel. I have been practicing law in Hawaii for more than 35 years (I was admitted to bar in 1981). Most of my practice relates to defending hospitals and healthcare providers in medical malpractice litigation. I am also on the clinical faculty of the William S. Richardson School of Law where I teach Pretrial Litigation to second and third years law students. I am an appointed member to the Judicial Arbitration Commission, which oversees the Court Annexed Arbitration Program (CAAP). I was recently appointed by the US District Court, for the District of Hawaii, to a three-year term as a lawyer delegate to the USDC; my selection was based on all attorneys appearing before the Federal Court and made by the Hawaii federal court judges. I am also a regular speaker on trial practice and legal ethics to members of the Hawaii State Bar Association. I have been recognized by Super Lawyers and Best Lawyers for the legal work I have done.

I have known Keith Hiraoka for a very long time and would estimate it's been over two decades! My professional involvement with Keith has been in cases where insurance coverage issues have arisen. Keith is truly an expert in this area of practice. I have always found that he was very prepared and had a solid understanding of the issues and the law. His clients were always well represented. Keith also has a great personality; he is always professional and cordial, with a pleasant sense of humor. I know he will be a great asset to the Hawaii judiciary. I feel that the Circuit Court bench, particularly on the civil litigation side, needs a judge like Keith with all of the experience he will bring from private practice and his civil litigation practice.

It is with great enthusiasm that I support Keith's nomination as a Circuit Court judge.

I am available for further information or testimony as needed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gail Cosgrove
Partner
Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel

Sent with Good (www.good.com)

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TESTIMONY OF GARY Y. OKUDA

**In Support of GM509 - Gubernatorial Nominee KEITH HIRAOKA
Submitted for consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court
of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii,**

I have known Keith Hiraoka for about 30 years, almost since the time we were licensed to practice law by the State of Hawaii. Keith was licensed in 1983; I was licensed in 1981.

Hawaii is fortunate that Keith is willing to serve the community as a judge.

I personally know his character and abilities. I have had cases with Keith representing clients opposing mine and other cases where his clients' interests aligned with my clients.

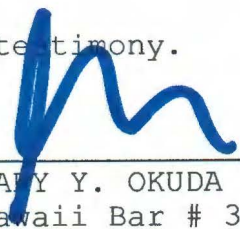
In all cases, Keith has demonstrated he is smart, honest and hard working. He follows strictly the law as enacted by the legislature.

Keith is an experienced trial attorney. He has a quick intelligence and can master whatever legal subject he is presented. He will bring his decades of experience as a trial attorney to insure that cases are litigated and resolved efficiently but always respecting the rights of every person appearing in his court.

Keith spent his adult life building the law practice now known as Roeca Luria Hiraoka. For an attorney to be willing to leave the firm he built to serve the public is commendable. But that's the type of person that is Keith Hiraoka.

I strongly endorse and support Keith Hiraoka's nomination to serve the people of Hawaii as a Circuit Judge.

Thank you for considering this testimony.



GARY Y. OKUDA
Hawaii Bar # 3013

February 22, 2017

SanHi Government Strategies

a limited liability law partnership

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

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DATE: February 22, 2017

TO: Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran
Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Submitted Via Capitol Website

RE: **GM 509 – Confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, Keith Hiraoka**
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room: 016

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I am Gary Slovin and I submit this testimony in **strong support** of the nomination of Keith Hiraoka as Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I have known Keith since 1981 when he worked at the Office of the Corporation Counsel for the City. Keith immediately stood out as a young lawyer who was diligent, conscientious, a good researcher, presented well orally and in writing and was possessed of a wonderful temperament. I have had the good fortune of being in touch with Keith professionally from that time to the present and he still possesses those skills. Those character traits made Keith a good and successful private lawyer and they are qualities that will hold him in good stead as a judge as well.

In addition to being a very good trial lawyer, Keith also works well with others. He is a terrific person, easy to get along with and to trust. He is a good listener and doesn't come across as someone who thinks he has all the answers. These qualities go to what I feel to be a temperament particularly well suited to his being a successful judge where patience is a critical virtue.

While we have an excellent judiciary, it is a brutal reality of our times that it is difficult to attract our best private lawyers to the bench. Whatever the reasons it is a benefit

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

Page 2

to everyone, most assuredly our residents, to have judges with extensive private practice experience. It is because Keith does have that background, that combines well with his many other strong qualities, that I so strongly endorse his nomination to be a circuit court judge.

Therefore, and accordingly, I strongly and without reservation ask your support and confirmation of Keith as Judge of the State of Hawaii First Circuit Court.

Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks
Attorneys at Law, A Law Corporation

Paul F. Cronin
L. Richard Fried, Jr.
Gerald Y. Sekiya
Wayne K. Kekina
David L. Fairbanks
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Howard G. McPherson
Brian T. Toma
Gregory Y. P. Tom
Deborah A. Johnson

February 16, 2017

VIA EMAIL: JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

Ref: GM 509

Hearing: February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair,
The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, and Members
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: GM 509 -KEITH K. HIRAOKA for Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit,
State of Hawaii - IN SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

I write in SUPPORT of the confirmation of Keith K. Hiraoka for the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I am a partner in the law firm of Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina and Fairbanks, and I have been licensed to practice law since 1993.

I have known Mr. Hiraoka for over twenty years and litigated several cases where we represented adverse parties. He has consistently impressed me with his intelligence, breadth of legal knowledge and experience, and calm and thoughtful demeanor. He is a consummate professional attorney who represents his clients with vigor and principle but always with the utmost civility. His personality and deportment are ideally suited for judicial office, where he will be the interface between our judicial system and the public.

Mr. Hiraoka is also dedicated to public service and education, as the wide scope of his civic and educational activities attest. I have also known him to be a devoted and loyal family man who expertly balances his work and home life without detriment to either.

I wholeheartedly believe that Mr. Hiraoka possesses all of the necessary skills and characteristics to be an outstanding Judge, will be an excellent addition to our esteemed

Senator Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, and Members
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
February 17, 2017
Page 2 of 2

Judiciary, and I can recommend his confirmation without reservation. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of the confirmation of Keith K. Hiraoka as a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. K. Komeya', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Geoffrey K. S. Komeya

GKSK:ant

LYONS, BRANDT, COOK & HIRAMATSU

GEORGE W. BRANDT
THOMAS E. COOK
JEFFREY A. BRISWOLD
BRADFORD F.K. BLISS
STEVEN Y. OTAGURO
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OF COUNSEL
SAMUEL A. B. LYONS
BEVERLY LYNNE K. HIRAMATSU
JAMES N. DUCA

February 17, 2017

VIA FACSIMILE (808) 586-7348

Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee

Re: Testimony In Support of GM509 re the Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m., Senate Judiciary
and Labor Committee, Conference Room 016

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

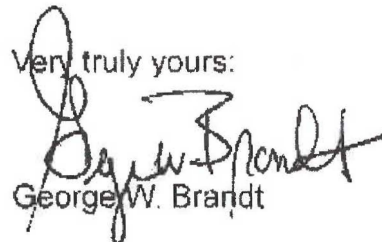
I am submitting this testimony in support of GM509 which submits the appointment of Keith Hiraoka as a Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, for the consent of the Senate.

I have been a licensed attorney in the State of Hawaii for 45 years. For many years my practice was primarily a civil trial practice and I had numerous dealings with Mr. Hiraoka. Mr. Hiraoka represented clients adverse to my clients as well as clients who were aligned with the interests of my clients. In my dealings with Mr. Hiraoka, I found him to be a hard worker, intelligent, competent and trustworthy. As a fair and reasonable person, Mr. Hiraoka, has a temperament that will give all parties and advocates their day in court.

Keith Hiraoka will be an outstanding Circuit Court Judge and the people of Hawaii are fortunate to have such an able and qualified attorney willing to serve as a Circuit Court Judge.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours:


George W. Brandt

Law Offices of Greg H. Takase

Suite 1010 Bishop Street Tower • 700 Bishop Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Telephone (808) 536-8885 • Facsimile (808) 536-8845
Email: greg@tanakalegal.com

February 21, 2017

VIA FACSIMILE (808-586-7348)

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: In the Matter of the Confirmation of Keith Hiraoka
Judge, Circuit Court of the First Circuit, GM 509

Hearing: February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran:

This letter is written in support of Keith Hiraoka, Esq.

I have known Mr. Hiraoka for a number of years and have litigated several cases where he represented one of the parties to the matter. Mr. Hiraoka is well-respected for his knowledge and expertise in insurance law and as a civil litigator. In my dealings with Mr. Hiraoka, he has always been professional, respectful and honest. I believe he possesses a sharp intellect and even-keeled demeanor that will make him an ideal circuit court judge.

If you should have any questions regarding Mr. Hiraoka, please feel free to contact me at 808-536-8885 or e-mail me at greg@tanakalegal.com.

Very truly yours,



Greg H. Takase

JAMES P. DANDAR
Attorney at Law, A Law Corporation

1900 Bishop Street Tower
Topa Financial Center
700 Bishop Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Telephone: (808) 532-0901
Telecopier: (808) 532-0909

February 21, 2017

Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Esq.
Chairman of the Judiciary and
Labor Committee
Senate of the State of Hawaii
415 South Beretania
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Testimony in support of GM509 appointment of
Keith Hiraoka

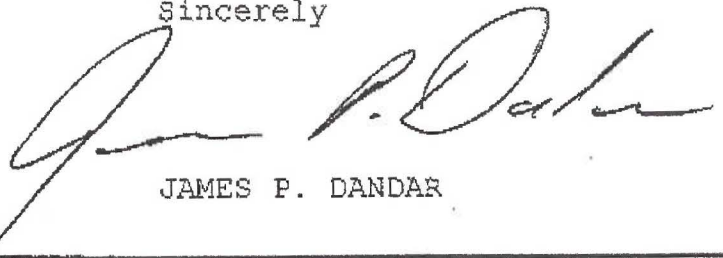
Mr. Chairman and Members:

I fully, completely and without any hesitation support and endorse the appointment of Keith K. Hiraoka to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

In my 43 year career as a trial attorney few of the attorneys with whom I have dealt have had the knowledge, professional acumen and civility possessed by Mr. Hiraoka. His passion to learn and do more; and to do the right and fair thing lead me to opine that Keith will be an asset and credit to the Judiciary and will never do the wrong thing nor decide contrary to the law. Furthermore, he will never embarrass the Judiciary or the State of Hawaii by his acts, conduct, behavior or his rulings.

I fully support the appointment of Keith K. Hiraoka,
Esq.

Sincerely



JAMES P. DANDAR

TESTIMONY BY JAMES KUMAGAI PhD, PE (retired)
GM 509. CONFIRMATION OF KEITH HIRAOKA, FIRST CIRCUIT COURT.
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

Aloha,
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Members of the committee

I support the confirmation of Keith Hiraoka to the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii. He is a caring and giving person, and has demonstrated citizenship by his actions and conduct in the community. He has earned the opportunity to serve a higher calling of public trust.

Keith has shown early in his life that he cares. He has been an active participant in school activities: volunteering, helping others, giving, leading by example. Much to my surprise many years ago in the campaign for re-election of George Ariyoshi for governor, he started showing up unsolicited as a teenager in the early morning hours holding signs, canvassing, and helping the grassroots workers in an upbeat way.

Years later, Pearl City was one of three districts that recalled its city councilman and forced re-election of a replacement. The then Representative Arnold Morgado resigned to run for the City Council seat. As the Chair of the Democratic Party it was my role to recommend names to the governor for filling the vacancy. After consulting district members, and approaching Keith Hiraoka as a potential nominee, he absolutely declined consideration and strongly recommended David Ige instead to fill the vacancy. I submitted David Ige's name to the Governor. The rest is history.

After 29 years, Keith Hiraoka and his friends were advocating the candidacy of Senator Ige for governor. A long shot, I said. It didn't matter at all. They believed. Gave their all, and made a difference.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that Keith Hiraoka will be a credit to the judiciary of the State of Hawaii and will serve the best interest of our community and our society.

Respectfully,



James Kumagai, PhD, PE (retired)

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM509 on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM
Date: Monday, February 20, 2017 8:52:37 AM

GM509

Submitted on: 2/20/2017

Testimony for JDL on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Bickel	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I have known Mr. Hiraoka mostly through his help with programs at 'Iolani school. I have known him to be one of the most honest, fair, and hard-working people I have met. Please give him your favorable consideration.

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

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Howard G. McPherson
Brian T. Toma
Gregory Y. P. Tom
Deborah A. Johnson

February 21, 2017

VIA FACSIMILE 586-7348

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Chairperson
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Room 201
Hawaii State Senate
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: Testimony in Support of the Appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the
First Circuit GM 509, February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.**

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

I write in support of the confirmation of Keith K. Hiraoka for the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I am a partner in the law firm of Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina and Fairbanks, and I have been licensed to practice law since 1973.

I have interacted with Keith Hiraoka for over thirty years in a variety of circumstances, including as legal opponents.

I have found Mr. Hiraoka to demonstrate the highest principles of legal competence: integrity, knowledge, preparation, commitment, passion, civility and a willingness to consider the merits of each parties' position. These qualities attest that Mr. Hiraoka will be an excellent jurist and a welcome addition to the First Circuit Court.

I endorse his confirmation without reservation. Thank you for this opportunity to write in support of the confirmation of Keith K. Hiraoka as a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,


John D. Thomas, Jr.

JDT:dtk

From: [Joyce Wang](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 11:35:54 AM

Dear Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee:

I have known Keith Hiraoka professionally for about five years. We have served together as co-counsel, and are both active members of the Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel. In all my dealings with Keith, I have found him to be of the highest caliber, civic-minded, and extremely pleasant. He is an outstanding attorney, has an even temperament and would make an excellent judge. I highly recommend him for appointment to the First Circuit Court.

Thank you.

Joyce C. Wang*

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415 391 8737 (direct)
jwang@ccplaw.com

**Admitted in California and Hawaii*

ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATION: If you are not a client of Carlson, Calladine & Peterson LLP, or one specifically authorized to receive this electronic mail by a client of this firm, you may not read, copy, use, or distribute this privileged attorney-client communication. If you received this e-mail in error, please immediately delete this e-mail and its attachments from your work-station and from all e-mail servers then reply to the sender or contact the firm at (415) 391-3911.

From: [K. Ahn](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Monday, February 20, 2017 5:33:46 AM

From: Karen S.S. Ahn
Submitted on: February 19, 2017

May I respectfully convey to you my support for the confirmation of Keith Hiraoka as judge for the 11th Division.

This is my former division, one through which I hope that I contributed to the betterment of as many lives as possible and to our community's well-being. I am fully confident that Mr. Hiraoka will work hard and use his legal abilities and prudent judgment to make sure that Hawaii remains the fair, just, and unique place that it is.

I worked for the law firm of Roeca Louie and Hiraoka before I took the bench and, based upon my observations at that firm, am confident that Mr. Hiraoka has the work ethic, pride of work, balanced judgment, and legal abilities, all so important to being an outstanding judge, to do very well on the bench, whether he serves on the criminal or civil calendar.

Thank you for your consideration and, should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks
Attorneys at Law, A Law Corporation

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L. Richard Fried, Jr.
Gerald Y. Sekiya
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February 21, 2017

VIA FAX 586-7348

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Chairperson
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Room 201
Hawaii State Senate
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

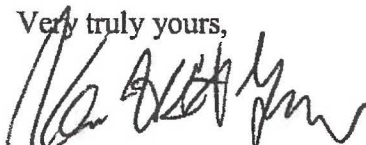
RE: Testimony in Support of the Appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the First Circuit
GM 509, February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran and Senators of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I am writing in support of the confirmation of Keith Hiraoka to the First Circuit Court of the State of Hawaii. I have known Keith and battled against him on many cases over the span of 3 decades. I have always found him to be well prepared, diligent, passionate, and competent. Yet he has always been open and receptive to other points of view. Keith will be an excellent addition to our First Circuit Court. He has my highest recommendation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Keith K.H. Young

KKHY:dct



KOBAYASHI SUGITA & GODA, LLP
Attorneys at Law

Bert T. Kobayashi, Jr.*
Alan M. Goda*

John R. Aube*
Wendell H. Fuji*
Charles W. Gall*
Neal T. Gota
Clifford K. Higa*
Robert K. Ichikawa*
Christopher T. Kobayashi*
Jan M. L. Y. Kutsunai*

David M. Louie*
Jonathan S. Moore
Bruce A. Nakamura*
Kenneth M. Nakasone*
Gregory M. Sato*
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Aaron Mun
Gabriele V. Provenza
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Anthony Suetsugu
Brian D. Tongg
Maria Y.Y. Wang

Of Counsel:
Kenneth Y. Sugita*
Jonathan A. Kobayashi
Burt T. Lau*
John F. Lezak*
Larry L. Myers*

February 22, 2017

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 016
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka to Circuit Court
Judge –STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and Vice Chair Rhoads:

I submit this testimony in strong support of Keith K. Hiraoka for the position of Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I am the former Attorney General of the State of Hawaii, having served under Governor Neil Abercrombie. I have been a practicing lawyer for the past 38 years, since 1978. I have served as the President of the Hawaii State Bar Association, a Lawyer Representative for the U.S. Court of Appeals of the Ninth Circuit, Vice Chair of the Hawaii Supreme Court Rule 19 Committed on Judicial Performance, Chair of the Aloha Tower Development Corporation, and in numerous Bench Bar Committees. I have appeared in court many, many times, both in Circuit Court and District Court. I have observed many judges and many lawyers.

I strongly recommend that you confirm Mr. Hiraoka for this position. I have known Mr. Hiraoka for 35 years, professionally, in business, and socially. He and I were partners at the law firm of Roeca Luria Hiraoka, LLP. He initially joined the firm as an associate in 1988 when we founded the firm. I have worked closely with Mr. Hiraoka on numerous cases and in the management of our law firm. I have watched him in court and with other lawyers, and in interaction with other lawyers and staff in my former law firm. I know his wife and children, and we have many mutual friends and acquaintances.

Mr. Hiraoka is an excellent lawyer and would be an outstanding Judge. First, he has exceptional intelligence and knowledge of the law, both substantively and procedurally. He has handled numerous cases that have gone to trial and gone up on appeal. He has represented parties that have dealt with many cutting edge insurance issues in the state of Hawaii and

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
February 22, 2017
Page 2

contributed significantly to the body of appellate law regarding insurance in Hawaii. He understands law and policy from a practical experiential perspective. Thus he has the intelligence, legal knowledge and experience to be a terrific judge.

Second, Mr. Hiraoka has the temperament, demeanor and calmness needed to succeed as a judge. He is fair, well balanced and unfailingly polite. He is able to listen to all sides before making a decision in order to obtain all viewpoints and perspectives. He is dispassionate and analytical, but he also understands the human dimensions of the cases that lawyers handle. He is empathic and able to understand the motivations and pressures that underlie the actions of people.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, Mr. Hiraoka is a man of great character and integrity. He is honest to a fault. He will not hesitate to do the right thing or honor his word, even if it means that the result may not be as advantageous to his client. He believes that the law must be fair and justice must be done, based upon the facts and the law.

Mr. Hiraoka will be a tremendous asset to the bench and a credit to the Judiciary. He is hard working, diligent, and unflagging in his enthusiasm and passion to get the right answer and see that justice is done.

I strongly recommend Mr. Hiraoka for this position and highly recommend that you confirm him.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David M. Louie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DAVID M. LOUIE

for

KOBAYASHI, SUGITA & GODA

Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks
Attorneys at Law, A Law Corporation

Paul F. Cronin
L. Richard Fried, Jr.
Gerald Y. Sekiya
Wayne K. Kekina
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Sylvia J. Luke
Denise K. H. Kawatachi
Howard G. McPherson
Brian T. Toma
Gregory Y. P. Tom
Deborah A. Johnson

February 21, 2017

VIA FAX: 808-586-7348

Ref: GM 509

Hearing: February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair,
The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, and Members
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: GM 509 – KEITH K. HIRAOKA for Judge of the Circuit Court of the
First Circuit, State of Hawaii – IN SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

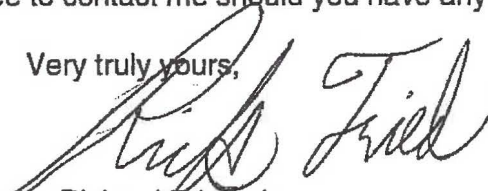
I write in SUPPORT of the confirmation of Keith K. Hiraoka for the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I am a partner in the law firm of Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina and Fairbanks, and I have been licensed to practice law since 1968.

I have known Keith Hiraoka for over twenty years and litigated several cases where we were adversaries. He always exhibited competence, legal knowledge and experience, and considerate demeanor. He is a very professional attorney who represents his clients with vigor and principle but always with the utmost professionalism and civility. His temperament is ideally suited for judicial office.

Mr. Hiraoka is dedicated to public service and education. He is a devoted family man who is able to manage his time well.

I support and recommend his confirmation without reservation. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of the confirmation of Keith K. Hiraoka as a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



L. Richard Fried, Jr.

LRF:lo

From: [Lance Fujisaki](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 9:01:41 AM

Re: Testimony in Support of GM 509
"Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee Keith Hiraoka, for a term to expire in 10 years"
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 016 State Capitol

Aloha Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I support the nomination of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court bench. I have practiced law in Hawai'i since my admission to the bar in 1986. I have known Mr. Hiraoka for over 30 years and have at various times worked closely with him on litigated cases. I am currently working with him on four pending actions in which we represent the same or related clients. My relationship with Mr. Hiraoka has been purely professional and not social or personal. I am personally knowledgeable about his qualifications to serve on the Circuit Court bench.

I can attest that Mr. Hiraoka has consistently performed at the highest level of professional competence, legal ability, integrity, fairness, compassion and diligence. Based upon his many years of practice as a trial lawyer, Mr. Hiraoka is capable of handling complex legal issues and is an effective problem solver. Other attorneys in my firm and I have from time to time referred cases to Mr. Hiraoka, which shows how much confidence we have in him. In my opinion, the State of Hawai'i will greatly benefit from the appointment of Mr. Hiraoka to the Circuit Court bench.

Mahalo,

Lance S. Fujisaki

Anderson Lahne & Fujisaki LLP
A Limited Liability Law Partnership

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Thank you.

From: [Larry Tong](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 4:58:12 PM

To the members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I urge you to confirm the nomination of Keith K. Hiraoka as a judge of the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii.

I first met Mr. Hiraoka in 1980, when we attended law school together. Over the last 35 years, I have had various professional and personal contacts with him. On the professional level, Mr. Hiraoka has distinguished himself as an ethical, talented civil litigator specializing in insurance and professional malpractice matters. He has extensive experience in handling all aspects of civil cases, including discovery, arbitration and trial matters. Mr. Hiraoka quickly identifies the critical issues in any dispute, and advocates forcefully for his clients. More important, he abides by all applicable rules, and conducts himself in a highly ethical manner. Mr. Hiraoka has earned a reputation as an outstanding lawyer who embodies the best of our profession.

Mr. Hiraoka also has a temperament that will serve him well as a judge. He is understated, thoughtful and considerate. He is able to advocate positions without making personal attacks. He will carefully listen to the attorneys and parties before him, and make well-reasoned judgments. He will preside over cases in a fair and impartial manner, and be a credit to our judiciary.

On a personal level, Mr. Hiraoka is a thoughtful man who is devoted to friends and family. He has outside interests, including playing in a band. He is very much a humble person who cares about others on a personal level.

Mr. Hiraoka is a skilled lawyer qualified to be a judge. More importantly, he is a fine man who would maintain humility even while exercising great authority. I urge that you confirm him. I am required to note that these are my personal opinions, and not those of my employer, which as a matter of policy does not support or oppose nominations.

Larry Tong

February 17, 2017

Senator Gilbert SC Keith Agaron, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Lee Miller, Citizen

Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2017

Support for GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka

I am a private citizen that supports the appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the First Circuit Court. It is my sincere belief that Keith Hiraoka possesses the temperament, demeanor, integrity, honesty and trustworthiness to sit as a judge on the First Circuit Court.

My experience and knowledge of Keith Hiraoka's personal qualities stem from my observations and relationship with him as a former board member of Hawaii Youth Soccer Association. I was on the board as a representative for my soccer club and had the pleasure of working with Keith. Yes, I am a soccer mom. He was a youth soccer referee for several seasons. He had to deal with overenthusiastic coaches, parents that lack knowledge of the game but are relentless in supporting their teams and a host of weekend challenges.

Keith knows soccer rules and regulations, but never was condescending in his officiating. His knowledge, confidence and knowledge of the rules made him one of best referees on the field. He never lost his cool with wrong-headed soccer fans and kept coming back weekend after weekend to encourage youth soccer programs to grow and prosper. What people fail to realize is that you can have soccer teams, soccer fields, coaches and parents, but a big part of what makes the sport grow is the ability to test teams against one another in games. You can't have games without an official.

Soccer is not the law, but his personal integrity and ethics were on display on the field. I wholeheartedly believe and support that Keith Hiraoka's appointment to the First Circuit Court will be a decision that you can look at and say in the years to come...."I did a good thing, Hiraoka was a good pick".

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony to support GM509 – the appointment of Keith Hiraoka.

From: [Leighton Lee](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509
Date: Monday, February 20, 2017 7:59:19 AM

Senators:

I fully endorse Keith Hiraoka, Esq., without any reservation, for the position of Judge, First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I have practiced law in our State for over 35 years. If I had to categorize myself, I am a general practitioner. In these years of practice, many of us come across intelligent, well educated, and well versed practitioners. Although Mr. Hiraoka has all of these, these qualities don't provide any useful information in selecting a judge. Assuming all of the candidates have met the minimum qualifications, the only qualities that truly count are integrity and conscientiousness. Keith has both of these qualities.

The premier judges at any level have these qualities. Unfortunately, this is not true for all of our judges.

The nature of our judiciary is judged on those that create the law, you, our Legislators, and those that review our laws, the judges. As we all our concerned about those that create our laws, it is my hope that you will be concerned about the integrity and conscientiousness of the people you select as our judges. It is my personal testimony that Keith Hiraoka has and will have these qualities, he will become an excellent judge of our State.

Thank you for taking the time to review this testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Leighton K Lee

Leighton K Lee
Law Office of Leighton K Lee

From: [Lissa H. Andrews](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 12:06:54 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Lissa Andrews. I am an attorney with the law firm of Case Lombardi & Pettit. I provide this testimony in support of Keith Hiraoka, Esq.'s appointment to the First Circuit Court bench. I have been a practicing attorney in the area of civil litigation in Hawaii for 33 years. During that time I have had the opportunity to work with Mr. Hiraoka, sometimes on the same side and sometimes on opposing sides. Mr. Hiraoka has strong litigation experience, an understanding of the law, and knows how to interpret and apply the law to any given set of facts. Mr. Hiraoka is also very even tempered, fair-minded, a good listener, patient and would be an impartial decision-maker.

Mr. Hiraoka's placement on the bench would be such an asset to the State of Hawaii Judiciary and the practicing lawyers in the State. I do not believe that we could do any better than to have Mr. Hiraoka appointed as a State Circuit Court judge.

I therefore strongly support Mr. Hiraoka's nomination to the bench. If you need any further information or have any questions, please contact me at 547-5429.

Lissa H. Andrews, Esq.

Lissa H. Andrews, Esq.
Case Lombardi & Pettit
Pacific Guardian Center, Mauka Tower

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Member of Lex Mundi, the World's Leading Association of Independent Law Firms.

(GM, Hearing on February 23, 2017, 9:30AM)

February 22, 2017

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
And Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

**Re: GM and Bill No. 509 – Keith Hiraoka for First Circuit Court Judge –
Testimony In Support**

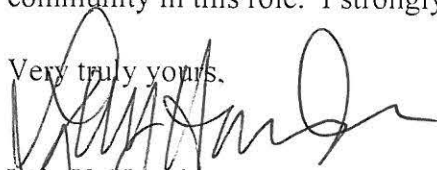
The Honorable Chair, and Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments concerning Keith Hiraoka, the nominee for the First Circuit Court Judicial position. Mr. Hiraoka will be an outstanding addition to the First Circuit Court. He is bright, capable, hard working, devoted to Hawaii, and has the necessary background and experience.

I have been a trial attorney for nearly 25 years and have dealt with Mr. Hiraoka as an attorney representing clients on the same side and on the opposite sides of cases. He has always been forthright and honest, and had the respect of his peers and judges. He brought a strong work ethic to his practice, and was always well prepared. His many years of experience as a trial attorney will serve him well on the bench.

Mr. Hiraoka will make an excellent judge. He is down to earth and he will treat everyone fairly and with respect. He will keep the judiciary strong and he will ably serve our community in this role. I strongly support his confirmation. Thank you.

Very truly yours,



Lyle Y. Harada
1022 Bethel Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

STARN • O'TOOLE • MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

February 17, 2017

The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 221
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Karl Rhoads
Vice-Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 204
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

NOTICE OF HEARING

Date: February 23, 2017

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 016

State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania Street

Re: GM509 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee KEITH HIRAOKA, for a term to expire in 10 years.

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee:

I would like to submit this testimony in strong support of Governor Ige's nomination of Keith Hiraoka to be a Circuit Court judge. I regret that because of a previously scheduled mediation, I will not be able to testify in person.

I believe Mr. Hiraoka to be an excellent attorney with the highest possible honesty and ethics, and I believe Mr. Hiraoka would make a superb trial judge.

Mr. Hiraoka has first-rate academic credentials, with an excellent reputation and experience. I believe the Circuit Court (and the people of Hawaii) would materially benefit from having someone with Mr. Hiraoka's experience, perspective, and integrity on the court.

I also want to briefly comment with regard to some stories in the media which have focused on what they describe as Mr. Hiraoka's friendship with the Governor, and his work on the Governor's campaign. I respectfully note my belief that these are not "negatives," and that the Governor's first-hand knowledge of Mr. Hiraoka's character, honesty, and integrity is, I believe, a good thing. And, it certainly does not in any way detract from Mr. Hiraoka's superb (and in my view) unquestionable qualifications for the position of Circuit Court judge.

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
February 17, 2017
Page 2

I, therefore, respectfully ask that you recommend that the Senate consent to Mr. Hiraoka's nomination to be a Judge of the Circuit Court, State of Hawaii.

Very truly yours



Mark J. Bennett

From: [Matt Levi](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 7:50:10 AM

I have known Keith Hiraoka for many years, both personally and professionally. Keith's son Kenny and our daughter Alia have been classmates at Iolani School since they were small, and are preparing to graduate this year. Keith and his wife Lisa are devoted parents, of outstanding character. Professionally, I have done investigative work for Keith and members of his law firm. He is a hard worker, honest, and possesses a thorough knowledge of the law. Combining that with an even temperament, Keith would be ideally suited for a career on the bench. I urge his appointment. Thank you for your consideration. Matt Levi

MCCORRISTON MILLER MUKAI MACKINNON LLP

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

February 17, 2017

Senator Gilbert S.C, Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 201
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran and the Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

We submit this testimony in support of the appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the position of Circuit Judge, Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

The undersigned are Litigation Partners of McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon LLP and have personal knowledge of the character and competence of this outstanding selection. We have known Keith for the entirety of his 34 years of practice both as an associate attorney at Case & Lynch and as a partner at Roeca, Louie & Hiraoka and Roeca Luria Hiraoka LLP. Many of us also have had positive interaction and collaboration with him in his service on the HSBA's Professional Responsibility Committee and the Hawaii Supreme Court's Permanent Committee on Rules of Civil Procedure and Circuit Court Civil Rules.

Keith has consistently exhibited competence, professionalism and integrity in his approach to litigation. He has represented his clients well with his strong advocacy and excellent writing skills. His demeanor and civility in sometimes contentious cases has established a positive image on behalf of all lawyers in this jurisdiction. He will be an outstanding addition to the Circuit Court bench.

We respectfully request your affirmative support of Keith as Circuit Court Judge.

Very truly yours,

McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon LLP



William C. McCorriston



David J. Minkin



Randall K. Schmitt



Robert G. Klein



Lisa W. Cataldo



Jordon J. Kimura



Bennett J. Chin

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM509 on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 11:06:46 PM

GM509

Submitted on: 2/17/2017

Testimony for JDL on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 016

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

Comments: Aloha, my name is Melissa Pavlicek. I have known Keith Hiraoka for more than 20 years, beginning when he first spoke as a guest to my law school class at the Wm. S. Richardson School of Law. He demonstrates a commendable commitment to community service and has earned a reputation as an attorney with the highest degree of legal and ethical standards. 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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NAOMI COLE

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900 Fort Street Suite 1120, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Tel. (808) 550-2880 / Fax (808) 521-2622

February 17, 2017

The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
And the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka – Letter in Support/Nomination to the First Circuit Court

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support for the appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the First Circuit Court of the State of Hawaii.

I first became acquainted with Attorney Keith Hiraoka 10 years ago. I didn't know him at all, but one day, out of the blue, he called me at work. He called just as I arrived to work after dropping my youngest daughter off on her first day of school. He asked me if I was Zelda's mom. I replied that I am. He told me that she looked to be in tears sitting outside the classroom before school started, so he asked a little girl named Cassidy to sit next to and take care of Zelda, and be her friend for the day. Cassidy and Zelda became best friends that year. What Keith did was so touching to me. He is the type of person who would go out of his way to help others whenever he could. It was an unforgettable moment for me, and soon, thereafter, we became good friends.

As a colleague, and working on cases with and against his firm, I have known him to be intelligent, diligent, responsible, and professional. He has many years of private practice experience and knowledge in many areas of the law. These are all the characteristics and background experience necessary for an outstanding judge.

But, to me, one of the most important things in being an outstanding judge is that the judge needs to be "fair" and "unbiased" – to be able to fairly decide who is right and who is wrong. I know from personal experience that Keith will preside over cases with impartiality.

Keith volunteered to be a HYSA soccer referee on the weekends. At one particularly important, playoff soccer game, he was to referee a team of boys he didn't know, against a team comprised almost entirely of the Iolani boy's soccer team. As an active Iolani parent, Keith knew all of these boys, and some of them since kindergarten, along with their parents. My son was on this

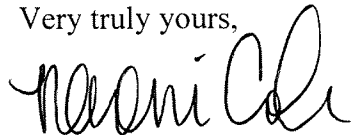
February 17, 2017

Page 2

team. During the soccer game, as I watched, Keith called plays with complete fairness and neutrality. It was a close game but our team lost. Of course, we all booed Keith for being so objective. Yet, he had the moral courage to withstand our retribution. Not only was the game an example of Keith's lack of bias and unwavering ethics, but it also showed his commitment and contribution back to the community. Keith spent almost every weekend dedicated to refereeing games for young boys, running around with them for hours, in the hot sun, for several years.

Whether it is in Keith's professional capacity as a managing attorney in his firm, as a parent at school, or as a referee on the soccer field, he will stand up to doing the right thing with integrity. He has all the qualities beyond the baseline requirements to make him a superb judge. I strongly support his appointment to the First Circuit Court.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naomi Cole". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "C" at the end.

NAOMI COLE

From: [Normand R. Lezy](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support: GM509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 9:38:58 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

From: Normand R. (Chip) Lezy
Submitted on: 02/16/2017

Testimony in support of the appointment of Keith Hiraoka to Judge, Circuit Court of the First Circuit

Submitted to: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

-
Aloha Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

I submit testimony in strong support of the appointment of Keith Hiraoka to Judge, Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I am a practicing attorney and have worked with Keith, on both sides of litigated cases, for more than 10 years. Keith is an attorney of the highest caliber and one of the most respected members of the Hawaii Bar. I have always found him represent his clients with the utmost skill and professionalism and with the highest ethical standards. Keith is thoughtful, pragmatic and decisive. His temperament is even and clear-minded. Those are all attributes that I suggest to you will make Keith an excellent judge. On a personal note, in working with Keith over the years I can say that I have never had a reason to doubt his word or question his actions. In addition to being a fine attorney, he is a genuinely good man.

I am sure that you will receive this same appraisal of Keith from many, many others. I join with all of them in urging you to confirm Keith's appointment. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Regards,

Normand R. "Chip" Lezy

Partner
Cox, Wootton, Lerner, Griffin & Hansen LLP
Tel: 808.744.7020 x10
Direct: 808.892.3831
Fax: 808.744.7030
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841 Bishop Street, Suite 1099
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San Francisco Los Angeles Honolulu



COX WOOTTON LERNER
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From: [Laree McGuire](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 6:39:25 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this testimony in favor of the appointment of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I was first introduced to Keith when he was invited by Professor Eric Yamamoto to speak in my Civil Procedure class at the William S. Richardson, School of Law in 1989. Keith was a great speaker at that time and was kind enough to take time out of his busy schedule to share his litigation experiences with us.

I, personally, have had the pleasure to work with Keith since in or about 2014 to the present date. My firm does a considerable amount of foreclosure work and unfortunately, that makes us a target for lawsuits. Keith has defended us in the resulting civil litigation and he has always been very professional and courteous both to us and opposing counsel. He is always very prepared and available whenever I or my partners have questions or concerns about our cases. His writing is excellent and to the point. Based on my experience with Keith, I can say the Bar would be extremely fortunate to have him on the Court. We need more judges with lengthy and in-depth litigation experience who also have the proper judicial temperament. To say Keith is suited and qualified for the position is an understatement. I pray you will do the right thing for the Bar and appoint him to serve forthwith. I look forward to appearing before him in the years to come. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

R. Laree McGuire

Mahalo,

R. Laree McGuire • Partner



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RICHARD K. MINATOYA

TESTIMONY
ON
GM 509 - CONFIRMATION OF KEITH HIRAOKA,
JUDGE, CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT

February 23, 2017

The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair
and Members
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support GM 509, the confirmation of KEITH HIRAOKA as Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

I have known Mr. Hiraoka for several years. I have also had the privilege of having him represent me personally. He is well versed in the justice system, and has clearly demonstrated the knowledge, skills, temperament and talent to serve excellently as a circuit court judge. I recommend confirmation without reservation.

Accordingly, I request that the committee RECOMMEND CONFIRMATION to the full Senate.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

From: [Robert Harris](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM 509 - Support
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 2:51:11 PM

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
GM 509

Thursday, February 23, 2017
9:30 a.m.

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Committee:

It is my pleasure to recommend confirmation of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii. While in private practice, I had several cases where Mr. Hiraoka represented the other side. He was extraordinarily civil, courteous, and very result-oriented. He did a great job of representing his client, but also worked towards mutually beneficial solutions.

I believe he'd make an exceptional judge. He's very knowledgeable and capable of learning new areas of the law; he's extremely civil and fair; and he'd take the necessary time to make important decisions.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

With warm aloha,
Robert Harris
Kaneohe, HI

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM509 on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 1:44:18 PM

GM509

Submitted on: 2/16/2017

Testimony for JDL on Feb 23, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert A Marks	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chair Keith-Agaran and Members. Several years ago, I served as an attorney for a party in a hard fought lawsuit. Mr. Hiraoka represented an adverse party. While relations with some opposing counsel deteriorated, Mr. Hiraoka maintained the highest level of civility and decorum throughout, and was professional in every respect. He is smart and thoughtful and has all the attributes necessary to be a fine judge. I respectfully request that Mr. Hiraoka's nomination be reported out of committee to the full Senate for confirmation. I will be out of town for the hearing, and regret I cannot testify in person in Mr. Hiraoka's support. Respectfully submitted, Robert A. Marks Hawaii Attorney General 1992-94

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From: [Robert Richards](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM 509 Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 6:44:40 AM

Senators:

I write in enthusiastic support of the nomination of Keith Hiraoka as a judge of the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii. I would appear in person before the committee but will not be in the state on the day his hearing is scheduled.

First the basics. Keith is a professional colleague of long standing. He is not a personal friend. I have never socialized with him. I am a non-partisan in terms of political affiliation. I have never been a registered member of either party and have never worked on behalf of any candidate, including Governor Ige. I have been a licensed attorney in Honolulu for 40 years. My practice has always been 100% civil litigation. I have appeared before more judges than I can count, some excellent, some good and some not so good. I have tried well over 100 jury trials to verdict. I have appeared in every trial division of every Circuit Court and in the Federal Court. I have an AV pre-eminent rating by Martindale-Hubbell from both the bar and the judiciary. Based upon my background and experience I think I can recognize someone who will be a superior judge. I can say, without qualification, that in my opinion Keith Hiraoka will make a superior circuit court judge.

Over the years I have been involved in many, many lawsuits in which Mr. Hiraoka was also counsel. I have also been involved in conferences and ADR with him. Sometimes we have been representing parties whose interests were aligned. In other cases our parties were adverse to each other. Mr. Hiraoka knows litigation, backward and forward. He knows the law and knows the rules. He knows how a courtroom should be run and should not be run. I have no doubt that any person or attorney who appears before him will get a full and fair hearing, will have an opportunity to present his or her case but will not be permitted to waste the limited resources of the court unnecessarily. Decisions by Judge Hiraoka will be grounded in law and supported by facts. They will be explained where explanation is needed. When explanation is necessary it will be delivered well.

Over the past several years Mr. Hiraoka's practice has emphasized insurance coverage. That is a difficult, complex and often contentious area of law. It requires both intellect and good analytical skills. Mr. Hiraoka has exhibited both qualities repeatedly. My own practice also involves insurance coverage from time to time. Mr. Hiraoka is one of only two attorney who I will call for advise when I have a question or am uncertain about a matter. These instances are great examples of his likely "judicial temperament". On several occasions he has expressed an opinion that I did not "like" or "want". I have argued with him (judicial temperament is not a quality anyone has ever said I have). Invariably he will calmly explain the bases for his opinion and/or repeat the central focus of his reasoning. I have never had him raise his voice or cut me off, even when I probably deserved it. In the same vein I have seen him argue in court on many occasions on behalf of his client. I have NEVER seen him be disrespectful in any way or act inappropriate in any way toward a party, opposing counsel or the court.

In closing I will note that I have from time to time commented on judicial candidates since the time practicing attorneys were permitted/encouraged to do so. More often than not my comments have been critical or cautionary. I can honestly say with regard to Mr. Hiraoka that I cannot think of a better qualified candidate for a Circuit Court judgeship.

If you have any questions or wish further comment, please feel free to contact me.

Robert P. Richards



RONALD T. OGOMORI

Attorney at Law, A Law Corporation
Commercial & Construction Law

Executive Centre | 1088 Bishop Street, Suite 4100, PH-2 | Honolulu, HI 96813

Main: 808-695-4240 | Fax: 808-275-3217 | Direct: 808-695-4241 | rogomori@ogomorilaw.com

February 21, 2017

VIA E-MAIL: (senkeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 221
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Keith Hiraoka

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran:

I am an attorney and the founder of Ronald T. Ogomori, Attorney at Law, a Law Corporation. I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Keith Hiraoka, who is one of the applicants for the existing vacancies at the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

I have known Keith since 1995 and have often worked on cases where we represented adverse parties. I have come to know and respect Keith as a well-qualified attorney. Keith has the requisite civil litigation experience and temperament to be an extremely effective judge. He is always prepared and is able to communicate his client's position in a calm but effective manner. More importantly, Keith is a person of the highest integrity. Therefore, it is without reservation that I recommend Keith Hiraoka to be appointed as a Circuit Court Judge in the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii.

If you have any questions or comments, I may be reached at (808) 695-4241.

Very truly yours,

RONALD T. OGOMORI

Sandra-Ann Y.H. Wong

Attorney at Law, a Law Corporation

1050 Bishop Street, #514

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT TO GM 509

Before the Committee on Judiciary and Labor

on Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 9:30a.m.

in Conference Room 016

Aloha Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Rhoads, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in **strong support of GM 509**.

Nominee Keith Hiraoka is a man with great integrity and the perfect temperament to be a judge. I can be all flustered, but Keith just stays calm. He is smart and a hard worker, and yet so modest.

The fact that he has trial experience and is a good listener will be great assets to him as a circuit court judge. Moreover, Keith at 58 is in prime health and has the energy, qualifications and enthusiasm to be a fine judge

Keith is also a dedicated husband and father. There is no drama in his personal life. He and his wife, Lisa, have been together for years and have raised two beautiful children who are now productive adults.

As a member of the Bar for the last 28 years, I strongly support the nomination of Keith Hiraoka to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in Strong Support to GM509.

From: [Sergio Rufo](#)
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2017 11:20:36 PM

I strongly support Mr. Hiraoka for a position as a 1CC Judge. I have known Keith for many years, both with him and against him on cases and in sporting competitions. He is more than competent and above board. He would be a welcomed addition to the bench.

Thanks,
Sergio

SERGIO RUFO
RUFO LAW GROUP, L.L.C.

BICKERTON ■ DANG
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

Stanley H. Roehrig
Of Counsel
101 Aupuni Street ■ Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
808.969.1441 ■ shroehrig@bsds.com

February 21, 2017

RE: Gov. Msg. No. 509

REGARDING: The appointment of Keith K. Hiraoka to serve as a Judge for the State of Hawai'i, First Circuit Court for a term of ten years before the Committee on Judiciary and Labor, Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair, Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, Senator Mike Gabbard, Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Senator Laura H. Thielen.

HEARING: February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m., Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran, Chairman, Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

I am honored to provide testimony in support of this Committee's action to confirm the appointment of attorney Keith K. Hiraoka as a Judge for the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I have known Mr. Hiraoka as an outstanding fellow lawyer since 1998. Mr. Hiraoka was counsel representing a Big Island law firm of which I was a founding partner between 1998 and approximately 2009. During that time, I got to know Keith and his capabilities as an attorney. He will make an outstanding judge. He has a personal demeanor that lends itself well to sitting as a member of the Judiciary. He is very bright. He is also humble and considerate of others.

I consider him a close friend and a leader of the State of Hawai'i legal community. I'm proud to have known him all these years and I wholeheartedly support his nomination.

Sincerely,


Stanley H. Roehrig

LYONS, BRANDT, COOK & HIRAMATSU

GEORGE W. BRANDT
THOMAS E. COOK
JEFFREY A. GRISWOLD
BRADFORD F.K. BLISS
STEVEN Y. OTAGURO
STEFAN M. REINKE
PAUL R. GRABLE
EDQUON LEE
MALIA E. SCHRECK
LAUREN MARI NAKAMURA

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
A LAW CORPORATION
1800 DAVIES PACIFIC CENTER
841 BISHOP STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 524-7030
FACSIMILE: (808) 533-3011

OF COUNSEL
SAMUEL A.B. LYONS
BEVERLY LYNNE K. HIRAMATSU
JAMES N. DUCA

February 17, 2017

VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee

Re: Testimony In Support of GM509 re the Appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2017, 9:30 a.m., Senate Judiciary
and Labor Committee, Conference Room 016

Dear Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of GM509 which submits the appointment of Keith Hiraoka as a Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, for the consent of the Senate


I first met Mr. Hiraoka when we were law students in the early 1980s. We both took the Hawaii bar examination in July 1983 and received our licenses to practice law in Hawaii in October 1983. Over the years, our respective law firms have been involved in a number of lawsuits representing clients with adverse interests. Mr. Hiraoka and I have worked on a number of those cases.

In the more than 35 years I have known him, I have always found Mr. Hiraoka to be a fair, trustworthy, and reasonable person. He is undoubtedly a strong advocate for his clients and a formidable opposing counsel. However, he has always shown respect for others, the applicable law, and the judicial process. In addition, I have always known him to be conscientious, hardworking, and very intelligent. I expect Mr. Hiraoka to be a compassionate judge who will not be afraid to make the proper decision as dictated by the facts and the law. Mr. Hiraoka is a well-respected attorney with excellent attributes and qualifications to serve the people of Hawaii as a Circuit Court Judge. He will be a welcomed addition to the Judiciary.

For these reasons, I strongly support Mr. Hiraoka's appointment and ask that the Committee recommend his appointment to the Senate.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours:


Steven Y. Otaguro

From: Tred R. Eyerly

Submitted on February 18, 2017

Testimony in Support of GM 509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka.

Relating to Governor Ige's appointment of Keith Hiraoka, Esq. as circuit court judge, First Circuit Court of the State of Hawaii

Submitted to: Judiciary and Labor Committee, Rm. 201, State Capitol

Aloha Committee Members:

I wholeheartedly support the Governor's appointment of Keith Hiraoka to sit as a circuit court judge for the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii.

I have been practicing law for 38 years, the last 16 in Honolulu. I am a Director at Damon Key Leong Kupchak Hastert and specialize in insurance coverage matters.

I have worked on many cases with Keith, when he represents the opposing party and also when we represent parties on the same side of a dispute. When on the opposing side, I have found Keith to be a formidable opponent, always fully prepared and ready to advocate with zeal in the interests of his client. Yet, even when we were on the opposite side of an issue, Keith was always polite and respectful, interested in working towards a solution rather than demonstrating to his client how effective he is as a lawyer. When on the same side as Keith in a particular case, it was always a relief that we would work together on a case rather than my having to oppose him.

In my opinion, he is an excellent litigator in all aspects, from advising his clients, to trial work and in appellate work. He has an even temperament and treats all with respect. We were involved in one case together in which an out-of-state lawyer representing the opposing party was particularly harsh in his written and oral comments in regards to Keith's handling of the case. Keith took it in stride, never letting the criticism get under his skin. It took a special personality not to lash back at the opposing attorney with the same vile comments that was being directed at Keith.

Therefore, I strongly recommend approval of the nomination of Keith Hiraoka as circuit court judge for the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii.

Thank you.

Tred R. Eyerly

From: [Wayne P. Nasser](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Subject: GM509 appointment of Keith Hiraoka
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 3:19:14 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

To the Chair and Members of the Committee

I write in support of Keith Hiraoka, who is before you for confirmation as circuit court judge. He is an exceptionally well-qualified candidate and I recommend him to you without reservation.

I have known Keith for about 20 years. I have worked side-by-side with him on cases, I have been opposite him on cases, and I have retained him to advise on legal matters. He is a first-rate, professional, highly ethical attorney. He has extensive experience inside the courtroom. He is even-tempered and personable. You could draft a job description for a judge using his resume.

Above all, I trust his judgment.

I urge you to confirm him.

Thank you for your consideration.

Wayne Nasser



Wayne Nasser, Esq. AAL ALC
First Hawaiian Center, Suite 1400
999 Bishop Street
PO Box 131
Honolulu, HI 96810
Phone: (808) 539-0458
wnasser@awlaw.com

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Fukunaga Matayoshi Ching & Kon-Herrera

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Attorneys at Law

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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-3908

Wesley H. H. Ching

Telephone: (808) 533-4300
Facsimile: (808) 531-7585

February 22, 2017

The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM #509 - Gubernatorial Nominee Keith Hiraoka
for Judge of the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii

Dear Senators Keith-Agaran, Rhoads and other Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

It is my privilege and pleasure to submit this letter in support of Gubernatorial Nominee Keith Hiraoka for Circuit Court of the First Circuit Court, State of Hawaii. I have been an attorney in private practice in Honolulu for the past 30+ years engaged in civil litigation in all state and federal courts in the State of Hawaii. Mr. Hiraoka's practice at Roeca Luria Hiraoka LLP over the past 30 years has been remarkably similar to mine, working in the areas of personal injury and professional liability defense, insurance law, and commercial litigation. As fellow insurance coverage attorneys in the Hawaii legal community, I have often referred matters to Mr. Hiraoka as one of a handful of skilled and experienced coverage attorneys whom I had complete confidence in.

More recently, I had the distinct pleasure of co-sponsoring Mr. Hiraoka's admission to the Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel in 2013. The Federation is an international organization whose members include experienced attorneys who specialize in the defense of civil

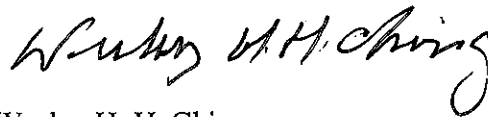
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
February 22, 2017
Page Two

litigation. Membership is by invitation only following an extensive peer review selection process.

By this letter, I would like to convey to the members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor and the Hawaii State Senate my unconditional support for the confirmation of Mr. Hiraoka as a judge for the Circuit Court of the First Circuit Court. I sincerely believe that Mr. Hiraoka possesses the knowledge, skills, temperament, expertise, sensitivity, fairness, and wisdom to be a circuit court judge. Although Mr. Hiraoka's practice has been focused on the defense of civil litigation, I have no doubt whatsoever that he will be fair, impartial, and wise as a judge.

I would be happy to elaborate or supplement this letter if any members of the Committee have any questions of me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wesley H. H. Ching". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the name.

Wesley H. H. Ching

MCKEON SHELDON MEHLING

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www.msmlhawaii.com

February 17, 2017

Via Email (JDLtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran,
Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senatorial District 24
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 218
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **GM 509 - Appointment of Keith K. Hiraoka**
Hearing Date/Time: February 23, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran:

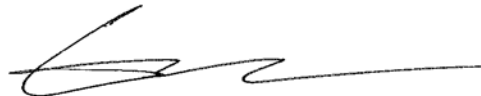
It is my privilege and honor to strongly support and recommend confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Keith K. Hiraoka.

As you know, I have lived and practiced law on Maui for over 32 years and I have appeared in courts across the state, from Hanalei to Hamakua. I have known Mr. Hiraoka professionally for approximately 10 years. As a practicing lawyer, Mr. Hiraoka quickly commanded the facts and identified the key factual and legal issues, and found creative solutions to complex problems. In my opinion, Mr. Hiraoka has the intellect, integrity, demeanor, fairness, toughness, compassion and case management skills to be an outstanding Circuit Court Judge. I know him to be a community-minded citizen and he has an outstanding reputation and is respected in our community.

Mr. Hiraoka would be an outstanding contributor to the Judiciary and our State, and I strongly urge his prompt confirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



William M. McKeon
McKeon Imlay Mehling
A Limited Liability Law Company



Testimony of the
HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
relating to the nomination of

Keith K. Hiraoka
Circuit Court Judge, First Circuit

TO: The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

FROM: Nadine Y. Ando
President, Hawaii State Bar Association

Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 016
State Capitol

The Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association (HSBA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the nomination of Keith K. Hiraoka for the position of Circuit Court Judge, First Circuit.

The HSBA Board of Directors evaluates the qualifications of persons appointed for judicial office, the position of Hawaii U.S. Attorney and the position of Hawaii State Attorney General. We follow a multi-step process to inform the confirming authority of its findings.

- Notification to the nominee of the HSBA appointment review process, which includes a questionnaire requesting educational credentials, legal and other professional work experiences, personal references; a resume; a copy of the JSC application; a form authorizing disclosure from the Office of Disciplinary Counsel of any disciplinary action; and an interview with the HSBA Board of Directors.
- Notification via electronic transmission to the HSBA membership of the appointment and a request for comments on the nominee.
- Appointment of a three-person review Subcommittee of HSBA Board members by the President, which serves as a neutral fact-finding body to review documentation submitted by the nominee, contact references submitted by the nominee, review comments received from the HSBA membership, and conduct follow-up member contact for clarification, if necessary, for presentation to the HSBA Board.
- Submittal of a report by the three-person review subcommittee to the President, and subsequently to the entire Board.

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- Meeting of the President, the Executive Director, and the nominee prior to the scheduled interview of the nominee by the Board.
- Interview of the nominee by the HSBA Board.
- Deliberation of the HSBA Board.
- Submittal of the HSBA Board's recommendation to the confirming authority.

The HSBA President and the Executive Director met with Mr. Hiraoka on February 17th to discuss the Subcommittee's findings. On February 20th, Mr. Hiraoka was interviewed by the HSBA Board of Directors in executive session.

Documentation submitted by Mr. Hiraoka was reviewed and all of the references listed were contacted for their personal opinions and observations. The comments and letters received from HSBA members reflected an affirmation of Mr. Hiraoka in all categories of the HSBA criteria which include:

- Integrity
- Diligence
- Legal knowledge and ability
- Professional experience
- Temperament
- Financial responsibility
- Public service
- Health
- Ability to fulfill the responsibilities and duties of the position

After the interview of the nominee, which included dialog and questioning relating to his background, experiences, and reasons for pursuing the position of Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit, the HSBA Board found Mr. Hiraoka to be **QUALIFIED**.

As a civil litigator during his 34-year professional career, Mr. Hiraoka is well regarded for his fair, insightful, courteous and effective courtroom skills, and exceptional written work. He has a reputation for always being well-prepared and competent. His handling of legal malpractice cases has helped him become familiar with other areas of the law and disciplines outside of his immediate practice area. Mr. Hiraoka has also been very active in the HSBA as he served as the Chair of the HSBA Litigation Section and chaired the HSBA Professional Responsibility and Risk Management Committee that is responsible for putting on the Supreme Court-mandated Professionalism Course which all new Bar admittees are required to take.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments for consideration during the deliberations and decision making of this Committee.