

GM 516

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, APHIRAK BAMRUNGRUAN, for a term to expire 06-30-2020.

Report Title: Language Access Advisory Council

Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH



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

In reply, please refer to:
File:

February 22, 2017

The Honorable Senator Rosalyn Baker
Chair, Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
The Senate, State of Hawai'i
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

In support of the appointment of Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan

Dear Senator Baker:

I am the person who nominated Mr. Bamrungruan for the position of State Agency Representative to the Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC).

He is the person who needs to be appointed. He is in charge of the limited English Proficiency Project at the Department of Human Services (DHS). He is experienced in working with state and federal agencies on compliance.

He has the practical, administrative background of running a major effort at DHS to improve the provision of language access in a major state agency. His experience is instructive to all of us and he is also a strong advisor to the Office of Language Access (OLA).

The LAAC of OLA is the primary community, educational institution, and governmental advisor to OLA.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at gerald.ohata@doh.hawaii.gov or 586-4614.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald Ohta".

Gerald Ohta
Affirmative Action Officer
Department of Health
(Former LAAC Vice-Chair/State Agency Representative)

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT
DIRECTOR

BRIDGET HOLTHUS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 10, 2017

TO: The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **GM516** - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, APHIRAK BAMRUNGRUAN, for a term to expire 06-30-2020.

Hearing: March 10, 2017, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the nomination of Aphirak Bamrungruan to the Language Access Advisory Council.

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Mr. Aphirak "AP" Bamrungruan for the Language Access Advisory Council. Mr. Bamrungruan received his Bachelor of Laws degree from Thammasat University and Barrister-at-Law degree from the Institute of Legal Education. He received his Master of Laws and Juris Doctor along with a Pacific-Asian Legal Studies Certificate from the University of Hawai'i William S. Richardson School of Law. In his current position at DHS, Mr. Bamrungruan serves as the Limited English Proficient (LEP) project manager and is responsible for the procurement and monitoring of language access services for the department's programs.

As a department, DHS provides benefits and services to one in four residents in Hawaii. DHS strives to encourage self-sufficiency and supports the well-being of individuals, families, and Hawaii's communities through its major benefit programs that provide financial assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), medical insurance coverage through Med-

QUEST, vocational rehabilitation services, and protective services for vulnerable children and adults.

DHS is committed to removing language barriers that may prohibit qualified residents from fully participating in DHS programs that lead to self-sufficiency and improved well-being. Mr. Bamrunguran will bring his comprehensive and the technical expertise to the council in its work to advise the Executive Director of the Office of Language Access.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Susannah Wesley

February 22, 2017

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker
Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 230
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Baker:

My name is Dominic Inocelda, clinical administrator with the Susannah Wesley Community Center. I am also a former member of the Department of Health, Office of Language Access (OLA) Advisory Council. I am writing in support of Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan's appointment to Office of Language Access Advisory Council. As a former chair of the OLA Advisory Council I can attest to the interest and valuable input that Mr. Bamrungruan provided as the LEP Project Manager for the Department of Human Services (DHS). He has been an informed supporter of the OLA office and its mission to improve the State's ability to better serve those persons with limited or no English speaking abilities.

The State of Hawaii has about twenty five percent (25%) of its total population of 1,431,603, based on census 2015 data, that speak a language other than English at home. With this significant number of persons speaking other languages besides English, there is a need to have an effective OLA Advisory Council. I feel that Mr. Bamrungruan can offer the input, guidance, and involvement that promotes an effective advisory council. He is a team player that takes seriously his responsibilities and will be valuable to the advisory council.

I ask for your consideration and support for Mr. Bamrungruan in his willingness to take on responsibilities as an OLA Advisory Council member. Thank you for the opportunity to write in support of Mr. Bamrungruan.

Should you have questions please feel free to call me at 554-1006. Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Dominic Inocelda, LCSW
Clinical Administrator
(808)440-5818, (808) 554-1006 Cell
Dinocelda@susannahwesley.org

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2017 5:51 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: geesey@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM516 on Mar 10, 2017 09:30AM*

GM516

Submitted on: 3/1/2017

Testimony for CPH on Mar 10, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yvonne Geesey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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Lisa Nakao
P.O. Box 23033
Honolulu, Hawaii 96823
E-mail: lisanakao@yahoo.com

March 1, 2017

Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

Hearing: March 10, 2017, 9:30 a.m., Conference Room 229

RE: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of GM 516 Consideration and Confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee APHIRAK BAMRUNGRUAN, for a term to expire 06-30-2020.

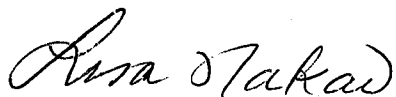
My name is Lisa Nakao and I am currently a Planner at the Department of Health, Executive Office on Aging. I am testifying as an individual and am in strong support of Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan's nomination to the Language Access Advisory Council.

I have known and worked with Mr. Bamrungruan for several years in his position as the LEP Coordinator at the Hawaii State Department of Human Services (DHS) while I was working at DHS as an Administrative Assistant. Mr. Bamrungruan has always displayed qualities of dedication, sincerity, and passion in advocating on behalf of those in need and individuals who may not otherwise have a voice. I have had the opportunity to work with and witness Mr. Bamrungruan's expertise and commitment in working with the limited English proficiency population. In my years of working with Mr. Bamrungruan, I have found him to be a trustworthy, dedicated, diligent and a caring public servant and community advocate.

It is with great pleasure that I provide strong support of Mr. Bamrungruan's confirmation serving as a member of the Language Access Advisory Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Nakao

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 2, 2017 6:30 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: bautista.aprilk@icloud.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM516 on Mar 10, 2017 09:30AM*

GM516

Submitted on: 3/2/2017

Testimony for CPH on Mar 10, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
April Bautista	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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TO: Senate Commerce, Protection and Health Committee

FROM: Wilfredo Tungol (Phone 387-7412)

RE: GM 516 (Confirmation of Aphirak Bamrungruan)

Date of Hearing: March 10, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Chair Baker, Vice-chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in SUPPORT of your confirmation of Aphirak Bamrungruan (“AP”) as a board member of the Language Access Advisory Council. I have the privilege of working with AP when I was assigned to the Director’s Office as a Projects Specialist from 2011 to 2014. AP was then one of two language access coordinators of DHS’s Limited English Project (LEP) and now currently the LEP Project Manager. AP is well respected in the immigrant community as a professional attorney and as an immigrant advocate. AP has a legal track record of helping the underprivileged population, having worked in Hawaii Immigrant Justice Center and the Volunteer Legal Services of Hawaii as a staff attorney. His professional and cultural background will provide the Office of Language Access (OLA) a positive perspective on the need to improve language access for our public services to the limited English proficiency (LEP) population.

AP is a collaborative manager who will help OLA to achieve its mission to help agencies provide language access to our LEP population as required by federal and state laws.

I respectfully ask you to act favorably to confirm AP as a member of the Language Access Advisory Council.

The Honorable Ronald Kouchi, President,
And Members of the Senate
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

From: Meredith Nichols

Date: Friday, March 10, 2017

Subject: **Support for GM516**, Governor's nomination of Aphirak Bamrungruan to the
Language Access Advisory Council

I have had the pleasure of participating in various work groups with Mr. Bamrungruan including a Compact of Free Association Health Insurance Stakeholder group as well as an Immigrant and Refugee Service Provider group. His legal background and extensive knowledge of Federal and State regulations surrounding linguistically and culturally appropriate services for the people of Hawai'i is impressive. Beyond his academic and field qualifications, Mr. Bamrungruan is passionate about language access issues and skilled in building strategic partnerships to improve language access throughout our communities. I am sure he will be an excellent addition to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Sincerely,

Meredith Nichols

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate:

Subject: Governor's Message 516 Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, Aphirak Bamrungruan, for a term to expire June 30, 2020.

It is my great pleasure to support Aphirak Bamrungruan's nomination to the Language Access Advisory Council.

I have served with Aphirak on the Hawaii Language Roadmap Council for four years and have also worked with him closely in my capacity as the Title VI and Language Access Coordinator for the City's Department of Community Services. He has been very generous and helpful in giving technical assistance to partner agencies on language access issues.

I have always been most impressed not only with Aphirak's knowledge of compliance and legal issues about language access, but also his genuine concern and commitment to improving the opportunities for limited English proficiency individuals to access quality public service. Even when resources and funding are limited, Aphirak is always thinking about more effective ways to meet the needs of the limited English proficiency clients.

Aphirak will be a devoted advocate and an outstanding asset on the Language Access Advisory Council.

Please call me at 768-5607 if there are any questions. Your favorable consideration is most appreciated.

Sincerely

Rolanse Crisafulli, Administrator

Oahu WorkLinks/WorkHawaii

From: [Merez, Gino R.](#)
To: [CPH Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 516 Nomination of Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan to the Language Access Advisory Council
Date: Friday, March 3, 2017 9:30:14 AM

Re: GM 516

Chair Rosalyn Baker and the Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Affairs, and Health.

Dear Chair Baker and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan to the Language Access Advisory Council, to represent the Hawaii State government.

I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Bamrungruan on many occasions in the area of language access compliance for the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH), most recently with the implementation of Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, giving individuals with limited English proficiency access to DOH services. Although we work in different State departments, Mr. Bamrungruan has always been willing to share his expertise in the implementation of language access programs. Through my interactions with Mr. Bamrungruan, I find him to be a very knowledgeable, competent and affable colleague.

As such, I ask that you give Mr. Bamrungruan utmost consideration.

Sincerely,

Gino R. Merez, JD, MPH
HIPAA Privacy Officer
DOH HIPAA Office
1250 Punchbowl Street, Rm. 250
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 586-4111
Fax: (808) 586-4115

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2017 4:57 PM
To: CPH Testimony
Cc: mark_forman@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM516 on Mar 10, 2017 09:30AM

GM516

Submitted on: 3/8/2017

Testimony for CPH on Mar 10, 2017 09:30AM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mark Forman	Individual	Support	No

Comments: The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Chair Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in strong support of confirming Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan, Esq., as a member of the Language Access Advisory Council. My name is Mark Forman and I am writing in my capacity as an individual. Full disclosure: I was hired 9/1/16 to work in the DHS Director's office (under a two year and several months-long special project. I work directly with Mr. Bamrungruan in his capacity as Limited English Proficient (LEP) project manager. Some of you know me because I recently worked at the Capitol as a legislative aide and concurrently in corporate philanthropy. I also served in the past as Hawaii State Democratic Party Chairman, as the Director of the State Office of Community Services, as Legal Aid staff, and as a longtime member of U.S. Senator Dan Inouye's Washington, D.C. staff. As you may know, DHS assists and supports one in every four adults in Hawaii, and about half of all children. In his current position at DHS, Mr. Bamrungruan is responsible for the procurement and monitoring of language access services for the department's programs. He is vitally important to Hawaii's diverse communities through his work to ensure access to DHS benefit programs that provide financial assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), medical insurance coverage, vocational rehabilitation services, and protective services for vulnerable children and adults. Mr. Bamrungruan is committed to removing language barriers that may prohibit qualified residents from fully participating in DHS programs that lead to self-sufficiency and improved well-being. He is probably THE best person in the state available to advise the council in its work and to advise the Executive Director of the Office of Language Access. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I enthusiastically urge you to confirm his appointment. Sincerely, (signed) Mark L. Forman Private Citizen

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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Aloha e Chair Baker,

I write to you as an individual in full support of Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan being appointed to the Language Access Advisory Council.

I have known Mr. Bamrungruan for more than a year and a half both professionally and personally. He is truly a team player and believes no job is above or beneath him. I believe this is an important quality for the Language Access Advisory Council. Moreover, Mr. Bamrungruan really shines as the Limited English Proficiency Program Manager at the state Department of Human Services. He is well-versed in applicable laws and adept at navigating both practical, policy and legal obstacles in ensuring DHS clients have access to language services they need.

I cannot think of any better candidate to join the Language Access Advisory Council than Mr. Bamrungruan.

Keopu Reelitz
773.758.2211
Keopu.reelitz@gmail.com

DATE: March 9, 2017

TO: Senator Rosalyn Baker
Chair, Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
Submitted Via Capitol Website

FROM: Tiffany Yajima

RE: **GM 516 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, Aphirak Bamrungruan, for a term to expire 06-30-2020.**

Hearing Date: Friday, March 10, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room: 229

Dear Chair Baker and Members of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health,

I submit this testimony in **strong support** of Aphirak Bamrungruan for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council. I have known Aphirak for over 13 years, and in the past have worked with him on immigration law cases. I have always known Aphirak to be forthright and diligent, and an excellent advocate for the underserved. His positive attitude and current experience as an interim appointee to the Language Access Advisory Council will be an asset to the community and the council.

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

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2017

Friday, March 10, 2017
9:30a.m.

**WRITTEN COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 516,
NOMINATING MR. APHIRAK BAMRUNGRUAN
TO THE LANGAUGE ACCESS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR,
THE HONORABLE CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, VICE CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in strong support of **Governor's Message No. 516**, nominating Mr. Aphirak Bamrungruan for membership on the Hawaii Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC). My name is Sean Mikell and I am offering these supporting comments in my individual capacity.

The role of the LAAC is to consider and offer solutions to improve both current compliance with Hawai'i's language access laws and the level of quality and adequacy of oral and written language services being provided to Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons in the State. Having known Mr. Bamrungruan for many years both as a friend and colleague, I firmly believe that Aphirak, or "AP" as he is often called, will be an excellent choice to serve on the LAAC given his deep knowledge of Hawaii's language access laws and programs and his dedication to helping others.

AP has been a good friend of mine since we were both students at the William S. Richardson School of Law. As long as I've known him, AP has been dedicated to learning the law and to using his knowledge to assist those in need, and this includes his early interest in studying immigration law so that he could assist individuals starting out in this country. AP has also chosen to work in areas that help some of Hawaii's most at-risk community members, including his time at the Domestic Violence Action Center and the Volunteer Legal Services Hawaii. I believe this kind of consistent focus on helping others is essential for serving on a public council like the LAAC.

One of the responsibilities of my job is to work on language access programs, and I have been fortunate to rely on AP for his expert assistance on a number of tasks and projects the last couple of years. He has a one of the best understandings of the State's language access law, the State's language access programs run by the Hawaii Office of Language Access, and the local network that utilizes and provides language access assistance. AP has been a great resource for the State already, and, if confirmed, I believe he will make many more valuable contributions to the LAAC and this State.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of AP's nomination to the LAAC.

GM516

Aphirak Bamrungruan

February 20, 2017

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker
Chair, Senate Committee of Commerce, Consumer Protection, and
Health Hawaii State Capitol, Room 230
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: The Committee Hearing on the appointment to the Language Access Advisory

Council Dear Chair Baker:

Per request from your office, I respectfully submit my answers as follow:

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

Answer – I believe my education, employment and personal background make me a well-suited candidate for the Board. As we all know Hawaii is one of the most culturally diverse states and has one of the highest proportions of non-English speakers in the nation. Presently I am a licensed attorney in Hawaii and am currently employed as a limited English Proficiency (LEP) Project Manager at the Hawaii Department of Human Services. I am responsible for overseeing and managing the development and implementation of department-wide systems, programs, policies and procedures designed to address the language needs for the Department's LEP applicants and clients. I am also originally from Thailand and once spoke very limited English. This experience has truly inspired me to help other limited English speakers who face similar situations when trying to access basic human needs. If I were selected to be a member of the board, I believe I would be able to provide useful, current insight about the state of language access programs in Hawaii.

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

Answer – As mandated by the Statute, I will serve in an advisory capacity to the executive director of the Office of Language Access. I will be providing input on implementation and compliance with the Language Access Law; the quality of oral and written services; and the adequacy of a state agency or covered entity's dissemination and training of its employees likely to have contact with limited English proficient persons, its policies and procedures for language services, its competency in working effectively with in-person and telephone interpreters, and its understanding of the dynamics of interpretation between clients, providers, and interpreters.

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

Answer – As a representative from the state government, I am always working to protect

the interests of the public. In my role as a Limited English Proficient Project Manager I am always working to make sure that the consumer, in this case the LEP individual, is protected. The very nature of my job is to make sure that one of the most vulnerable consumers in Hawaii, the LEP individual has access to government programs and services. That said, I also balance the needs of the LEP individual with the budget that I am given. I regularly assess the status and effectiveness of current language access efforts. It is my job to identify program deficiencies and create corresponding solutions to provide the best services to LEP individuals within a budget. To do this, I regularly evaluate the effectiveness of different types of interpreting resources and advise the director about alternatives available to improve the access to services for LEP individuals. I am therefore very knowledgeable about the language access tools currently available to the consumer.

4. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the Board.

I believe that I am qualified to be a member of the Board due to my experience as both a Limited English Proficient Project Manager and Coordinator at the Department of Human Services. I think I am especially well-suited to provide the Board with input on language access topics because I have worked tirelessly to increase language access for LEP individuals by managing the development and implementation of department-wide systems, programs, policies and procedures designed to address the language needs of those individuals so that they may be better served by the Department. In doing so, I have also been able to collaborate with other state departments and private sector partners to establish and coordinate the implementation of a comprehensive department-wide plan. I also regularly assess the status, effectiveness and quality of the Department's efforts to increase language access to clients, which has provided me with a great deal of knowledge in the tools available to improve the access to services for LEP applicants and clients. While my work has focused mainly on increasing language access to the Department of Human Services clients, I believe that the programs that I have implemented and continue to manage allows me to provide valuable input to the Board.

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

As an advisory member, I want to ensure that language will not be a barrier to accessing any state programs or services. While I am passionate about and work on increasing language access every day, I realize that not everyone values language access the same way. I hope that I will be able to provide insight so that all entities will have a better understanding about language access law and will take reasonable steps to ensure persons with limited English proficiency gain meaningful access to their services, programs, and activities.

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

My education, employment and personal background make me a well-suited candidate for this

position. As a lawyer, an advocate for LEP individuals and an immigrant - someone who has faced a language barrier head-on, I have first-hand knowledge of the obstacles LEP individuals face as well as an awareness of the tools available to overcome those obstacles. I believe this would make me a valuable addition to the Language Access Advisory Council.

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

Answer – As a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Project Manager at the Hawaii Department of Human Services, I am responsible for overseeing and managing the development and implementation of department-wide systems, programs, policies and procedures designed to address the language needs for the Department's LEP applicants and clients. This experience has given me first-hand knowledge of all of the tools available to increase language access. Because I also have experience working with these tools, I am also able to provide insight to what tools work best for different situations and different types of clients and the best practices to make sure that each tool is being implemented properly.

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

Answer – I believe that there will be no conflicts of interest during my service on the Language Access Advisory Council. However, if there is a situation that presents a potential conflict of interest, I will immediately consult with the Hawaii State Ethics Commission.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (808) 271-2137.

Sincerely,

Aphirak Bamrungruan