



LATE

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HI 96813

Testimony of **Joshua B. Green** Lieutenant Governor,
State of Hawai'i
Before
the **SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**
March 8, 2019 2:45 p.m.,
Room 016

In consideration of **GM 605, Pankaj Bhanot**
as the **Director of the Department of Human Services**

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and committee members:

I am respectfully and enthusiastically requesting your **STRONG SUPPORT** in confirming the reappointment of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Pankaj has diligently served as the director of DHS, leading the department with vision and aloha, since September of 2016. Prior to his tenure as Director, he spent the better part of two decades working with the department, striving to provide the most vulnerable among us with the resources and support that was needed to help all of Hawaii's residents live successful, independent, fulfilling lives; a mission he is just as committed to today.

Growing up in India, Pankaj always had a passion for helping people which lead him to pursue a path in law, earning a B.A. in political science and a J.D. from the University of Delhi before going on to receive his LL.M in international human rights law from Cornell Law School.

It has been a privilege to have known and worked with Pankaj for many years during his time at DHS. In my capacity as a state legislator, having served as the Human Services Chair in both chambers, our paths have crossed often, and I have come to know him as someone who is entirely engaged, fully passionate, extremely competent, and completely dedicated when it comes to the enormous and honorable task of human service.

Pankaj Bhanot is the compassionate leader we need to support all of the hardworking, dedicated employees of DHS as they work to fulfill our common mission of moving Hawaii forward together.

Mahalo for your consideration.



TESTIMONY BY:

JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
LYNN A.S. ARAKI-REGAN
DEREK J. CHOW
ROSS M. HIGASHI
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097



March 8, 2019
2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 016

G.M. 605

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Senate Committee on Human Services

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **strongly supports** Pankaj Bhanot's nomination as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Mr. Bhanot was born and raised in India and came to the United States in 1990 and has called Hawaii home since 1992. He received his bachelor's in political science (1986) and law degree (1990) from the University of Delhi, India; received master's in law from the Cornell University School of Law (1991); and conducted four years (1993-1997) of post-graduate research at the University of Nottingham School of Law in Nottingham, England.

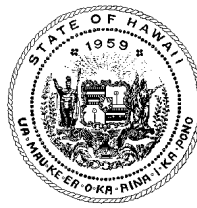
Prior to joining DHS, Mr. Bhanot served as the Family Development Director of the Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc. (KEO), a non-profit agency on the island of Kauai, from 1998-1999. Mr. Bhanot served as the Division Administrator of the Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division of DHS from 2007 to 2010 and was the department's Deputy Director from 2010 to 2012 where he led a business transformation initiative that garnered national recognition.

Mr. Bhanot is an excellent choice to lead DHS. He has proven himself as an effective and dynamic leader in each of his capacities at DHS. He has provided a steady hand as the department's Director. If you're looking at qualifications, his are impeccable. If you're looking at experience and how he has served in every job he has held, he is without blemish.

We strongly urge his confirmation. DHS is in very good hands, and we look forward to DHS continuing to make the significant progress which it has made over the recent years.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

NOLAN P. ESPINDA
DIRECTOR

Maria C. Cook
Deputy Director
Administration

Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata
Deputy Director
Corrections

Renee R. Sonobe Hong
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 605
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE PANKAJ BHANOT.

by

Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Friday, March 8, 2019; 2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports the nomination of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Director Bhanot brings 20 years of committed service to State government, previously serving in leadership positions in DHS, including Division Administrator of the Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD), Deputy Director, and most recently, as the DHS Director.

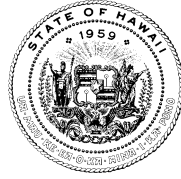
Mr. Bhanot spearheaded the Business Process Reengineering Project (BPR) during his tenure as BESSD Administrator, a project that continues today and which has already served to markedly increase the efficiency and effectiveness in determining eligibility and deploying needed benefits to service clients. The award-winning BPR has resulted in faster processing of, for example, federally-funded SNAP claims, cost-savings to the State, and a significant multiplier effect on the State's economy.

Mr. Bhanot's leadership in programs and initiatives such as BPR provides ample justification for his confirmation as DHS Director.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII



JOBIE M. K. MASAGATANI
CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

LATE

TESTIMONY OF JOBIE M. K. MASAGATANI, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
HEARING ON MARCH 08, 2019 AT 2:45 PM IN CR 016

IN SUPPORT OF

GM605

for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human
Services, (DHS)
Gubernatorial Nominee, **PANKAJ BHANOT**,
for a term to expire 12-05-2022

March 08, 2019

Aloha Chair Riuderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and members of the Committee:

It is an honor to provide this testimony in support of Governor Ige's nomination of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Mr. Bhanot's background, professional credentials and his tenure at the DHS make him well-qualified for this appointment. His awards, presentations, and publications note his long experience in human services. The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands looks forward to working with him for the next four years.

We respectfully ask your committee to advise and consent to this nomination, and we thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

LATE

GM-605

Submitted on: 3/7/2019 3:53:44 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/8/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Moser	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support for GM605 confirmation as the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT

I wholeheartedly support Director Pankaj Bhanot in his bid for confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services. Through personal experience and witness I affirm Director Bhanot's passion for Hawaii's impoverished community, his commitment to improving their lives, and effective leadership in his role. Director Bhanot's determination to improve social mobility for Hawaii's SNAP recipients, yet realizing the need to be resourceful, lead him to envision an innovative interagency partnership with the Community Colleges. Director Bhanot reformed DHS's SNAP Employment and Training program by prioritizing college degrees and certificates as an effective pathway out of poverty for SNAP recipients. The program leveraging resources from the DHS SNAP office and the Community Colleges is now known as HINET, Hawaii Nutrition Employment and Training (hinethawaii.org.) HINET has resulted in increased client count in the SNAP E&T program, increased enrollment in college workforce and certificate programs and improved college retention and completion rates for the State. DHS SNAP clients, now college students, are often the first generation in their family to pursue a college degree with a true desire for self sufficiency through employment. These significant results are the result of leadership, vision, and willingness to adjust internal policies in collaboration with the University of Hawaii. This is a true model of significant reform, innovation, and transformation via a genuine interagency partnership. A recent news feature provides impactful student / client testimonials <https://www.hawaii.edu/news/2019/02/10/hinet-helps-hungry-students-succeed/> Moreover, Director Bhanot's accomplishments with this innovative program is now gaining national attention as a best practice for social and economic mobility.

Thank you in advance for reconfirming Director Bhanot's appointment and recognition of his accomplishments and future successes on behalf of Hawaii.

LATE

GM-605

Submitted on: 3/7/2019 6:39:30 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/8/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edward Mersereau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strong Support

GM-605

Submitted on: 3/7/2019 7:03:24 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/8/2019 2:45:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lori Wada	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Lori H. Wada, Esq.

Kailua, Hawaii 96734

Re: GM 605 Confirmation hearing regarding Pankaj Bhanot for Director of Human Services

Dear Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in **strong support** on behalf of Pankaj Bhanot for the position of Director of the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS).

I have known and worked with Mr. Bhanot since March of 2011 until the present. Mr. Bhanot is presently employed as the Director of the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services, a position he has held for the past two years. Mr. Bhanot's experience in administration at DHD also includes being Deputy Director under two prior Directors. As Director, Mr. Bhanot has made numerous positive changes in the Department and has begun work to implement initiatives promoting his vision and mission statement upon becoming Director in 2016. These initiatives include ensuring the Department is team-oriented in getting tasks completed, human-centered when tackling improvements with a focus on the client's perspective and carrying out decisions that are evidence based as fairness and respect are of utmost importance to him. Mr. Bhanot continues to be a pillar of industriousness and energy in his zeal to produce efficient outcomes for the good of the people of Hawaii. What is most impressive is Mr. Bhanot's humble and kind nature balanced with the fair and firm ability in often difficult decision-making.

Mr. Bhanot has maintained the highest level of professional decorum and courtesy and continues to be a selfless and dedicated worker in the best interests of the State. I have no doubt that upon confirmation for the position of Director of the State of Hawaii's Department of Human Services, there will continue to be great changes for future successes for the State of Hawaii. I strongly support, fully endorse and without

reservation, submit my recommendation of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot for the position of Director of the Department of Human Services and humbly request that he be confirmed by the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in this matter.

LATE

GM-605

Submitted on: 3/7/2019 8:27:51 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/8/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keopu Reelitz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support Pankaj Bhanot's appointment as Department of Human Services Director. Pankaj brings with him two decades of experience with the department and a passion for serving others. Please vote to confirm him in this important state leadership role.

Written Statement of
Zubin Menon

LATE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Friday, March 8, 2019 2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

IN SUPPORT OF:

G.M. 605 Confirmation to the Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, PANKAJ BHANOT

To: Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee on Human Services
Re: **Testimony in Support of G.M. 605**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my strong support of the confirmation of Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services (“DHS” or “the Department”).

Pankaj Bhanot has the experience, vision, and dedication to lead DHS. He has served as the Director of DHS since September 2016, as the Deputy Director for over two-and-a-half years combined, and as a Division Administrator for the Benefit Employment and Support Services Division (“BESSD”), the largest division in the Department with over 700 employees and 200 contractors providing direct and indirect services to Hawai’i residents.

Mr. Bhanot is a visionary with a passion for human services and a track record of success. Among his many achievements, he is leading the effort to implement ‘Ohana Nui - a new and comprehensive service delivery model that invests in children and families early and concurrently to improve outcomes for residents. This is a program that we need now more than ever, given the challenges Hawai’i faces as a state - hunger, substance addiction, mental health issues and homelessness, among others.

Pankaj Bhanot’s confirmation will not only ensure that the Department continues to provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits to Hawai’i residents, but will reinstate a leader to the Department who is forward thinking, innovative, has a track record of successful delivery for our State, and who is passionately committed to our community. **I ask that you support Pankaj Bhanot’s confirmation to Director of the Department of Human Services.**

Mahalo nui.

Zubin Menon
zmenon@gmail.com

LATE

GM-605

Submitted on: 3/8/2019 6:58:44 AM

Testimony for HMS on 3/8/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Blake Shaw	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

I've known Director Bhanot and watched him execute his role as leader in the Hawaii Department of Human Services since approximately 2012. When I first met him, he was the Director at BESSD. They were under immense pressure with the recent loss of positions and a looming lawsuit for poor timeliness. Director Bhanot led his Division from one of the poorest performing public assistance agencies to one of the best in the country. It became clear to me that he wasn't driven by just being the best. He was driven by the desire to create a better working environment for his staff, as well as by the need of the vulnerable citizens in Hawaii who were sometimes not receiving their supportive services for months. As Director of DHS, his mission always seems clear - to ensure the best service possible to Hawaiians in need of support - to encourage self-sufficiency and support the well-being.

Director Bhanot is not only an excellent leader. He is a wonderful person. Thank You.

Respectfully,

Blake Shaw

LATE

GM-605

Submitted on: 3/8/2019 11:55:07 AM

Testimony for HMS on 3/8/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Catherine Scardino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mr. And Mrs. Joseph and Catherine Scardino **support** the reappointment of Mr. Pankaj Bhanot as the Department of Human Services Director.

LATE

Bernadette K. Tebia, MSN, MPH

87-1041 Papaya Road

Waianae, HI 96792

March 8, 2019

To: Testimony to Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

Date and Location: March 8, 2019 at 2:45pm, Room 016

RE: GM 605, Pankaj Bhanot as the Director of the Department of Human Services

Dear Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

My name is Bernadette Tebia, and I'm currently working as a Registered Nurse in Hospice and a Licensed Massage Therapist. It is my honor to **SUPPORT** the nomination Pankaj Bhanot for Director of the Department of Human Service. I have known Mr. Bhanot for the past 2 years. I can testify that Mr. Bhanot epitomizes stalwart professionalism and character. He will hold this office with the highest degree of honor, integrity, and compassion for all, and especially the underserved. His vast experience and knowledge in field of health and human service will serve the people of Hawaii immensely. Please confirm Mr. Bhanot.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of GM 605 and Mr. Pankaj Bhanot.

Sincerely,

Bernadette K. Tebia