

April 10, 2019

Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair  
Committee on Human Services  
State Capitol, Room 016  
State of Hawaii  
415 S. Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Rehabilitation Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, HOWARD LESSER, for a term to expire 6/30/2022.

My name is Howard Lesser and I am humbly requesting your consideration and confirmation to be appointed to the State Rehabilitation Council, representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP), for another term.

CAP, which is administered by the Hawaii Disability Rights Center (HDRC), serves individuals who are applicants and recipients of programs and services authorized in the Federal Rehabilitation Act. The program helps people with disabilities when they are having difficulty getting services under the Rehabilitation Act.

As the CAP representative, mandated on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), my position serves a critical role in advocating for clients served through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs). Working with all the agencies and individuals serving on the SRC as CAP representative, I bring a unique perspective in advocating for services with the goal of community-based integrated employment for persons with disabilities and related issues.

Currently serving as Vice Chair of the SRC, I have been involved with issues such as the Order Of Selection (OOS) and requesting updates from DVR of its status, transition of students from High School to post-secondary education or employment, reviewing Client Satisfaction Surveys, providing legislative testimony, reviewing the selection of hearings officers, obtaining redacted hearings decisions, doing orientations for new SRC members and new VR Counselors, and working together with SRC members to help the SRC to better become a recognized entity in the State of Hawaii.

I have a passion for serving as the CAP representative on the SRC and would be honored to serve for another term, respectfully ask for your confirmation, and thank you for this opportunity to give my testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Howard Lesser".

Howard Lesser,  
CAP Advocate

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

Date: April 12, 2019, 2:45 pm, Room 016

**RE: GM 730: In Support of the Nomination and Confirmation of HOWARD LESSER to the State Rehabilitation Council**

Dear Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Committee Members;

Thank you for the opportunity to express my strong support of Governor Ige's nomination of Howard Lesser to the State Rehabilitation Council. As the current Chair, I am submitting testimony on behalf of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

The SRC was established in the 1992 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The SRC provides an external, consumer-oriented perspective as it acts in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) on services that address the employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Lesser is seeking re-appointment to the SRC representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP); administered by the Hawaii Disability Rights Center; for an additional term.

As the CAP representative, Mr. Lesser ensures that the rights of the consumer are at the forefront and provides a unique perspective in advocating for services that provide and support competitive, integrated employment opportunities for the consumers served by the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Mr. Lesser is passionate about the work of the SRC and has played a key role in further strengthening the partnership between the SRC and DVR. While serving on the SRC over the years, he has been directly involved in addressing key issues and has worked diligently with fellow SRC members and DVR to identify solutions to those issues. He has extensive experience working in the disability field and has successfully advocated for and assisted numerous individuals with disabilities over the years.

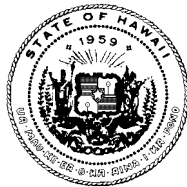
As a result, we believe that Mr. Lesser's experience, advocacy skills, passion, and desire to serve will continue to be of great value to our consumers, State Rehabilitation Council and the State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,



Michele L. Ku  
Chair, State Rehabilitation Council

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

**LATE**

April 11, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director  
Maureen Bates, Administrator, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: **GM 730 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Rehabilitation Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, HOWARD LESSER, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.**

Hearing: Friday, April 12, 2019, 2:45 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the nomination of Mr. Howard Lesser to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). Mr. Lesser is seeking an appointment for an additional term on the SRC. He will assume the SRC member role representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP) per section 348-8(a)(2), Hawaii Revised Statutes. As a CAP representative, Mr. Lesser brings a unique perspective in advocating for services that involve the community-based integrated employment for persons with disabilities and related issues affecting services.

In addition to his position with CAP, Mr. Lesser currently serves as Vice-Chair of the SRC. He has served a number of terms over time and has been involved in issues such as the Order Of Selection (OOS), requesting updates from DVR of its status, transitioning of students from high school to post-secondary education or employment, reviewing Client Satisfaction Surveys, providing legislative testimony, reviewing the selection of hearings officers and hearing decisions as part of Client Assistant Program (CAP), doing orientations for new SRC members, and working with SRC members to help the SRC become a more recognized and productive entity in the State of Hawaii.

Mr. Lessor's experience with CAP, the SRC, and long history with DVR, is of great value and the basis of sound guidance and counsel for DVR and the population it serves.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this committee.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AGENCY



## HAWAII DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER

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April 10, 2019

Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair  
Committee on Human Services  
State Capitol, Room 016  
Hearing on April 12, 2019 2:45PM

Re: GM 730 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Rehabilitation Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, HOWARD LESSER, for a term to expire 6/30/2022.

The Hawaii Disability Rights Center is pleased and proud to support one of its finest advocates, Howard Lesser, for confirmation to be appointed to the State Rehabilitation Council, representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP), for another term.

CAP, which is administered by the Hawaii Disability Rights Center (HDRC), serves individuals who are applicants and recipients of programs and services authorized in the Federal Rehabilitation Act. The program helps people with disabilities when they are having difficulty getting services under the Rehabilitation Act.

Howard has spent most of his adult life in the disability field and his work has helped countless individuals to have better lives. As the CAP representative, mandated on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), his position serves a critical role in advocating for clients served through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).

Currently he serves as the Vice-Chair of the SRC, and has been a crucial member who has helped the Council to become a more effective entity. He has a deep, lifelong commitment to the disability community and a passion for serving others who are less fortunate. He is an excellent member of the SRC and we respectfully urge the Committee to recommend his confirmation for another term.

Sincerely,

Louis Erteschik, Esq.  
Executive Director



**GM-730**

Submitted on: 4/6/2019 5:11:54 PM

Testimony for HMS on 4/12/2019 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dylan P. Armstrong	Testifying for Oahu County Democrats	Support	No

Comments:

The Oahu County Committee of the Oahu County Democrats is proud to support the confirmation of Mr. Howard Lesser to the State Rehabilitation Council.

Mr. Lesser is a respected expert on disability rights and policy, with a commanding resume of dedicated service working with our vulnerable populations, both in the public and non-profit sectors. We wish Mr. Lesser success in doing the State's Vocational Rehabilitation duties on the Council.

Please vote in favor of confirming Mr. Lesser.

Thank you,  
Dylan P. Armstrong, Vice Chair  
Oahu County Committee, Oahu County Democrats

**GM-730**

Submitted on: 4/9/2019 2:48:51 PM

Testimony for HMS on 4/12/2019 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Tada	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I have known Mr. Lesser for over 30 yrs. During that time, he has been like a mentor to me with regards to disability advocacy. I know that he will be a huge asset to the State Rehabilitation Council. He is a very powerful and effective asdvocate.