

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND**

**Wednesday, April 12, 2017
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 664
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE BOARD OF
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SAMUEL GON III,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE JUNE 30, 2021.**

Governor's Message 664 submits the Governor's nomination of Samuel Gon III for the O'ahu seat on the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board). Dr. Gon's training and background also meet the requirements for the expert in natural resources and Hawaiian traditional and customary practices. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this nomination.**

Dr. Gon was first nominated to the Board in 2006 and served two 4-year terms. He stepped down in 2014 and returned to the Board as an interim member to fill the seat of Ms. Ulalia Woodside, who resigned in August 2016. The Department is pleased to welcome Dr. Gon back and welcomes his broad knowledge of natural and cultural resources in Hawai'i.

Dr. Gon is the Senior Scientist and Cultural Advisor for The Nature Conservancy in Hawai'i. He has over 35 years of experience in Hawaiian ecology, including biological inventory and research, field ecology, ecological modeling and biological database management. Dr. Gon is also a Kumu Hula and is proficient in the Hawaiian language. He is able to combine the two to provide a cultural lens to the Department's mission to:

Enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of the people of Hawai'i *nei*, and its visitors, in partnership with others from the public and private sectors.

CARTY S. CHANG
INTERIM CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DANIEL S. QUINN
INTERIM FIRST DEPUTY

W. ROY HARDY
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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

Because of his holistic view of natural and cultural resources, Dr. Gon is often able to propose creative ways to address issues faced by the boards to address the variety of concerns raised by members of the public.

The Department strongly supports Dr. Samuel Gon's nomination to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.



The Nature Conservancy
Hawai'i Program
923 Nu'uuanu Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96817

Tel(808) 537-4508
Fax(808) 545-2019
nature.org/hawaii

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting Governor's Messages 663 and 664 for the Confirmation of Samuel M. Gon III
to the Board of Land and Natural Resources
Senate Committee on Water and Land
Wednesday, April 12, 2017, 2:45PM, Room 224

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. We manage 40,000 acres in 14 preserves and work in 19 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs and waters of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnerships with government, private parties and communities to protect Hawai'i's important watershed forests and coral reefs.

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i strongly supports the appointment of Dr. Samuel M. Gon III to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Sam has worked at The Nature Conservancy for more than three decades and currently serves as our Senior Scientist and Cultural Advisor. In this capacity, he oversees and guides the science behind our terrestrial conservation operations in Hawai'i. His expertise is critical in directing the vision and goals of our organization. Sam's long history in and broad knowledge of Hawaiian ecology makes him a valuable resource to others in the conservation community as well. He is often called upon by colleagues at the state, federal, and local levels for guidance, and his interactions have earned him the reputation of being intelligent, fair, and completely dedicated to the wise use and management of Hawaii's natural resources. Sam's extensive volunteer and professional associations further demonstrate his commitment to the protection of Hawai'i's natural heritage.

In addition, Sam's knowledge of Hawaiian history, culture, and language allows a broad perspective to ensure the best protection of Hawaii's unique natural and cultural heritage.

Sam is a leader in the conservation community whose expertise in Hawaiian ecology and culture will serve the Board well. We respectfully encourage your favorable consideration of Samuel Gon's appointment to the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mark Agne Paul Alston Christopher Benjamin Dr. C. Tana Burkert Anne Carter Richard Cooke III Brian Doyle
Thomas Gottlieb James Haynes III Sean Hehir Eiichiro Kuwana Duncan MacNaughton Kathy Matsui
James Polk Jean Rolles Scott Rolles Crystal Rose Dustin Sellers Nathan Smith Peter Tomozawa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 9, 2017 8:05 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: 2kahaualea@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM664 on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM*

GM664

Submitted on: 4/9/2017

Testimony for WTL on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kylee Mar	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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, April 7, 2017 3:27 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: jeannine@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM664 on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM

GM664

Submitted on: 4/7/2017

Testimony for WTL on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha mai kākou! I STRONGLY SUPPORT the appointment and confirmation of Dr. Samuel M. 'Ohukani'ōhi'a Gon, III to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources. Dr. Gon is a senior scientist and cultural advisor at the Hawai'i Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i, a leading expert on Hawaiian ecology and a 'Living Treasure' of Hawai'i. Dr. Gon protects Hawaiian species, ecosystems, and culture as well as shares his vast knowledge of them. I had the good fortune to be on a nature walk with Dr. Gon a few years ago and learned so much, especially about the value of our watersheds and sustainability. He is exactly what is needed for Board of Land and Natural Resources and heartedly ask for your support.

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
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2017 10:25 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: launahele@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM664 on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM*

GM664

Submitted on: 4/6/2017

Testimony for WTL on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton	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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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 5, 2017 5:58 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: kaleo.manuel@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM664 on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM

GM664

Submitted on: 4/5/2017

Testimony for WTL on Apr 12, 2017 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marvin Kaleo Manuel	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members, I support the Governor's nomination of Dr. Samuel 'Ohu Gon III to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR). As a former BLNR Member, Dr. Gon has provided an invaluable and holistic perspective on natural and cultural resource management and has the experience and knowledge to act in the best interest of the public trust. I ask that you confirm Dr. Gon as a member of the BLNR. Mahalo nui.

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: [Laurie Baron](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM 663 and GM 664
Date: Saturday, April 8, 2017 9:39:24 AM

Aloha Kakou,

I'm writing in support of the nomination of Dr. Sam Ohu Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

Dr. Gon has demonstrated his capacity and willingness to work tirelessly to malama these islands. He has a deep and broad understanding of the science underlying conservation.

Hawaii is profoundly blessed by Dr. Gon's dedication to the land and ecosystems. Thank you for choosing him to serve on the BLNR.

Aloha,
Laurie Baron
Kaneohe

April 12, 2017

Testimony in favor of Governor's Message 663 and Governor's Message 664
Samuel Gon III
Board of Land and Natural Resources

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land

Aloha Senator Rhoads and Members of the Committee on Water and Land:

My name is Annette Kaohelaulii and I live in Kailua. I am pleased to be submitting testimony in favor of the appointment of Samuel Gon III to the Board of Land and Natural Resources to complete the term ending 6/30/2017 and a new term ending 6/30/2021.

I have known Sam Gon since he was a Sierra Club High School Hiker from McKinley High School in the 1970's. I have watched his career over all these years and am very proud to have been an adult leader in the High School Hikers program when he and my son and many other fine young people were in that program. Sam is a exemplary example of the modern Hawaiian man. His knowledge of the natural history of our islands and his ever expanding cultural expertise is amazing.

His background and previous term on the Board make him the perfect nominee for 19 a position on the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my personal testimony for this nomination.

From: [Azuma Yosuke](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Monday, April 10, 2017 3:44:51 AM

To the Senate Water and Land Committee:

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

I hope he can continue his good work for Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Ann Azuma

From: [florence fines](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 663/664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 10:47:20 PM

To whom it may concern:

It is with great pleasure and without reservation that I am writing to you in support of the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources. Dr. Gon is well known in the community and statewide for his expertise as a conservation biologist and his immense knowledge of Hawaiian history and culture, and I believe he will be a great asset as a source of knowledge, skill and expertise. I have no doubt that he will serve with integrity and honorably as a board member for the DLNR.

Sincerely,

Florence Fines

From: [James Seto](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Sunday, April 9, 2017 12:15:27 PM

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

I have personally known Dr. [Sam Ohu Gon III](#) for over 15 years and through the years I have witnessed his tireless efforts to protect and support our Hawaiian Islands culture and land. I humbly ask you to also support his appointment. He will be an asset to our State and we would be so lucky to have him in this position. Mahalo!

James Seto

From: [curtis.manny.manchester](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Saturday, April 8, 2017 1:28:00 PM

Dear Senate Water and Land Committee,

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

Mahalo,
Curtis A. Manchester III

From: [Tim Bowden](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Saturday, April 8, 2017 10:48:58 AM

Aloha!

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

Mahalo!

Tim

From: [Ashley Romero](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: Support for GM663 and GM664
Date: Saturday, April 8, 2017 7:36:53 AM

Aloha,

I am writing to SUPPORT Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

Mahalo,
Ashley

From: [AkamaiScott.](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Saturday, April 8, 2017 6:09:58 AM

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

Mahalo

From: [Thom Kam](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 9:39:45 PM

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

Mahalo,
Thom Kam

From: [Holle Chernis](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: UPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 9:04:49 PM

Aloha,

I highly SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo,

Holle Chernis

Noho Nani Mai

**Historic & Hula
Inspired
Arts**

510-898-8020

[Facebook](#)

[My Blog](#)

From: [Shannon Rivera](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 8:52:51 PM

To whom this may concern,

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources. We need more people like Dr. Sam Gon in leadership positions, not only in Hawaii- but nationwide. He is an asset to our community and I look forward to the work he will do on this Board.

Mahalo

--

Shannon N. Rivera

From: [Jolyn Rosa](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 8:29:12 PM

Aloha,

I am writing to express my support fro the appointment of Sam Ohu Gon III to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

When I attended a meeting earlier this year regarding the issue of Paradise Park, I saw Mr. Gon's knowledge and reasoning in action. He is an asset to the board, and his service is a benefit to the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you,
Jolyn Okimoto Rosa
Manoa

From: [Rochelle Nowaki](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 4:56:48 PM

I SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Mahalo,
Rochelle Nowaki
RNOWAKI@hawaii.edu

From: [Dr. Pikunas](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT for GM663 and GM664
Date: Friday, April 7, 2017 9:53:45 PM

To the Senate Committee in Water and Land,

Without reservation, I wholeheartedly SUPPORT the appointment of Sam Gon to serve on the Board of Land and Natural Resources through 2021.

I look forward to his confirmation hearing. Mahalo for making it happen!

Aloha ~ Kristina Pikunas PhD
Psychologist Private Practice
Assistant Clinical Professor
University of Hawaii
John A. Burns School of Medicine
kpikunas@hotmail.com
(808) 228-4560

Ke Kōmike no ka Wai a me ka `Āina,

Re: nomination of Dr. Sam Gon III to the Board of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha Senators Rhoads and Gabbard,

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of Dr. Sam Gon III to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (GM 663 and GM 664). I have known Sam for almost 40(!) years, ever since we were both undergraduates at the University. During every school break Sam and I and a group of like-minded folks went on volunteer service projects in the Hawaiian backcountry for the Hawai`i Service Trip Program. We built fences to keep goats and pigs out of sensitive ecosystems, built trails to improve public access to scenic areas, and eradicated invasive plants. Over the years, Sam participated in, or led, probably a few 10s of these trips. They require physical and mental fortitude to deal with challenging terrain and vegetation, and to live in sometimes primitive backcountry campsites. Why this is relevant to Sam's appointment to the BLNR is that most of all these trips require strong dedication to the Hawaiian environment because the work is difficult and all volunteer!

Sam is one of those rare people on which one can confer the title of genius. He is skillful at anything he tries – science, music, `ōlelo Hawai`i, the intricacies of land policy, and most importantly, how these and many other aspects of Hawai`i nei are inter-related. Because he is so smart, clever, and fair-minded, Sam will be a very valuable asset to the Board, especially when they need to make difficult or contentious decisions. Sam is one of very few people who combine deep knowledge of both the western and Hawaiian viewpoints of our ecosystem, and the BLNR will be fortunate to have Sam's expertise.

Sincerely,



Scott Rowland

41-028 Mānana St.

Waimānalo, 96795

scott@hawaii.edu

(note: I work at the University, but am writing this as an individual)