

# GM 581

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Board Of Nursing, Gubernatorial Nominee, IRIS OKAWA, for a term to expire 06-30-2019.

Report Title: State Board Of Nursing

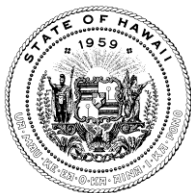
Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):



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

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

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

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

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2017

Friday, March 24, 2017  
9:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 581.**

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR,  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Lee Ann Teshima and I am the Executive Officer for the Board of Nursing, Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department"). The Department thanks you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message No. 581, regarding the **appointment** of Iris Okawa to the Board of Nursing ("Board"). The Department supports the confirmation of Ms. Okawa's appointment to the Board.

Ms. Okawa has served on the Board as an interim appointee since December 19, 2016 and is being appointed as a public member. She has attended 2 of 3 meetings since her appointment. She is prepared for the meetings and actively participates in discussions and is not afraid to ask questions to better understand issues. Ms. Okawa is well respected by the other Board members. As a public member her contribution to the Board is greatly appreciated as she is a true consumer advocate.

The Department believes that Ms. Okawa's interest and willingness in serving on the Board and her desire to contribute to the community will continue to enhance the effectiveness of the Board.

Therefore, the Department supports the confirmation of Iris Okawa to the Board of Nursing and thanks you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**LAW OFFICE OF  
NAOMI COLE**

Attorney at Law  
Office located in the  
Pioneer Plaza

1088 Bishop Street Suite 1217, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Tel. (808) 550-2880/Fax (808) 521-2622

---

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker Chair  
And the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: GM581 Appointment of Iris Okawa – Letter in Support/Nomination for the State Board of Nursing

Ms. Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support for the appointment of Iris Okawa to the State Board of Nursing.

Iris Okawa has been one of my best friends for the past 20 years. I first became acquainted with Attorney Iris Okawa approximately 20 years ago when she served as a Real Estate Commissioner on the Real Estate Branch at the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. At that time, I was one of the attorneys working for the Real Estate Commission. We were both present at the Real Estate Commission meetings, which were held twice a month. She was extremely dedicated serving as a Commissioner, as she rarely missed a single meeting during her many years of service. She was Chair of the Laws and Rules Committee, spear heading the recodification of the condominium rules and regulations and regulation of real estate professionals across the State. Her responsibility was to ensure that the licensees were properly educated before serving the public.

I left the Real Estate Commission to go into private practice and became closer friends with Iris, through working on client cases with each other as co-counsel, and against each other, as opposing counsel in the private sector. As a colleague, I can confidently state that Iris is one of the smartest attorneys I have had the opportunity to work with and learn from.

Iris has always aspired to give back to the community. Once her service with the Real Estate Commission was complete, she served as a Commissioner on the Honolulu Liquor Commission for several years. As an attorney going before the Honolulu Liquor Commission, I witnessed her making decisions regarding applicants and licensees in an adjudicatory process, listening to the facts, applying the law, and rendering decisions that were fair and unbiased. She is a strong person and will make rulings based on what she believes is right, even if those rulings may not be popular. I know from personal experience that Iris' back ground as an attorney in private practice, administrative decision maker, and experience on boards and commission will make her an invaluable asset for the Nursing Board.

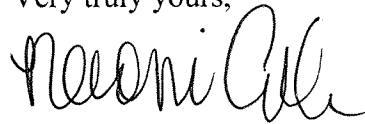
March 22, 2017

Page 2

Yes, Iris has the intelligence and experience, but it is her compassion, integrity, strong moral character, and willingness to help others before herself, that places her beyond the baseline requirements of just another board member. Her caring and compassionate nature coupled with ensuring a certain level of care will make her an excellent board member for the nursing profession.

I look up to Iris as a mentor, teacher and someone I aspire to be like one day. She is the person I go to when I need advice, to seek her words of wisdom. She is my role model, and the Nursing Board will be very fortunate to have Iris Okawa serve on their board. I strongly support Iris Okawa to the Nursing Board.

Very truly yours,

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

NAOMI COLE



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

**Friday, March 24, 2017, 9 a.m.**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**TO:** The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM581 – CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION  
OF GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE IRIS OKAWA TO THE STATE BOARD OF NURSING**

I am Stafford Kiguchi with Bank of Hawaii testifying in strong support of the Governor's nomination of Iris Okawa to the State Board of Nursing. I have not only had the privilege of working with Iris at Bank of Hawaii for the past six years, but at the same time have also served with her on the board of the local chapter of the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

Iris always conducts herself in the highest professional manner and has the respect and admiration of her colleagues at both the bank and ADA. In her role at ADA she is a dedicated and actively involved volunteer board member. I know she would continue to bring the same enthusiasm and commitment to this Board. She has tremendous integrity, the highest ethical standards, a positive outlook, and sincerely cares about the wellbeing of our community.

Iris recognizes and shares the broad public concern about our aging population and the increasing health needs that will come with that. Her professional background and experience allow her to bring a valuable perspective and contribution to the Nursing board.

I appreciate her willingness to serve in this voluntary capacity and respectfully encourage the committee's favorable consideration of her nomination.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Stafford Kiguchi'.

Stafford Kiguchi  
Executive Vice President

John Ohama  
420 Waiakamilo Road, #113  
Honolulu, HI 96817

March 23, 2017

Senator Roz Baker  
State Capitol  
State Senate  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Dear Ms. Baker,

I am writing to you in support of Iris Okawa to the Nursing Board of the State of Hawaii. Iris has served with me in the past on the Real Estate Commission and has contributed her time and expertise in the most unselfish and productive way that one can as a volunteer board member.

Speaking as the former Chair of the Real Estate Commission, I think that Iris will be an invaluable asset to the Nursing Board, to the members of the general public, as well as members of the profession. In my experience, Iris has only the best interest of the public and the industry in mind when she serves. She is trustworthy, has the highest morals, the highest standard of ethics and will work to instill or perpetuate that in whatever capacity she is serving for the public and that industry. I cannot recommend Iris highly enough for a position on the Nursing Board.

Please consider the appointment of Iris Okawa to the Nursing Board. In my opinion, she is worthy of your strongest consideration. My hope is that you appoint her, and that the public, the members of that profession, and the State will be the beneficiaries of her appointment. Iris is an example of selfless serving for the greater good. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,



John Ohama  
Former Chairperson  
Hawaii Real Estate Commission