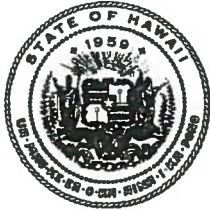


# GM643

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, JUSTIN TOKIOKA, for a term to expire 06-30-2023.

Report Title: Disability and Communication Access Board

Current Referral: CPH



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • Fax (808) 586-8129 • TTY (808) 586-8162

April 5, 2019

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

Governor's Message 643 – Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Justin Tokioka for a Term to Expire June 30, 2023

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the re-nomination of Mr. Justin Tokioka to our Board for a four-year term. Mr. Tokioka has been on the Board for only one year, as he filled a vacancy due to the resignation of a prior member.

Mr. Tokioka resides on the Island of Kauai and represents that County on our Board. Mr. Tokioka is also serving in the capacity of a consumer/person with a disability representing the population of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Mr. Tokioka is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL).

In his short tenure of one year, Mr. Tokioka has joined the Standing Committee on Communication Access and supported its efforts to amend our administrative rules to develop a new credentialing system and recommended fee schedule for ASL interpreters.

We urge his reconfirmation to our Board.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Francine Wai*

FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director

To Whom It May Concern,

It is indeed my honor and pleasure to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Pono Tokioka, a person I've been fortunate enough to call a dear friend of mine since meeting him some five years ago.

I first met Pono in 2014 during my college days at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. My roommate at the time, Chad McLay, was teammates with Pono on the UH men's golf team. Pono and other members of the team would come over to the dorm on occasion to hang out, which is how I got to know him.

Although I was not one myself, I saw firsthand how much of a commitment it takes to be a college athlete. It's a lifestyle, and one Pono handled with grace. Between morning weightlifting sessions and afternoon practices almost every day of the week, I'd often see Pono helping multiple teammates with their homework during hangout sessions in my dorm room. Despite Pono being deaf, this never caused a communication barrier between me and anyone else I saw him interact with. He is a joy to be around and his teammates always embraced him.

The more I got to know Pono, the more impressed I became with who he is. This was also around the time I started to write for Ka Leo, the student newspaper at UH-Manoa. I still have some quotes saved from when I interviewed his coach and his teammates for a story, and what they have to say about him speaks volumes about his character.

"(His deafness) is not something that he's ever used as an excuse and it's not something that's ever brought to the forefront. On a daily basis, communication with him has been very easy," UH men's golf coach Ronn Miyashiro told me. "I never look at it as something that's an obstacle for him and I don't think he does either, and that's a good thing because at the end of the day, when he's here with our program, he's like any other student athlete. He works hard, does his work at school, works hard on his golf course, performs, and that's all we can ask for.

"He is very supportive as a teammate. That's the one thing about Pono; he's very positive, he's very encouraging to his teammates, he's very enthusiastic about wanting to be successful. He does a good job of getting that to everybody else on the team."

"He's a very hard worker. You can see that through his attitude. He practices hard, he keeps up with his schoolwork," added teammate Adrian Lee. "He never makes excuses or complains about being deaf. He doesn't make you feel bad and he doesn't let it drag him down."

I fondly remember tagging along with Chad and Pono one time when the two were getting extra work in at the Ala Wai Golf Course driving range during a late Friday night. I would be remiss if I didn't mention how Pono's golf swing is a thing of beauty. To me, the most impressive part of his golf game is his humility. During our numerous conversations, Pono never once boasted to me about his golfing talents, even though Coach Miyashiro beamed to me about his athletic ability and how much he coveted him as a high school recruit.

Another lasting memory I'll have of Pono is when a group of friends and I were stranded at a bonfire at Haunauma Bay on a Saturday night without any means of transportation. Pono picked us up on a moment's notice and brought us back safely to campus in the middle of the night. I think that situation illustrated best who Pono is as a person. He's someone you can always count on. As evidenced by those who know him, he's someone you always want on your side. He comes from a great family and during his time at UH, he was an excellent representative of the university and, by extension, the state. I have no doubt he'll continue to bring these same qualities and more to the DCAB.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration, and please feel free to contact me anytime at (808) 937-7474 or at [christian.shimabuku@hotmail.com](mailto:christian.shimabuku@hotmail.com).

Sincerely,

Christian Shimabuku