

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 733: In Support of the Nomination and Confirmation of JODI ASATO 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 Jodi Asato 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.

Ms. Asato is seeking re-appointment to the SRC for an additional term representing Business, Industry, and Labor.

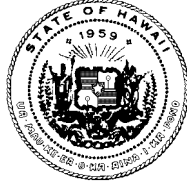
Ms. Asato has extensive experience working with people with disabilities including vast knowledge in the area of assistive technology. In her current role as a counselor with the Disability Student Services office at UH Manoa, Ms. Asato works tirelessly to ensure equal access to education for students with disabilities. Ms. Asato is a current SRC member and serves on our Executive Committee as our Secretary. It has been a pleasure working with her in this capacity, learning from her experiences, and further understanding disability related issues and challenges from her unique perspective.

We believe that Ms. Asato's experience, knowledge, 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



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



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 733 – RELATING TO NOMINEE FOR STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

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

The Department of Human Services, on behalf of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), supports the nomination of Ms. Jodi Asato to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The SRC was established in the 1992 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The SRC acts in partnership with the DVR on services that address employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Jodi Asato is seeking appointment to a second term to the SRC representing Business, Industry, & Labor per section 348-8(a)(5), Hawaii Revised Statutes. Ms. Asato is currently working as a counselor for the Disability Student Services Office at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UH). As a counselor, she is responsible for eligibility of services and coordination of accommodations for students. Ms. Asato is actively involved in the community developing relationships and gathering resources to ensure the UH campus follows legal requirements to provide equal access.

Ms. Asato's 17 plus years of experience beginning in special education, to her current position as a counselor, is beneficial to the SRC council. Her goal of making her students' success her number one priority aligns with the mission of DVR in supporting individuals with disabilities to be successful in education and employment.

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

April 11, 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, Jodi Asato, for a term to expire 6/30/2022.

Dear Senator Ruderman and Committee Chairs:

My name is Jodi Asato and I am hereby submitting my written testimony to renew my term as a Board member of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). I was appointed in July 2016 and my current term will end on June 30, 2019. I am currently the Secretary/Treasurer of the SRC.

For the past eighteen years, I have worked in the disability field with a focus in Assistive Technology (AT) as a teacher, auxiliary aid specialist, program manager, and most recently as a counselor for students with disabilities at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Throughout my career experience, I have found that education and work remain the best route to independence and enacting one's own choices for individuals with disabilities.

Being a member of the State Council on Rehabilitation has been a learning and impactful experience both personally and professionally. As a member of the SRC, I would like to continue to promote collaboration and build partnerships with schools and employers to give individuals with disabilities access to meaningful employment and postsecondary options. I will also assist in the preparation of the state plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessment, and evaluations. The Council's mission and vision continues to align with my hope that Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participants can achieve their hopes and aspirations for meaningful employment and continual education through individualized VR services.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide and accept this written testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodi Asato". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jodi" and last name "Asato" clearly legible.

Jodi Asato
Counselor, KOKUA Program (University of Hawaii at Manoa)