



## University of Hawai'i Student Caucus 2018-2019

*Senate Committee on Higher Education*

*Chairperson Senator Mercado Kim*

*Vice Chairperson Senator Kidani*

Aloha mai kākou,

We, the University of Hawai'i Student Caucus, are the representative body of the students in the University of Hawai'i system which is chartered by the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents, representing approximately 51,000 undergraduate and graduate students across 10 campuses. As caucus delegates, we advocate collectively for the interests of the students and serve as the liaison between our constituents system-wide and the UH Administration, State Legislature, Governor, and other offices.

It is our request that the Senate Committee on Higher Education support the confirmation of the appointment of Ms. Kelli Acopan as the new Student Regent. Throughout the years she has exhibited tremendous leadership within the University of Hawai'i system, both within the University of Hawai'i Student Caucus and at Windward Community College Student Senate. One of her accomplishments during her tenure as the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Windward Community College was spearheading the initiative for an on-campus food pantry which was established from data collected from the student body of Windward. From there, the initiative branched out to other UH System campuses through various conversations between the delegates within the Caucus.

Ms. Acopan has been an advocate for the best interest of the students in the capacity of her leadership roles, which can be seen through her determination and force. The University of Hawai'i Student Caucus is confident that she will continue to be a vital proponent of positive impact within the UH system. It is within our best interest and those we represent, that the position of the Student Regent be filled by a student with prior experience in advocacy on campus and system-wide. We are proud to send our support for GM 572, Kelli Acopan, Gubernatorial Nominee to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

The University of Hawai'i Student Caucus would like to take this final moment to thank the members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education for considering this letter and if there any questions, comments or concerns that should arise, please feel free to contact the caucus Chairperson Christielove Espinosa at [ckee@hawaii.edu](mailto:ckee@hawaii.edu).

Mahalo,

Andrew Kalani Simeona

University of Hawai'i Student Caucus 2018-2019



WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JAN SULLIVAN  
IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF  
**KELLI ACOPAN**  
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF  
HAWAII BOARD OF REGENTS (GM 572)

Before  
**THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

April 15, 2019  
2:00pm  
Conference Room 414

To: Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair, Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education

From: Jan N. Sullivan, EVP/COO

Re: **Testimony in Support of GM 572**

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members:

I am writing to express my support for the nomination of Kelli Acopan to serve on the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

Kelli was an active student representative prior to being nominated to serve on the Board. I remember her for her passionate advocacy for students, for her willingness to come before the Board to fight for student issues, for the time that she committed to student representation.

I was very glad to find that she was nominated to fill the student Regent position as she had already demonstrated her commitment to bettering the University and to the students.

She is a busy mother that somehow manages to juggle many competing priorities. The fact that she wants to serve on the Board is a testament to her tenacity and passion.

I believe that she will do a great job representing the student viewpoint on our Board and I sincerely request your support in allowing her to continue her tenure on the Board of Regents.

Thank you for your consideration.

**GM-572**

Submitted on: 4/10/2019 8:11:24 AM

Testimony for HRE on 4/15/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Wayne S. Higaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Monday, April 15, 2019  
by Brandon Marc Higa (as Regent Emeritus)

**Testimony in Strong Support  
GM572 Confirmation of Ms. Kelli Acopan  
University of Hawaii Board of Regents**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support of GM572 regarding Ms. Kelli Acopan's candidacy for the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents**. My decision to nominate Kelli for the Student Regent seat is based upon my positive interactions working with her during my term as the current Student Regent in her prior capacity as the Acting Chair and Vice-Chair of the University of Hawai'i Student Caucus ("UHSC") during the 2016-17 academic year. Ms. Acopan is dependable, highly-organized, and level-headed in coordinating student government leaders from the ten University campuses.

For the following reasons, Ms. Acopan is qualified and motivated to serve as the Student Regent.

First, I am particularly impressed by Ms. Acopan's actions during the 2017 Legislative Session where she led efforts in research legislative bills pertaining to students. She closely monitored bills to provide the student government leaders with up-to-date information on important developments. Most importantly, Ms. Acopan was diligent in building consensus among the student leaders to advocate for issues they were collectively concerned with. These experiences will translate well into the role of an active Student Regent.

Second, Ms. Acopan is already a recognized leader among the student government organizations representing over 51,000 enrolled undergraduate and graduate students at the University's ten campuses. Ms. Acopan previously served as the president of the student government group at her campus, the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Windward Community College (ASUH-WCC). Although Windward CC has the reputation as a small campus, Ms. Acopan tackled big issues as the student body president. She dealt with a contentious community issue that drew attention from local politicians in a manner that kept the student voice central to her actions. She has consistently demonstrated rational and responsible judgment through her actions representing others.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to offer testimony in strong support of Governor David Y. Ige's appointment of Ms. Kelli Acopan to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. Confirming Ms. Acopan would provide a conduit between the Board and over 51,000 undergraduate and graduate students throughout the ten University campuses.

I urge you to vote "yes" for the Committee's recommendation for her Senate confirmation.

Respectfully submitted,  
s/Brandon Marc Higa  
Student Regent, 2016-18

**GM-572**

Submitted on: 4/10/2019 8:33:04 AM

Testimony for HRE on 4/15/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sara Perry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

She really cares about students and will be an excellent Board member.

**GM-572**

Submitted on: 4/11/2019 3:10:41 PM

Testimony for HRE on 4/15/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alapaki Nahale-a	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim and members of the Higher Education Committee. I've had the pleasure of serving with Ms. Acopan on the UH Board of Regents since our appointment, subject to confirmation, in November of last year. Ms. Acopan has been an incredible advocate for student voice and student well being. She has brought her personal experience and connection to current students to BOR discussions in a way that has been authentic and influential. She has been courageous in her expression of concern about certain areas in our UH System while doing so in a way that is focused on how we can improve. I believe she will be a force in improving our UH System through her commitment to being an active and effective BOR member. I would be honored to serve as a Regent with her.

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

April 15, 2019  
G.M. 570, 571 and 572

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii  
Gubernatorial Nominee Robert Westerman for a term to expire June 30, 2022  
Gubernatorial Nominee Alapaki Nahale-a for a term to expire June 30, 2023  
Gubernatorial Nominee Kelli Acopan for a term to expire June 30, 2020

Chair Kim and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express my strong support for the nomination of Robert Westerman, Alapaki Nahale-a, and Kelli Acopan to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

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

I regret that I will be out of town at the time of your committee hearing on this matter and will therefore not be able to testify in person.

All three nominees are currently serving interim appointments and therefore I and others have had the opportunity to “see them in action.” All three have assumed their positions with an appropriate mix of curiosity, perspective, experience and wisdom. They are all active and constructive members of the board and of the committees to which they have been assigned. Additionally, all three have taken the time to attend meetings to committees of which they are not members, and accordingly have gained an understanding of the range of matters that have come to the board since their appointments.

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 the continued participation and contributions of these three outstanding individuals as a regents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Testimony of Farrah-Marie Gomes

**LATE**

Before the Senate Committee on Higher Education

Monday, April 15, 2019

2:00 p.m.

Conference Room 229

In consideration of GM572

Kelli Acopan

Gubernatorial Nominee to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. I do so in **strong support** for the confirmation of Kelli Acopan to serve on the University of Hawai'i's Board of Regents.

Although an employee of the University of Hawai'i, I submit this testimony as an individual. For a period of about 15 months in 2016 and 2017, I served as advisor for the University of Hawai'i Student Caucus (UHSC). It was in this capacity that I was first introduced to Kelli. She was the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii at Windward Community College and one of the campus representatives to the UHSC. Kelli demonstrated her ability to be an effective leader because not only was she knowledgeable about campus and system policies pertaining to students, but she was able to mobilize others to take action and impact change. These qualities were recognized by her peers across the other nine campus student governments who unanimously voted her in as UHSC Vice Chair.

There was a period of about six months when the UHSC chair was not able to fulfill the duties of the position, which required Kelli as the Vice Chair to step in. Kelli did so without missing a beat and without any questions or hesitation. She continued to fulfill the duties of Vice Chair while taking on the additional duties of Chair.

This period of time was also when Student Regent Higa at the time became more involved with the UHSC. I believe the interactions Student Regent Higa and Vice Chair Acopan (serving as Chair) had during that time provided Kelli with a tremendous amount of exposure to the role of a student regent, which is why I further believe that she understands and accepts the responsibilities that come with being a student regent. Kelli has my unwavering support as she commits to the duties of Student Regent, duties that I am confident she will fulfill with the highest amount of dedication and integrity because that is how Kelli approaches all that she does.

There is no doubt in my mind that Kelli will be able to fulfill the duties of Student Regent on the UH Board of Regents. The combination of experiences that she brings as a wife, mother, student, and employee as well as the ability to balance the various demands of each speaks volumes about Kelli. I wholeheartedly support Kelli's confirmation because I know that she understands the importance of the role and takes that seriously. Kelli will certainly add value to the composition of the Board with the perspectives that she is able to bring to the table through the student lens.

For all of the reasons above, I strongly endorse Kelli Acopan's confirmation as Student Regent on the UH Board of Regents, and humbly ask for your vote of approval. Mahalo!





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April 15, 2019

**LATE**

To: The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education

From: Benjamin A. Kudo  
Ashford & Wriston  
999 Bishop Street, Suite 1400  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: GM-572 – Consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, KELLI ACOPAN - **SUPPORT**.  
Hearing date: Monday, April 15, 2019  
Hearing time: 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 414

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

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration and the support of your Committee members on the appointment of Ms. Kelli Acopan as the Student Regent to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Ms. Acopan will faithfully carry out her responsibilities as a member of the Board.

I recommend your favorable consideration of Ms. Kelli Acopan for the aforementioned position. She is a person who will prove to be worthy of your support.

Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully urge your Committee's support to confirm her nomination.

Very truly yours,

ASHFORD & WRISTON

  
Benjamin A. Kudo

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**From:** [Lee Putnam](#)  
**To:** [HRE Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** GM572 - In strong support  
**Date:** Monday, April 15, 2019 10:14:46 AM

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Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Committee,

Please accept my testimony in strong support of the confirmation of Kelli Acopan to the Board of Regents.

Kelli Acopan has experienced being a student at several UH campuses, which gives her a good background to consider the needs of the system as a whole. Moreover, she has been involved in the Student Caucus for a number of years and her deep understanding of the workings and concerns of students throughout the University prepared her well to be the Board liaison to the Caucus. She has already been meeting with them and is doing an excellent job of being a two-way conduit for communication between the BOR and the Caucus. While her role as a Student Regent is being fulfilled at a high level, Kelli has also shown that she will be contributing to Board decision making on a number of other areas. Her questions are insightful and her comments are well thought out. I am confident that Kelli Acopan will be an outstanding public servant on the BOR.

I strongly support the confirmation of Kelli Acopan to the Board of Regents.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my support and I apologize for any inconvenience of late testimony