

**Testimony in support of GM 778 : Simeon Acoba Jr. for the Board of Regents**  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
April 18, 2017 @ 1:30pm  
Hawai'i State Legislature, Room 211

To: Honorable Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Honorable Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Committee Members

From: Amy Agbayani, chair  
FILIPINO-AMERICAN ADVOCACY NETWORK (FAN)  
amy\_agbayani@yahoo.com

My name is Amy Agbayani, chair of the Filipino-American Advocacy Network (FAN) in strong support of Mr. Simeon Acoba Jr. to be reappointed as a Regent of the University of Hawai'i. Regent Acoba was confirmed by the Senate to fill the remainder of a term. During these past two years as a Regent, he has demonstrated his competence, independence and hard work. He has outstanding qualifications and his reappointment is an important affirmation of the importance of diversity for the BOR. Regent Acoba will continue to be a valuable member to fill a full term if confirmed by the Senate.

I have known Mr. Acoba for five decades. I first met Mr. Acoba Fall 1964 when he was an undergraduate political science major and an active ASUH student leader. At the time, I was a new graduate student with the East West Center and we were classmates in a political theory class taught by the iconic professor Allan Saunders. Over the years, I have observed his academic success, his intellectual and legal analysis, his integrity and fair judgments as a member of the judiciary and his service to the community. He has had a very long relationship with UH, first as an undergraduate, as a deputy AG advising the President and the board, lecturer and mentor of many UH law students, interim Regent and proud father of a JABSOM medical graduate. Mr. Acoba and his wife Carolyn continue to share their appreciation of their alma mater by their donation for a scholarship program. UH in turn has acknowledged his contributions to our state and the University by awarding him the UH Foundation Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award for 2015.

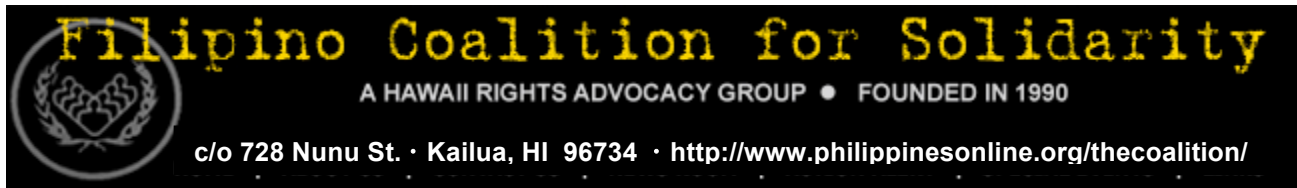
A few months ago, I retired from UH Manoa after 45 years of service and continue to be active in community affairs. I have had the honor to observe and work with Mr. Acoba on community events relating to civil rights and diversity. I was very pleased that his work was recognized by the Japanese American Citizen's League, one of the leading civil rights groups in Hawai'i and the nation. The state continues to benefit from

workshops and policy recommendations of the Access to Justice Commission, which was founded by Mr. Acoba when he was an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

Although I am familiar with Mr. Acoba's public service which impacts many policy areas, Native Hawaiians and all ethnic groups in our state, I will focus my comments on his impact and importance to the Filipino community as a role model for Filipinos and our multicultural community. Regent Acoba was honored by the Filipino Community Center for his public service leadership. I believe it is important for the private sector, the state and the university to meet goals for inclusion and affirmative action to increase representation and success of groups who are under-represented in public and private sector management and policy making boards. I believe representation and diversity in state government is important and results in better policies for our community. Mr. Acoba will add ethnic diversity, his competence and experience to serve the state of Hawai'i and the University. If confirmed, Mr. Acoba and Ms. Doctor Sparks will join current Regent Michelle Tagorda so that 3 of the 15 Regents will be of Filipino ancestry effective July 1, 2017.

The Filipino community has grown since the first immigrants came to Hawai'i in 1906. According to the United States Census, people of Filipino ancestry are the second largest ethnic group in Hawai'i, with fifteen per cent of residents identifying themselves as Filipino alone and twenty five per cent identifying themselves as Filipino and another race. Students of Filipino ancestry are also the second largest ethnic group in the department of education and represent more than half of the student population at Farrington high school, Waipahu high school, and Lanai high and elementary school. Students of Filipino ancestry are underrepresented in the University of Hawai'i system. Filipino students comprise only thirteen per cent of the entire University of Hawaii system student population. One percent of management/executives, six per cent of the community colleges faculty and two and a half per cent of the University of Hawaii at Manoa faculty are of Filipino ancestry. The seventeen per cent postsecondary degree rate held by Filipinos is significantly lower than Caucasians (42%) and Japanese (35%).

During his brief time as a Regent, Mr. Acoba has demonstrated his, competence, integrity, engagement and dedication to the University of Hawai'i. I am confident that he will continue to be a responsible member of the Board of Regents. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank him for being a mentor to many young professionals and for his leadership to improve access to justice and equal opportunity. He has a deep appreciation of the history of UH and our state. I am confident that as a Regent, he will continue to make a positive contribution to the UH and our state. I respectfully ask you to confirm his nomination as a Regent.



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 780  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 414

To: Chair Kaiali'i Kahele and Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani  
Senate Higher Education Committee Members

From: Jovanie de la Cruz, Executive Board Member, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, NORMA DOCTOR SPARKS, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

My name is Jovanie de la Cruz, executive board member of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity. The Coalition strongly supports the confirmation of Ms. Norma Doctor Sparks to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Since its inception in 1990, the Coalition has represented more than 50 Filipino community leaders, whose aim is to work for social justice issues to empower Filipinos to make socially responsible contributions to Hawai'i and our global neighbors through education, advocacy, and social action.

We believe that Ms. Sparks is fully qualified and able to work well with the UH Board of Regents to govern with transparency, accountability and competency to advance our university's fiduciary, scholarly, executive, humanitarian, and socially just mission in higher education for Hawai'i's diverse student body and communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our strong support for Ms. Sparks' confirmation.

Respectfully,

Jovanie de la Cruz  
Executive Board Member  
Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

# Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President  
P. O. Box 270126 \* Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 780  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 414

To: Chair Kaiali'i Kahele and Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani  
Senate Higher Education Committee Members

From: Charlene Cuaresma, Vice President, Filipino American Citizens League

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, NORMA DOCTOR SPARKS, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

I am proud to submit our full support of Ms. Norma Doctor Sparks to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. My name is Charlene Cuaresma, vice president of the Filipino American Citizens League. The Filipino American Citizens League was formed over twenty years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

The Coalition supports Ms. Sparks because she will contribute her executive and legal expertise, cultural and class sensitivities, and neighbor island, as well as national, lens to challenging statewide issues of preparing students for complex global labor force demands. Her planning background also alerts her to the necessary conversations to bring to the BOR table on historical, social, political and economic impacts on higher education. We hope that she will also help position our university in an empowering role during these austere and precarious times to prepare students to chart a socially just course to navigate through these critical forces that will shape the future of our island and planet. Her executive and government expertise is also needed to help put together top UH leaders who are competent, accountable, committed, respectful, and worthy of trust by the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our strong support of Ms. Sparks' consideration for confirmation.

Very Sincerely,

Charlene Cuaresma



## *Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.*

*... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.*

*NAMI, P.O. Box 2034 Aiea, HI 96701*

*E-mail: bramosrazon@aol.com*

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 778  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 414

To: Chair Kaiali'i Kahele and Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani  
Senate Higher Education Committee Members

From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors Inc.

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

My name is Beatrice Ramos-Razon. As the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.), I am proud to submit our strong support for Gov. David Ige's nomination of Mr. Simeon Acoba for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 volunteer nurses, instructors, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawai'i's people through education, mentoring, advocacy and service.

NAMI recognizes Mr. Acoba's excellent service in his past term and is pleased that Governor David Ige has nominated him for a second term. We are confident and trust that Mr. Acoba will continue to work effectively with his colleagues for student excellence, capitol improvements, filling of vacant executive leadership positions, and retaining the high integrity and reputation of the University of Hawai'i system as a welcoming place, where diversity is a shining and protected asset. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our strong support for Mr. Acoba's nomination.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDONA  
President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.



# THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

94-428 Mokuola St., Suite 302 Waipahu, Hawai'i 96797 Phone: 680-0451 Fax: 680-7510 www.filcom.org

*Our mission is to develop, own and operate a community center that provides social, economic and education services and to promote and perpetuate Filipino culture and customs in the State of Hawai'i.*

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April 17, 2017

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**RE: Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. (Ret.) - UH Board of Regents**

Dear Honorable Senator Kahele,

Justice Simeon R. Acoba continues to serve the State of Hawaii with distinction. His experience within the community is vast. His ability to ensure that his concerns, beliefs, and ideals come with his ability to speak candidly about the issues that come before him.

His own personal experience as an undergraduate student and as an adjunct professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa is a vital asset. His intelligence is beyond reproach and his solid dedication to contribute to the State of Hawaii continues on.

The Filipino Community Center, Inc. in Waipahu, Hawaii recently honored Justice Acoba for his extraordinary acts of service and we strongly support Justice Acoba's desire to serve on the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents. Thank you for considering our letter of recommendation and praise of Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.

Sincerely,  
The Filipino Community Center, Inc.

Edmund C. Aczon  
Chair  
Board of Directors

# SanHi Government Strategies

a limited liability law partnership

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

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[rtsujimura@awlaw.com](mailto:rtsujimura@awlaw.com)

DATE: April 14, 2017

TO: Senator Kaiali'i Kahele  
Chair, Committee on Higher Education  
*Submitted Via Capitol Website*

RE: **GM 778 – Confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, Simeon Acoba**  
**Hearing Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.**  
**Conference Room: 414**

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Dear Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I am Gary Slovin and I am writing in **support** of the nomination of Simeon Acoba to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii (BOR).

Earlier, I wrote in support of Judge Acoba when he was first nominated to the Board. I noted his outstanding career as a jurist as well as his service to those persons in the community who cannot easily hire lawyers when they are brought into the judicial system. While serving on the Board these last few years, Judge Acoba has continued his community work. His passion for those in need of help is something to behold, as is his ability to work with others in a collaborative way. His presence on the Board has been a benefit to the Board and to the University of Hawaii.

Judge Acoba is an outstanding person who is committed to serving his community. He is a strong voice for what is fair and just and merits reappointment to the Board of Regents. Accordingly, I respectfully urge the committee to support his nomination.

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

TESTIMONY OF JAN SULLIVAN IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF  
SIMEON ACOBA, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF  
HAWAII BOARD OF REGENTS (GM 778)

April 18, 2017 1:30pm, Conference Room 414

Dear Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Justice Simeon Acoba to serve on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

I have had the privilege of serving on the Board of Regents alongside Justice Acoba for several years now.

Justice Acoba consistently dedicates time and effort into thoroughly reviewing the issues that come before the board. He diligently reviews all of the materials that are presented to the Board, provides substantive comment and input, and shares his well thought out positions with the rest of the Board.

His judicial experience and acumen are an asset to the Board and reflect in his reasoning and judgement in decision-making.

While he may not always be in the majority when it comes to voting, he is well respected on the board, and is always well reasoned in his explaining his positions.

Our Board was seriously impacted by the financial disclosure law and experienced many mid-term resignations. As a result, normal Board continuity for this complex institution was severely disrupted. We need to maintain continuity on the Board, and Justice Acoba's continued service will also help by stabilizing the Board.

I sincerely request your support of Justice Acoba and ask that you give your full consideration of his desire to continue serve on our Board.



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 778  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 414

To: Chair Kaiali'i Kahele and Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani  
Senate Higher Education Committee Members

From: Domingo Los Banos, Board Member, Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

My name is Domingo Los Banos. I strongly support Governor David Ige's nominee, retired judge Simeon Acoba, Jr., for consideration and confirmation to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

I serve as a board member of the Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum. I also retired many years ago as an educator and Leeward District Superintendent of the Hawai'i State Department of Education. Since then, I have produced a documentary to educate the public about the role of Filipino World War II veterans called "Unsung Heroes".

During my whole career as an educator, Filipinos, Native Hawaiians, and many disenfranchised groups of children are more likely than other groups to come from struggling public schools where more than three-fourths of the students qualify for federally funded school lunches. I know that these are the students who are now parents, and even grandparents. Their descendants need a champion like Mr. Acoba to "arm wrestle" those folks on the Board of Regents to ensure that our land grant University of Hawai'i system serves all students fairly to realize their talents and gifts, in order to give back to Hawai'i and to our global societies.

In closing, I am grateful to Governor David Ige for nominating a candidate with the highest integrity in Mr. Simeon Acoba, Jr. Thank you for your kind consideration to approve his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Domingo Los Banos  
Member, Board of Directors  
Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 778  
Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 414

To: Chair Kaiali'i Kahele and Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani  
Senate Higher Education Committee Members

From: Deanna Espinas, Board Member, Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

My name is Deanna Espinas. As a board member of the Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum, we support the confirmation of gubernatorial nominee Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the UH Board of Regents. We believe that education of Hawai'i's rich multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and labor history should never be forgotten, because historical lessons learned can serve as a social justice compass to understand and resolve persistent inequalities in striving for a civil and just society.

We believe that Mr. Acoba possesses the life experiences and socio-cultural heritage and background of living in Hawai'i that can enrich the perspectives in deliberating policies and resolving difficult issues that continue to overshadow the real work of increasing access to a quality education for all students, including those who are under-represented, low-income and first to go to college in their generation.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to offer our testimony for Mr. Acoba, and for your consideration to support his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Deanna Espinas

TO: Senate Higher Education Committee

FROM: Wilfredo Tungol, Esq. (Phone 387-7412)

RE: GM 778 Confirmation of Justice Simeon R. Acoba (Ret.) to UH BOR

Date of Hearing: April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m.

Chair Kahele, Vice-Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT for your confirmation of retired Justice Simeon Acoba to the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents. Governor Ige is to be commended for appointing such a distinguish public servant and legal community leader to our only public higher education system in the state.

I have known Justice Acoba for over thirty years as a member of the Hawaii State Bar Association and as a practicing attorney. His legal acumen and scholarship while he served in the appellate courts are well known in the legal community. What is less known, but just as important is his contribution outside of his role as a jurist. He was the initial chair of the Access to Justice Commission which looked into ways of providing legal services to low income people who are appearing before the court but could not afford private representation. He returned to serve again as chair upon his retirement from the Supreme Court. For his accomplishment as associate justice, he was nominated by CJ Recktenwald for, and received the prestigious Opperman Award by the American Judicature Society in 2013. He also received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Hawaii Alumni Association in 2015 for his contribution to the State of Hawaii, the University of Hawaii, and the Filipino community. The Hawaii State Bar Association also recognized his contribution to the legal community with its HSBA President's Award. His community contribution was also recognized by the Filipino Community Center with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.

Justice Acoba has deep ties and aloha to the University of Hawaii. He is a distinguished alumni (Class of 1966) and a former government student leader. He also taught at the Richardson School of Law early in his legal career, and later returned to teach part-time after his retirement from the bench. He had served as an adviser to former President Harlan Cleveland; and currently serves the remaining term of a regent who resigned in 2014. One of his sons (Dr. Jarred Acoba) also attended the University of Hawaii's John Burns School of Medicine.

And of course, his wife and staunchest supporter for over 40 years, Caroline, also attended the University of Hawaii.

I am confident that Justice Acoba will serve the University of Hawaii ably and with the truest of intent to advance the stature of the University of Hawaii system as one of the top public institutions in the country. The people of the State of Hawaii is fortunate to have Justice Acoba continue to serve in this important policy making role. I am certain that this Farrington High School and University of Hawaii alumni will make the University of Hawaii one of the best institutions of public learning in the country.

I respectfully ask you to act favorably towards his confirmation.

TESTIMONY OF  
RANDOLPH G. MOORE  
to the  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

April 18, 2017  
G.M. 778

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii  
Gubernatorial Nominee Simeon Acoba for a term to expire June 30, 2022

Chair Kahele and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express my strong support for the nomination of Simeon Acoba to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

I am speaking for myself a vice chair of the Board of Regents. The regents as a body do not take positions on the nomination of individuals for the Board.

Justice Acoba is completing a nearly-three year term as an at-large regent, having been appointed to fill a Honolulu board member vacancy when former regent John Dean resigned in 2014. Justice Acoba has been an active, interested, conscientious, and productive member of the Board. He is currently a vice chair of the intercollegiate athletics committee, a member of the academic and student affairs committee, and is the regent member of the University Health Partners of Hawaii, an Internal Revenue Service Section 501(c)(3) organization that manages the clinical practice of participating members of the University's John A. Burns School of Medicine.

Justice Acoba regularly attends meetings of other board committees as an active observer, so he has exposure to and experience with all aspects of the Board's activities and responsibilities. As you might imagine of someone with his background, he brings to board deliberations his inquisitive, thoughtful, and articulate manner with a strong sense of social justice.

The University of Hawaii is a large and complex organization. It takes more than one year for new regents to "get up to speed." The board and the University would benefit by Justice Acoba's continued participation and contributions as a regent.

Thank you for your consideration.

# SUSAN M. ICHINOSE

*Attorney at Law*

April 16, 2017

The Hon. Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
The Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members of the Committee on Higher Education  
Hawai'i State Senate  
Conference Room 414  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: *GM 778, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.*

**CR 414, April 18, 2017, 1:30 p.m.**

Dear Senators Kahele, Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education,

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Governor Ige's nomination of the Hon. Simeon Acoba to the University's Board of Regents.

Justice Acoba is the right man for the job. He is a leader, a jurist of great foresight and integrity, and a nonetheless humble man. I know him as my former Law Professor; as the Circuit Court judge who was assigned to oversee my trial cases; and as the Associate Justice of the Supreme Court who wrote his opinions with foresight, intellectual honesty, and fairness. He was distinguished on the bench for all that, and for his stalwart voice for equality and excellence.

Justice (and Regent) Acoba has brought that voice to the Board. As a taxpayer, and as an alumna of the University, I believe that he is the right person to be appointed to the demanding job of Regent. In today's high-pressure world, I am concerned about the future of my alma mater. I have witnessed its declining enrollment, the disrepair of its physical plant, the turbulent comings and goings of its ostensible administrators. It is for these reasons that I have followed the recent activities of its Board of Regents with great interest. I have noted that Justice/Regent Acoba has been most diligent and has brought his pre-eminent sense of fair play and foresightedness to the Board's consideration of how the UH system should treat its major problems and concerns.

| P. O. Box  
| 240749

| Honolulu, HI  
| 96824-0749

| Phone  
| 808.377.8800

| E-Mail  
| smiaalaw@gmail.com

The Hon. Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
The Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members of the Committee on Higher Education  
April 16, 2017  
Page 2

For all these reasons and more (he is also a product of Hawaii's public school system and the University; a family man and father of distinguished college graduates, and a leader in the community), he should be designated a permanent member of the Board of Regents.

Thank you for your consideration of this message.

Mahalo, me ke Aloha pumehana.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle N. Kidani". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jesse K. Souki  
Honolulu, Hawaii

April 13, 2017

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

I **strongly support** the nomination and reappointment of Regent Simeon Acoba for the City and County of Honolulu seat on the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii (UH).

I make this recommendation with the pride of a UH Manoa undergraduate and graduate alumni, the concern of a parent who wants UH to continue to be a serious option for Hawaii's high school graduates, and the knowledge of Mr. Acoba's work ethic and temperament having served with him on the legislature's recent transient accommodations tax (TAT) working group.

Mr. Acoba's accomplished career solving complex issues that confront Hawaii speaks for itself. He considered a wide range of controversies confronting our state as an associate justice of the Intermediate Court of Appeals and the Hawaii Supreme Court. UH needs people like him who can solve complex problems and help it be a world class institution of higher learning.

Accolades aside, I have seen his temperament tested as chair of the aforementioned working group. As you know, the TAT is a long simmering issue that involves the highest levels of state and county governments. As chair of this working group, Mr. Acoba was able to navigate rational, solid arguments and positions on all sides of the issue and have all involved work collectively. Although some agreed to disagree, he was able to keep the conversations civil, productive, and guided the group to come up with alternatives in a report for the legislature's consideration and deliberation. It was a great experience working under his leadership.

It is also important to note that he currently lectures at UH's William S. Richardson School of Law. His willingness to serve in this way shows that he is interested in UH, its students, and its programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jesse K. Souki



Robin K. Campaniano  
3525 Lelehune Place  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822  
April 13, 2017

Senator Kaiiali'i Kahele  
Chair,  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Letter in support of Simeon Acoba, Candidate for University of Hawai'i  
Board of Regents

Dear Chair Kahele,

I humbly submit this letter in support of Justice Simeon Acoba's candidacy for the O'ahu seat on the University of Hawai'i's Board of Regents.

Justice Acoba has a distinguished career serving the state and is a proud alumni of the University. This, along with his service as a Special Assistant to former University President Harlan Cleveland, and his interim appointment as a Regent well qualifies him for this role.

Justice Acoba is a man of great character and unquestionable integrity, and imposes a high standard of service excellence upon himself.

As an Emeritus Regent for the University, an active participant in University affairs, and as a participant in the affairs of our Filipino community, I believe I have some understanding on the challenges and demands which Simeon will face. I firmly believe that he is well qualified for the demands placed upon a Regent, and will serve the people of our State well. We will be well served with Justice Acoba as a Regent of the University of Hawai'i.

Thus I urge your favorable consideration of his candidacy and would be grateful of your support of Simeon Acoba.

Yours Very Truly,

/s/

Robin Campaniano

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 414  
by Brandon Marc Higa (as current law student)

**GM778 – Gubernatorial Appointment of the Honorable Simeon Acoba  
to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Honolulu Seat**

Chair Kahele, Vice-Chair Kidani and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **testimony in strong support of GM778** pertaining to Governor David Y. Ige's appointment of the Honorable Simeon Acoba to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Honolulu Seat. I am writing in my capacity as a current law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law and the President Emeritus of the Student Bar Association representing the 250+ law students currently attending the University's law school where Justice Acoba teaches courses, including Criminal Procedure, which is vital to prepare future attorneys for the Bar examination.

Justice Acoba's extensive experience as a retired Hawaii Supreme Court judge is a major asset to the UH Board of Regents as the policy-making and governing body of the only public higher education institution in the State of Hawaii. Justice Acoba's strengths include his keen attention to the underlying principles and procedures upon which Regents create, amend, and repeal policies and rules that impact not only UH students and employees, but also our community supporters.

Justice Acoba consistently demonstrated his high bar for ethics and commitment to fulfilling his fiduciary duty as a Regent by carefully and thoughtfully educating fellow Board members on how Regent policies could potentially impact our rule-making practices. Setting a high bar for respecting democratic principles and institutions is what we should expect from our appointed members of a governing body and I believe Justice Acoba is the gold standard.

Additionally, I would like to highlight Justice Acoba's background as a fellow public high school graduate who pursued a legal education at Northwestern University School of Law and ultimately decided to return to the islands to establish a career. As a fellow public high school graduate, I feel Justice Acoba is a role model and success story to which UH students could look up to, especially as UH expands its efforts in HODOE local high schools. We need positive role models who embody the principles of hard work and success to inspire students to persist in pursuing their goals during their journey at UH and beyond.

Justice Acoba brings credibility, morality, and fairness to the University, and I believe he is a leader that will continue to make sound decisions, as well as inspire students to strive for something great during their academic journey. For the reasons stated above, I reiterate my strong support of Justice Simeon Acoba's candidacy for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

s/Brandon Marc Higa  
President Emeritus, Student Bar Association  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
Entering Class of 2015

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 12:14 PM  
**To:** HRE Testimony  
**Cc:** Lon Paresa  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for GM778 on Apr 18, 2017 13:30PM

**GM778**

Submitted on: 4/11/2017

Testimony for HRE on Apr 18, 2017 13:30PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lon Paresa	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support Judge Acoba for a seat on the UH Board of Regents

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](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

**Michael T. McEnerney**

MBA,JD,CPA/ABV/CFF,ASA,CVA

1100 Ward Suite 720

Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

808-5203-0462

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Senate

Hearing April 18, 2017  
GM 778  
Confirmation of Simeon Acoba  
UH Board of Regents  
Term to Expire 06/30/2022

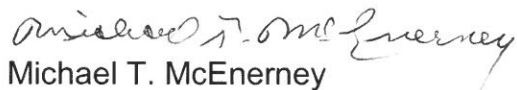
Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Higher Education and the Arts Committee:

My name is Michael T. McEnerney. I am completing my second full year as a Regent from Honolulu. I am writing today in strong support of the appointment of Simeon Acoba for a five year term on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I would be there in person but for the fact that the 18<sup>th</sup> is the final federal due date for individual and other returns.

My term began on July 1, 2015. Regent Acoba was on the board to complete the term ending this June 30. I have greatly appreciated his insight and analysis. Although I do not always agree with his conclusions he has always been a gracious adversary considering whatever points I have raised.

He brings a very important perspective to the board and it is my hope that you will confirm him for a full five year term.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McEnerney

Regent Honolulu to 06/30/2020

April 12, 2017

TO: Senate Higher Education Committee  
State of Hawaii

RE: Testimony in support of Simeon Acoba, Jr.  
Nomination to the UH Board of Regents

BY: Rodney Mukai, Friend and Classmate of Simeon Acoba

My friendship with Simeon began about 60 years ago while attending intermediate school. Simeon attended Dole Intermediate in Kalihi and I attended Kalakaua Intermediate in Kalihi-Kai. We became good friends because we played on the same Pony League baseball team, the Puuhale Pirates.

My testimony will focus on the time spent with Simeon in high school and the University of Hawaii.

At Farrington High School:

- Simeon served as our Senior Class President, a class that had an enrollment of over 1,000 students.
- We were both in the same YMCA club known as the "Gents", a popular Hi-Y club.
- A little known fact is that Simeon was a good singer back in those days. He was one of 6 guys who formed a group known as the "Gems". They were often asked to sing and perform at many of the club dances.

After graduating from Farrington in 1962, we both attended the University of Hawaii:

- Simeon was awarded the prestigious Wallace Rider Farrington Scholarship, a 4-year scholarship that was sponsored by the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.
- Simeon majored in Political Science. In our freshman year at the University, we both were elected as Senators to the student governing body, ASUH. Simeon continued to serve as a Senator for 3 years and in his senior year was elected Vice-President of ASUH.
- Simeon's leadership, vision and perseverance were especially evident when he chaired the Civil Rights Symposium on the UH campus. Our speakers were:
  - Martin Luther King, a founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference
  - James Farmer, head of CORE (Congress of Racial Equality)
  - William James Simmons, Executive Director of the White Citizens Council
  - Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Black Muslims

Simeon's accomplishments during high school and college were outstanding. His core values of trust, fairness, integrity, and friendship have not wavered during the many years I've known him.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Simeon's nomination to the UH Board of Regents. I'm especially proud to know that my friend and classmate is still willing and able to serve the University, our community and the Hawaii that we all love.

Respectfully submitted,



Rodney S. Mukai  
[rod.mukai@locationshawaii.com](mailto:rod.mukai@locationshawaii.com)

LAW OFFICE OF  
DOUGLAS A. CROSIER, LLLC

Attorney at Law  
Office in Century Square

1188 Bishop Street, Suite 707, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813/ Tel. (808) 599-7677/ Fax (808) 599-7679  
E-mail: douglascrosier@gmail.com

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April 14, 2017

VIA EMAIL:  
HREtestimony@capital.hawaii.gov

Senator Kaiali'I Kahele  
Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Supporting the Senate confirmation  
of the Honorable Simeon R. Acoba to the  
University of Hawaii Board of Regents

Dear Chair Kaiali'I Kahele and Senate Committee members:

I am writing to you in strong support of and to express my unequivocal endorsement of Justice Simeon R. Acoba (ret.) for your favorable consideration for the confirmation of Governor David Y. Ige's nomination of Justice Acoba as a regent to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I am an attorney in good standing. I have been in active practice both in the public and private sector for over 37 years in the State of Hawaii. In the course of my practice and my professional activities as an attorney including my activities as the elected 2003 president of the Hawaii State Bar Association, I had the opportunity to work directly with Justice Acoba in various matters including his active participation as a member of the Hawaii State Bar Association's ("HSBA") Standing Committee on Judicial Administration. Justice Acoba was the Judiciary's representative on this important HSBA committee which dealt with numerous and sensitive issues such as the selection and vetting of individuals nominated for judgeship, the HSBA's separate and independent evaluation of current sitting judges whose terms were ending and who had applied to be retained by the Judicial Selection Commission of the State of Hawaii, and the reform of the filing of documents with the courts to enable a more user friendly system for those individuals who represented themselves and those who were represented by attorneys, among other matters and issues, all of which had an important impact on

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele  
Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 14, 2017  
Page 2 of 3

the public, Judiciary, HSBA, and attorneys. Justice Acoba's participation and conduct in this Bar committee demonstrated Acoba's traits of legal acumen, credibility, and patience. He was respected as a leader and valuable committee member. As chair of this Bar's important committee, I personally observed Justice Acoba's weekly participation at our committee's monthly meetings. One of the most amazing and telling observation of him was his persona and presentation which provided the other committee members an environment in which committee members felt free and unrestrained to honestly express their viewpoints without fear or concern that these viewpoints may be contrary to the Judiciary's position on the particular issue at hand. The fact that my attorney committee members were able to be open about their positions allowed the committee to effectively address sensitive issues in a productive manner. From my experience as an attorney, Justice Acoba's ability to set a tone or environment for honest and professional discourse is uncommon among jurists.

Justice Acoba is known and is credited for establishing systemic changes in the expansion of the delivery of legal services to members of the public. He was the founder and first Chair of the Hawaii Supreme Court's ("Supreme Court") Access to Justice Commission ("Commission") which was established by the Supreme Court in 2008. This Commission has and continues to be one of the key programs/projects in Hawaii that focuses on the public's access to our courts. As its chair, Justice Acoba was pivotal in garnering the support of Hawaii's legal community and the public which was crucial in galvanizing the interest and commitment by lawyers to volunteer their services to members of the public who cannot afford the high cost of legal services. In the seven years following its inception, the work of this Commission was recognized nationally by the National Center for Access to Justice ("National Justice Center") which had issued its Justice Index Findings naming Hawaii as one of the top states in the country for best practices of ensuring public access to the civil and criminal justice systems. The National Justice Center measured the public's accessibility to the Hawaii justice system in four categories: access to lawyers for low-income litigants, the systemic support for effective self-representation, support for members of the public with limited language proficiency, and support of those who were otherwise disabled in some manner that impeded their ability to gain access to the courts. In effect, through Justice Acoba's leadership of and guidance to the Commission, the accomplishments and reputation of the Commission rose to national prominence. His role and contribution to this Commission "opened" the doors of legal services to the those who were historically left out.

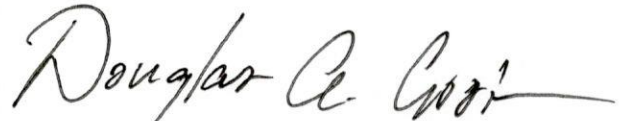
Senator Kaiali'I Kahele  
Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee  
April 14, 2017  
Page 3 of 3

Justice Acoba's appointment would bring to the Board of Regents the same skills, traits, and commitment to excellence and measurable progress and improvement in the University's affairs and issues. His presence on the Board of Regents will bring a strong measure of credibility by a proven track record which would enhance the public's opinion of it as a top quality university and further the efforts of the University of Hawaii in seeking financial support.

I can think of no other more qualified than Justice Acoba for this important appointment. Please feel free to contact me for more information or questions.

Thank you for consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas A. Crosier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Douglas A. Crosier

DAC

cc: Justice Simeon Acoba



**From:** [Leslie Patacsil](#)  
**To:** [HRE Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of Simeon R. Acoba's nomination  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 12, 2017 9:03:42 PM

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Dear Senator Kaiali'i Kahele,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter in support of the nomination and reappointment of Regent Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. for the City and County of Honolulu seat on the Board of Regents, University of Hawaii.

While in law school, I served as a legal extern for Mr. Acoba when he was an Associate Justice at the Hawaii Supreme Court. It was clear to me that Mr. Acoba had the strong ability and requisite temperament to opine on complex legal issues that impacted our state and other jurisdictions. Although he may have disagreed with other justices on certain cases, he maintained his position and articulated his opinions in a professional and objective manner. He made sure that his opinions were not conclusory and supported by sound legal authority.

As an extern, I vividly remember Mr. Acoba having the most extern students than any other justice and he made us his priority. On a daily basis, he took the time to carefully examine our work and provide meaningful feedback. This type of attention to his externs showed that Mr. Acoba was passionate about providing the best education and legal experience to future attorneys who would most likely serve our community.

Finally, Mr. Acoba's many years of dedication and work in our community demonstrate his commitment to ensure that our state's university system continues to thrive and produce excellence. While I was the president of the Filipino Law Student Association at William S. Richardson School of Law, Mr. Acoba strongly supported our organization by speaking at our meetings and symposiums and personally meeting with the students if they had any questions. He further taught classes at the law school despite his busy schedule. Mr. Acoba's support for the Hawaii legal community and our community at large continued with his active involvement with, among other things, the Access to Justice program, the Hawaii Filipino Lawyers Association and the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu. As a Regent, Mr. Acoba will continue to be "hands on" as he has shown to be with other organizations.

Again, I strongly support Mr. Acoba's nomination and reappointment for the City and County of Honolulu seat on the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leslie Patacsil Chinn

**From:** [HKKL](#)  
**To:** [HRE Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** ["Howard K.K. Luke"](#)  
**Subject:** Confirmation Hearing for Justice Simeon R. Acoba (Retired) to the U.H. Board of Regents  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 12, 2017 11:44:59 AM

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To: Members, Senate Higher Education Committee  
Attn: Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Committee Chair

Aloha Chair Kahele and Fellow Committee Members,

My name is Howard K.K. Luke. I am an attorney now in my fortieth year of practice in the State of Hawai'i, and currently the President-Elect of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

I am writing in very strong support of the confirmation of the Hon. Simeon R. Acoba (ret.) to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. He is an exceptionally great choice for the board, and the university will benefit immensely from his tenure as a regent.

The University of Hawai'i is where Justice Acoba's heart always has been, and always will be. I recall when he and I were both entering freshmen at U.H. in the fall of 1962. He had recently graduated from Farrington High School, and I from McKinley. We had never met, but in the three semesters I was at U.H., I kept hearing from those who knew him that he was an outstanding student and student leader, and just a great guy. I left to enter the military before completing two years at the university, and he went on to distinguish himself as a student before being accepted to and entering the very prestigious Northwestern University School of Law after graduation. The legacy he left as a student at U.H. has been enhanced over the years, as he has maintained contact with the university as an educator, former regent, and all-around supporter. If there were any limitations to his involvement with the university, they were the result of ethical considerations imposed on him in his role as a trial and then appellate judge.

My first real contact with Justice Acoba was in 1981, related to my appearance as an attorney in his court where he presided as a Circuit Court Judge. Having appeared before all the Circuit Court Judges, it was my opinion that Justice Acoba was the foremost legal scholar, and the best writer, of all the judges then presiding in the Circuit Court. Beyond his mastery of legal precedent and the rules of evidence and procedure, he demonstrated very sound judgment and great judicial temperament, being respectful to all counsel appearing in his court and the parties whom they represented. His long and distinguished career as a jurist included all levels of the judiciary: first in District Court, then Circuit Court, and then as an appellate judge in the Intermediate Court of Appeals, and finally the Hawai'i Supreme Court.

I believe you will hear much about Justice Acoba's outstanding background from others. What I hold as his best attributes are his commitment to community service in our state, and his dedication and support for his family. He has an unwavering commitment to make Hawai'i a better place for all of us, regardless of how long we have lived here, or what our economic circumstances may be. As chair of the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, he has been an outstanding leader in ensuring the fulfillment of the Commission's mission to substantially increase access to justice for Hawai'i

residents of low and moderate income. His other pro bono community service has consistently demonstrated his deep, abiding compassion for all his fellow citizens.

I consider it a very great honor to support Justice Acoba in his appointment to Board of Regents, and I respectfully request that you to confirm his appointment.

You may contact me any time at your convenience if you have any questions or would like further clarification of my comments in support of Justice Acoba.

Mahalo,

Howard K.K. Luke

GILBERT C. DOLES  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
A LAW CORPORATION

CENTURY SQUARE  
1188 BISHOP ST., SUITE 1405  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

TEL: (808) 521-0900  
FAX: (808) 545-5560

April 17, 2017

Senate Committee on Higher Education      Email: [HREtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HREtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Attention: Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair

**Re:    GM 778 – Senate Confirmation Hearing on the Reappointment of  
Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. (ret.), to  
University of Hawai'i Manoa Board of Regents**

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Dear Honorable Chair Kahele:

It is both a pleasure and a privilege that I present this letter in full support of Hawai'i Supreme Court Associate Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. (retired) ("Justice Acoba"), as he is being confirmed by the Senate for reappointment as a Regent to the University of Hawai'i ("UH") Board of Regents.

For the past 28 years, I have known Justice Acoba, on both personal and professional levels. Based upon my long-standing relationship with Justice Acoba, I am able and very willing to attest to his personal and professional character as being of the highest quality. Throughout Justice Acoba's distinguished legal career, he has not only served, for a majority of his time in public service, as a member of the State Judiciary, but also selflessly and generously contributed a significant amount of time, on a pro bono basis, in various volunteer positions, one of the most significant of which is as a UH Regent.

In my humble opinion, Justice Acoba is a most ardent and steadfast supporter of UH, at all of its levels, from academics to NCAA collegiate sports. He is a proud and successful graduate of UH and, in 2015, the UH Alumni Association honored him with a UH Founders Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award, a well-deserved honor in recognition of his many academic and professional accomplishments, as well as, his contributions to, and involvement in, various civic and community activities. Most recently, Justice Acoba, along with his wife, Carolyn, affirmed their commitment to UH by generously endowing a new scholarship at the William S. Richardson School of Law ("WSRSL") at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa with preference to a deserving student from a public high school. Since retiring from the Hawai'i Supreme Court, Justice Acoba has taught at WSRSL. For many years, Justice Acoba has enjoyed watching UH sporting events, particularly as a loyal and unwavering Rainbow Warrior football fan, a season ticket holder through all seasons, long and short.

**Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair**  
**April 17, 2017**  
**Page Two**

Justice Acoba has been and continues to be a firm believer and staunch advocate in the effective and efficient delivery of a first class public educational experience that UH offers its student population, both local and worldwide. Justice Acoba's active and significant involvement as a Regent exemplifies his abiding loyalty to UH and his commitment to its primary mission, which is "to provide environments in which faculty and students can discover, examine critically, preserve and transmit the knowledge, wisdom and values that will help ensure the survival of the present and future generations with improvement in the quality of life." It is my firm belief that should you decide to reappoint Justice Acoba to another term as a UH Regent, he will continue to serve admirably and positively in that capacity, with sincere altruism and without any personal motive. His professional background and experience, having served as a jurist on all levels of the legal review of a wide range of both criminal and civil issues and disputes that involve the UH, provides assurance of a thorough review and analysis of matters that come before the Board of Regents, which is empowered to formulate policy and to exercise control over UH through its executive officer, the UH president. Clearly and without a doubt, Justice Acoba's strong and steady presence on the Board of Regents is both valued and needed, especially during this period of continued growth, expansion, and upgrading of the UH Mānoa campus' facilities, buildings, and structures.

Overall, I have found Justice Acoba to be a thoughtful, intelligent, fair-minded, well-respected, and responsible individual, whose honesty and integrity are noted and appreciated by his colleagues, peers, the UH (students, faculty, and administration alike), and members of the legal, business, government, and higher education community.

Therefore, it is without reservation that I would strongly support and urge the full Senate's confirmation in favor the Governor's reappointment of my friend and colleague, Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. (ret.), to the UH Board of Regents.

Thank you for your kind consideration. Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 521-0900 or (808) 864-4440.

Very truly yours,



GILBERT C. DOLES

Attorney at Law

GCD

cc: Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. (ret.)

**From:** [Clarence Liu](#)  
**To:** [HRE Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Simeon Acoba  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 9:52:28 PM

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TO: Senator Kai'ali'i Kahele, Senate of Higher Education Committee Chair

FROM: Chaplain Clarence Liu (Retired)

I heartily support and endorse Simeon Acoba for a full term to the UH Board of Regents. His two years of service as a Regent have been marked by his integrity, wisdom and most of all his commitment to making all things *pono* in Hawaii. He is a man of his word and will not shrink from making difficult decisions to restore the credibility and reputation of our University and its governance.

Simeon is known for his faith and ideals and is a man beyond reproach. We need someone of his calibre to do what needs to be done as a Regent. I have known Simeon for many years and attest to his character. He listens deeply and makes decisions, as he did on the Court, "comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable." Thank you for considering my request.

Malama Pono,

Chaplain Clarence Liu Jr.

**From:** [Julie](#)  
**To:** [HRE Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** GM 778, Confirmation Hearing of April 18, 2017, Regarding Simeon Acoba, Gubernatorial Nominee  
**Date:** Friday, April 14, 2017 6:48:57 PM

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Via Email: [HREtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HREtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Higher Education Committee  
Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair  
Re: GM 778, Confirmation Hearing of April 18, 2017, Regarding Simeon Acoba,  
Gubernatorial Nominee

To the Honorable Committee and Senator Kahele:

I am submitting this written testimony to support the appointment of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the U.H. Board of Regents. I have known Justice Acoba for more than 40 years, have practiced law and worked on cases with him, and am familiar with many of the opinions he has written during his years as an Appellate Judge and Associate Supreme Court Justice dealing with many of the most momentous and important issues in both civil and criminal law that our State has faced with over the last 25 years. I unequivocally support Justice Acoba's appointment to the Board of Regents because he is a man of unsurpassed integrity and top notch intellect who will always make the welfare of the State of Hawaii, and specifically the University of Hawaii, his top priority regardless of what extraneous or political issues may be involved. I would be happy to provide additional information or answer further questions if asked to do so. Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony to the Committee.

Very truly yours,

/s/

DENNIS W. POTTS

DWP/jlg

--  
Julie  
Legal Assistant to Dennis W. Potts, Esq.  
841 Bishop St., Suite 1628  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: 808-537-4575  
Facsimile: 808-537-4576  
Email: [Julie@denniswpottslaw.com](mailto:Julie@denniswpottslaw.com)



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [Tmhifo](#)  
**To:** [tmhifo@aol.com](mailto:tmhifo@aol.com); [HRE Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony in favor of UH Regents Nominee SImeon Acoba  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 12, 2017 11:16:59 AM

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Dear Senator Kahele and Committee Members,

Please accept this email of support for the nomination of Simeon Acoba to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. He has always been an advocate of public education and I believe his core values are important to be represented on the Board of our university.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eden Elizabeth Hifo

-----Original Message-----

From: Tmhifo <[tmhifo@aol.com](mailto:tmhifo@aol.com)>

To: HREtestimony <[HREtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HREtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)>

Sent: Wed, Apr 12, 2017 3:07 pm



**Diane T. Ono**  
**2534 East Manoa Road**  
**Honolulu, HI 96822**  
**Phone: 808-585-1087**  
**Email: [Dianetono@gmail.com](mailto:Dianetono@gmail.com)**

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele  
Senator and Chair of the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: **GM 778**

Dear Senator Kahele:

I am writing in strong support of the selection of Justice Simeon Acoba, Jr. (ret.) to the Board of Regents for the University of Hawai'i.

When I was in private practice, I knew of Justice Acoba and his work on the bench at the Hawai'i Supreme Court although I was not personally acquainted with him. From observing him during oral argument and from reading his opinions, I have the utmost respect for Justice Acoba as a jurist who encouraged and stood up for debate and discourse, insisted upon reinstating oral argument before the Supreme Court and for his well considered and cogent written opinions. He demonstrated the utmost integrity and the need for transparency so that justice would be served.

After retiring from the Court, Justice Acoba served as a Regent, and I have had the opportunity to attend and testify at several Board of Regents' meetings. I am a longtime supporter of the University of Hawai'i, William S. Richardson School of Law, the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center and a member of the Friends of the UH Cancer Center board. In all meetings where I was able to personally observe Justice Acoba as a Regent, I saw that he attends meetings well prepared having thoroughly read all of the material put before him. He is engaged and asks appropriate and thoughtful questions whenever he deems necessary.

As a University of Hawai'i alumnus, Justice Acoba fully understands the need for our state university to not only be doing excellent teaching and education but he is also keenly aware of the need for top notch research in order for UH to fuel intellectual as well as economic growth for our state as a whole. Research promotes discovery and advances in areas such as medicine and health, our environment, in communication and in many other areas. Justice Acoba is a proven visionary and would be a key player to take our University into the future as a world-class institution

As the Governor's appointee to the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, over the last two years, I have become better acquainted with Justice Acoba. He is the Chair of the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission as well as the Chair of the Justice for All Grant Committee of the Commission. As a result, I have been able to work directly with him. He is a ready listener with whom I have never hesitated to express my opinion or provide a suggestion. Most importantly, Justice Acoba is a strong leader able to view problems or situations at the macro level while also developing practical solutions. He has worked strategically on how to move the work of the Commission forward. Under his leadership, this year, Hawai'i is one of seven states to receive a Justice for All grant through which a strategic plan can be developed to move Hawai'i closer to the goal of providing 100% access to justice for our unrepresented and underrepresented in matters so basic to human survival such as housing, immigration and healthcare.

In summary, Justice Acoba possesses the necessary skillset and experience to play an important role on the Board of Regents in shaping policy for the University of Hawai'i and for providing oversight and management of the University as well.

It is without reservation and with great honor that I recommend Justice Simeon Acoba for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

DATED: April 17, 2017.



DIANE T. ONO

Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lee Putnam and I have the honor of being a UH Regent since July 2014. Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony for Judge Simeon Acoba.

Regent Acoba has been serving in an interim appointment since October 2014, joining the Board at a particularly challenging time when there was a lot of turnover among the members. From the outset, he has contributed meaningfully to the work of the Board of Regents. I am very gratified that he is willing to continue his service and have no hesitation in offering my strong support for this appointment.

Judge Acoba is a particularly vigilant advocate for the concerns of students and for the welfare of the general public. He has direct experience with the University, from early in his career when he served as a special assistant to the UH President, to the present when he is serving as a lecturer at the Richardson School of Law. By the way, he is teaching as a volunteer.

Regent Acoba demonstrates high ethical standards and recuses himself from discussion most scrupulously. I respect his judgment for this, but am always a little sorry when he leaves the room since his perspective is so valuable. He often asks the most incisive questions or makes the most helpful summary of complex issues. The Board of Regents and the University will benefit greatly from the continued participation of Judge Simeon Acoba.