

GM 518

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Mental Health And Substance Abuse, Kaua'i Service Area Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELENA ELLENBERGER, for a term to expire 06-30-2019.

Report Title: Mental Health And Substance Abuse, Kaua'i Service Area Board

Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony SUPPORTING GM0518
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the State Council on Mental
Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELENA ELLENBERGER,
for a term to expire 6-30-19.

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH
Hearing Date: March 10, 2017, 9:30 a.m. Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports the nomination and
3 confirmation of Elena Ellenberger to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Kauai
4 Service Area Board (KSAB) for her first term. Ms. Ellenberger fills the community
5 member segment of the board, pursuant to Chapter 334-11 of the Hawaii Revised
6 Statutes.

7 Ms. Ellenberger is a residential specialist and the resident manager team with the
8 Steadfast Development Corporation on the island of Kauai. She has a strong passion
9 working with persons in recovery and helps them with obtaining successful housing.
10 Ms. Ellenberger is also involved in the Kauai Chapter of Bridging the Gap for Housing
11 and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Program to end homelessness in her
12 community. In addition, she is a great artist, and she won the agency design logo
13 competition for Steadfast Development Corporation.

14 We respectfully request your favorable consideration in confirming the
15 appointment of Ms. Ellenberger.

1 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Ms. Ellenberger's behalf.

2 **Offered Amendments:** None.

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Elena Ellenberger

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

I have been working very closely with the population with dual diagnosis for over 4 years now and I can advocate for the needs and identify gaps in service that we have here on Kauai. I would like to promote recovery, meaningful activities and involvement of people with mental illness (and substance abuse) in the community.

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

I hope to be an active member to help design the policies and the strategies so we in collaboration with the State Government can build an efficient and beneficial care system for the target population.

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

I will protect the consumer by helping them to express their needs and concerns while strictly maintaining his/her confidentiality and protect their rights. I will strive that in all situations they are treated with respect and dignity.

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

I have a degree in Communication/ Teaching and Linguistics which helps me to be a good listener and to be able to identify a potential crisis a consumer is facing. For four years I have been working for a company providing housing for people with SPMI (severe and persistent mental illness) where I am a liaison between the AMHD treatment team, the landlords, Housing Agencies and the consumers. On a daily basis I manage a semi-independent facility for people with SPMI and I also administer and promote a Supported Housing Program for independent living and recovery.

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

I hope to be a part of the decision making process on the improvements of services for the targeted population. Specifically I would like to see a substance abuse rehabilitation facility created on the Island of Kauai.

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

I am very dedicated to the welfare of our consumers. I strongly believe that this population needs an advocate who knows their daily struggles and who would voice their concerns. By nature I am

compassionate and patient in working with people with disabilities and my education in Teaching and Communication has been a great asset in successfully working with the target population. I am persistent and I don't quit if I face obstacles. I pride myself on being reliable and hardworking.

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

I am a member of CoC (Continuum of Care) Kauai Community Alliance where along with other local Federal and State agency members I am working on Homeless Crisis solutions and measures to prevent it.

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?

There is no personal conflict of interest in my participation on the Board. If I ever suspect or witness any conflicting situation I will immediately report it to your staff to get clarifications and instructions on how to proceed.