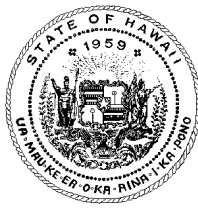


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



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

Shari L. Kimoto
Deputy Director
Corrections

Renee R. Sonobe Hong
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 503,
NOMINATION OF RONA M. SUZUKI AS DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION.

by
Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Monday, July 6, 2020; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol Auditorium

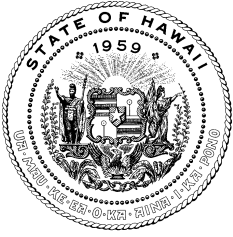
Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **supports** Governor's Message (GM) 503, nominating Rona M. Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation.

As Senior Special Assistant in the Tax Department since March 2018, Ms. Suzuki has led and managed the deployment of the Tax System Modernization (TSM) project to replace the ITIMS systems and prepare for the decommissioning of the system, which has been used for decades and is sorely in need of updating. The successful transition to a modern and efficient State tax system speaks to Ms. Suzuki's competence and skills and her ability to lead the Department of Taxation.

PSD urges the Committee on Ways and Means to pass her nomination to the full Senate to advise and consent.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

235 South Beretania Street, 5TH Floor, Honolulu, HI 96813 | energy.hawaii.gov

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

(808) 587-3807

Testimony of
SCOTT J. GLENN, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Monday, July 6, 2020
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Auditorium

In SUPPORT of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 503, RONA M. SUZUKI
As the Director of the Department of Taxation
(Written Testimony Only)

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee, I am writing in support of the appointment of Ms. Rona M. Suzuki to serve as the Director of the Department of Taxation.

Ms. Suzuki has extensive experience in government and the private sector that make her eminently qualified to serve as the Director of the Department of Taxation. As the current Acting Director, and previously as Senior Special Assistant, she has delivered transformational projects, foremost being the tax system modernization project. Her understanding of federal and state revenues and funding sources well-positions the State to find resources as it seeks to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: [ryan ha](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - Strongly Support
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 3:27:06 PM

Attn: Senate Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing in strong support of Rona Suzuki's nomination for Director of the State Department of Taxation. I believe that Ms. Suzuki is well equipped to handle the position. I am happy to speak further regarding this letter of strong support if necessary.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

--

Ryan Ha, Esq.
Ryan.A.Ha@Hawaii.gov
Deputy Public Defender, State of Hawaii
1130 North Nimitz Hwy A-254
Honolulu, HI 96813

From: [Laura Ahn](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 12:51:19 PM

Aloha,

My name is Laura Ahn and I am the principal at Niu Valley Middle School. I am writing this letter of support for Rona Suzuki and strongly support her nomination for the Director of the Department of Taxation.

I have known Rona Suzuki for over 10 years through a network of women in leadership roles in Hawaii. Ms Suzuki has always shown her passion in her work as well as her friendships. In our group we always try to find balance but it seems that Ms Suzuki's commitment to her work was always a priority. She has proven her loyalty to the State of Hawaii in so many ways.

I hope that Rona Suzuki's confirmation for the Director of Taxation will be confirmed tomorrow.

From: [Karen Thompson](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT."
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 7:55:18 AM

Ms. Rona M. Suzuki has the experience, skills, and personal and professional qualities to be an outstanding Director of the Department of Taxation for the State of Hawaii. I **strongly support** her nomination.

Sincerely,
Karen S. Thompson, MD
Chair, Department of Pathology
JABSOM

From: [leslie terasako](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Confirmation of Rona Suzuki and Director of Taxation
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 3:10:55 PM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means, Sirs and Madams, Chair and Members

I am writing to request that you confirm Rona Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation.

I have been a Department of Taxation (DOTAX) employee for 30 years. When I first started at DOTAX, there were so many manual processes that I can recall my supervisor always saying "things will get better".

Whenever anyone takes on a new position, it takes some time to get up to speed. Rona was quick to adapt. She worked to unify DOTAX and the project team; walking along side to make sure timelines were met. When issues arose, she got involved and valued the input from each team member fostering an environment of collaboration. With Rona's guidance DOTAX continually strives to implement new processes and procedures that will enhance taxpayer experience which facilitates compliance with tax laws.

Under the direction of Rona Suzuki, her leadership, knowledge and work ethic allowed DOTAX to accomplish much in a short period of time. With her guidance, we successfully implemented our Tax System Modernization project on time (a project that was on the verge of failing).

Rona continuously works to improve taxpayer service, she worked with other state department to streamline processes and shorten the turnaround times. She championed an automated pre-compliance process which allows other state departments to submit a list of their licensees. DOTAX then automatically generates a letter of tax compliance status to the licensee, freeing up DOTAX employee time to assist taxpayers with other needs.

After many directors, supervisors and tax systems, I can finally say that things are better! I humbly ask that you confirm Rona Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation.

Sincerely
Leslie Terasako

From: [heidi gallardo](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 3:20:51 PM

Dear Chairman Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

I work for the Department of Taxation for over 22 years to date. I have worked under numerous numbers of Directors who have their own individual strengths. I can attest that Ms. Rona Suzuki has demonstrated an exceptional level of leadership.

Ms. Suzuki came into the Department of Taxation as a Senior Special Assistant for the Dotax System modernization project. She rose to the occasion with her “can do” attitude. The success of the project came into fruition because of her strong and great leadership. She proceeded to show her competence when she was assigned as our Director. She continues to impress me with her admirable intelligence, work ethics and dedication to her craft. The Department of Taxation is more than lucky to have her on board as our Director.

From a person who works in the Department of Taxation, I can tell offhand that the department is heading in the right direction with Ms. Suzuki as the director because of her continued dedication and hard work for the betterment, not only for the department but most importantly, for the taxpayers. On top of it all, she is approachable, ready to listen to her staff, open to any suggestions. She just does not sit behind the office table but goes out in her way to work with us at the staff level. We work as a team. She is “one of us”. It is, but easy to follow a leader with her unique qualities. I will continue to support her.

Rona Suzuki is our tireless great leader. We, the staff, need her. We, the taxpayers, need her.

I humbly ask for your consideration to recommend and confirm her as the Director of Taxation.

Sincerely,
Heidi Gallardo

From: [Rose Salvacion](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: [Rose Salvacion](#)
Subject: GM503 Rona Suzuki
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 5:25:20 PM

Dear WAM Committee,

I'm writing to you in support of GM503 Rona Suzuki.

I've been with the Department of Taxation for 20 years and Rona Suzuki has demonstrated great leadership within our Department.

Rona Suzuki is very inspiring. She learned our business and system processes to make the right decisions based on facts, numbers and guidelines. I've personally witnessed Ms. Suzuki in action as she listened to our practitioners concerns about the General Excise Tax form process flow on HTO (Hawaii Tax Online) while trying to make it user friendly. Her immediate action was so fast, I had to keep up with her. Keeping up with her was a pleasure because the changes was for our taxpayers. I like this about her as our leader because she takes immediate action, ensuring we will maximize the use of our new Modernized Tax Systems.

Department of Taxation will definitely benefit from having Rona Suzuki as our Director. With her as our leader, it will also be for good for our Taxpayers.

Thank you
Rose Salvacion

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/3/2020 5:22:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen Velasco-Egdamin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I work for the Department of Taxation and I am writing this in support of GM 503 confirming Rona Suzuki as the Department's Director. Rona is the epitome of a strong leader. Her work ethic is undeniable and her commitment and dedication to serving the community is admirable. She takes time to get to know her employees and provides assistance and motivation, creating an atmosphere of teamwork and solidarity resulting in increased productivity. With her focus and drive, the Department of Taxation will continue to advance under her leadership. Thank you.

From: [Marie Fe Bumanglag](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM503 - Rona Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 7:24:53 PM

Hello,

I am a current employee of the Hawaii Department of Taxation (DOTAX), and I fully support Rona Suzuki to be confirmed as director of DOTAX. I had the pleasure to work with Rona since 2019, and she has exemplified great leadership since being involved in DOTAX operations.

Rona became involved in DOTAX operations during the toughest rollouts of the Hawaii Tax System Modernization (TSM) project, and overcame existing adversities by instilling better leadership and accountability. Firm decisions were one of the biggest shortfalls prior to her engagement with DOTAX. She overcame that shortfall by taking the time to focus and learn DOTAX business processes. She was approachable and considered ideas or options possible before making the best decision, as she saw fit, to improve the business processes in TSM and provide better service to the public.

When Rona was appointed as interim director of DOTAX in August 2019, she continued to be involved with TSM improvements despite the additional responsibilities as director. The additional responsibilities as director allowed her to oversee a bigger picture and envision more improvements for DOTAX as a whole. A few improvements include the creation of the DOTAX intranet for better communication to all employees, create projects to focus on specific DOTAX functions, revisit business processes to further streamline and improve service to the public, and also configure business processes that still did/do not exist in TSM.

Other than being intelligent and professional, a couple of traits that really stood out consistently was Rona's ability to be approachable and be open-minded. She engaged in DOTAX operations amidst adversity and resistance to change. But by being approachable and open-minded, others were able to express their ideas or concerns to her. With this, she was able to make decisions and envision a positive and optimistic outlook for DOTAX.

Please be rational and consider Rona Suzuki's leadership and accomplishments during her time at DOTAX, and allow her to continue and execute what she has envisioned for us as our director.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/4/2020 11:53:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ryan Ignacio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

I am writing in support of GM503 Rona Suzuki for Director of the Department of Taxation.

I have been with the Department of Taxation (DOTAX) for 15 years. Ms. Suzuki came on board at time when DOTAX was in the process of upgrading its tax system. She was able to understand the requirements and needs of each division leading to a successful implementation.

Ms. Suzuki has gone above and beyond her role as Director. Her work ethic and leadership is inspiring. Under her direction DOTAX has come a long way and will continue to excel.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Suzuki for Director of the Department of Taxation.

Respectfully,

Ryan Ignacio

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/5/2020 8:45:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Danielle Tosaka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chairman and Committee Members,

I submit this testimony with strong support for the confirmation of Rona M Suzuki as Director of the Department of Taxation.

I am a current employee of the Department of Taxation. I have had the privilege to work with Ms. Suzuki on the Tax System Modernization project. She is a hands-on Director who takes the time to understand each section's goals and implements procedures to help increase the productivity of the Department.

Ms. Suzuki is an amazing Director because she leads by example. I've witnessed her assisting taxpayers while they're waiting for assistance from the Taxpayer Services team. Ms. Suzuki is approachable and is always willing to assist her staff as well as taxpayers when challenges arise. She makes my job enjoyable because everyday is an opportunity to learn from a great leader.

I urge you to confirm Ms. Suzuki as Director of Taxation so that she may continue to make the Department of Taxation successful.

Thank
you,
Daniele Tosaka

Danie

Tax Return Examiner

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/5/2020 11:33:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gale Magee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith Agaran and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in **support** of Rona M. Suzuki for confirmation as the Director of the Department of Taxation for the State of Hawaii. I have been an employee of DOTAX since 2011 with prior experience in the private banking industry. During Ms. Suzuki's time with DOTAX, she has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and a strong desire to improve our operations. She has always been willing to research and obtain a deeper understanding of any issues before making decisions. She has also proven to be incredibly hardworking and intelligent. I humbly request your consideration to approve GM 503 in confirming Rona M. Suzuki as Director of the Department of Taxation and thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Gale D. Magee

From: [Julie Fukata](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Reconsideration for Rona Suzuki's Appointment as Tax Director
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 1:29:34 AM

To: Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee

News of Rona's decision to withdraw her nomination as Tax Director has left us shocked and saddened. As a DOTAX employee, Rona has been very supportive of her staff no matter how small the issue. Please reconsider Rona's appointment as Tax Director.

Thank you,
Julie Fukata

From: [Claire Doi](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 4:02:54 PM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

It is with respect that I write in strong support of GM 503, confirmation of Rona M. Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation (DOTAX).

Working at the Department of Taxation, I have seen so many accomplishments by the department and more recently with Rona's leadership. Rona has provided an open and transparent environment of communication with the department through the development and implementations of many new ideas such as our new intranet system, progressively enhancing our Tax System Modernization Program and continuous means of updates to keep the community informed. She even assisted the department to answer customer calls during our peak periods, one of many ways she reaches out to the community, personally.

From what I can see, Rona is always brainstorming to think of ways to help the department, its employees, and the State of Hawaii.

I respectfully ask for your support of Rona M. Suzuki for Director, Department of Taxation.

Sincerely,
Claire Doi

From: [Blas, Edward R](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Gm503
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 10:44:45 AM

Aloha WAM Committee,

I work for the Department of Taxation and have been on the TSM Project from the beginning. TSM project started off rocky and I really saw improvements in leadership and direction since Rona stepped in as project manager and as Tax Director. I would like Rona to remain as my Director at Taxation as long as I work there. I believe we need stability in that position.

Thank You,

Ed

Tax Information Technician II

Department of Taxation

From: [Myrna Lactaoen](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: "GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT"
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 8:16:19 AM

Dear Cahir Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for Rona M. Suzuki to become full-time Director of the Department of Taxation. I have known Rona as our Executive Director for two and a half years, and have found her to be a strong, motivated, kind, and honest leader. She is very professional when it comes to work, but very friendly and easy to talk to even after-hours. I have been extremely impressed with her diligence, honesty, and can-do attitude. She has always gone the extra mile to get the job done- especially when she became our Executive Director at DLIR-OCS. She cleaned up DLIR-OCS in the office from paperwork to within the system. A hard-working and dedicated public employee such as Rona fully deserves the support of the entire community. We are lucky to have Rona representing our community in such a critical position, and my hope is that the members of the Hawaii Senate Ways and Means Committee supports her nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support.

Sincerely,
Myrna Falcon Lactaoen
Personnel Clerk I
Department of Parks and Recreation
City and County of Honolulu

From: [Douglas Mersberg](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Dept. of Taxation Director, Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - Strongly Support
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 4:16:58 PM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Gilbert. S.C. Keith- Agaran, Vice Chair

Re: In strong support of Rona M. Suzuki as Director of the Dept. of Taxation

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of Rona M. Suzuki as the Director of the Dept. of Taxation.

Rona has served as a Senior Executive Assistant at the Department of Taxation, where she managed the modernization of the department's computer systems. She also served as the state Dept. of Labor and Industrial Relation's Executive Director of the Office of Community Services. Rona has a record of excellent service and significant achievement in these roles.

As the Executive Director for Waianae Coast Early Childhood Services for the past 36 years, I have worked with numerous public service leaders and Rona Suzuki exemplifies the best of those who choose to serve this state's community interest. I hold Rona in the highest regard and strongly support her nomination as the Director of the Dept. of Taxation.

Sincerely,

Douglas Mersberg

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/3/2020 12:58:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Ms. Suzuki's performance during the Senate Covid 19 Special Committee meetings should be commended. She way always willing and able to be of service. Her performance should be recognized.

As a regular viewer, I strongly support her confirmation.

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/3/2020 5:09:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rev. Samuel L Domingo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT.

Aloha WAM Chair Dela Cruz and Committee Members,

I submit my testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Rona Suzuki's appointment as Director of the Department of Taxation. In the few short months as interim director, Ms Suzuki has demonstrated her ability to steer the department in moving towards the goal of completing the technical upgrades and directing staff to be fully functional in service to the people of Hawaii.

I was shocked to read this morning's Star Advertiser article. Ms Suzuki is a faithful civil servant!

I trust that this matter will be resolved quickly in Monday so that Ms Suzuki can return in full confidence to do the work as Director of the Department of Taxation.

Sincerely,

Rev Samuel L Domingo

From: [Cameron Holm](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 6:47:49 PM

Rona is dedicated to her work. I strongly support her nomination.
Sent from my iPhone

From: [John](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 5:44:57 PM

I John C Meier SUPPORT Rona

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kevin Takamori](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 5:14:44 PM

Dear Members of the Hawaii Senate Ways and Means Committee,

I strongly support the nomination of Rona Suzuki for the position of Director of Taxation for the State of Hawaii.

Much mahalo for all your hard work.

Sincerely,

Kevin Takamori
Registered Hawaii Voter
Senate District 10

From: [Kirk Tengan](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM503 Director of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 4:42:43 PM

Dear Chairman Dela Cruz,

I Strongly Support the Gubernatorial Nomination of Rona M. Suzuki for the position of Hawaii State Director of Taxation.

I've known Rona for many years and I am confident that knowledge, experience and integrity makes her the best choice for the job.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kirk T. Tengan

From: mchow@screaltyhawaii.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT.
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 5:30:30 PM

To whom it may concern,

I strongly support Rona Suzuki's Confirmation as Hawaii Tax Director.

Thank you,

Michael Chow
SC Realty LLC
808-225-2576

Aloha,

Michael Chow (R)
SC Realty LLC
808-225-2576 cell
808-591-6262 fax
www.screaltyhawaii.com

From: [Shirley Lee](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 4:26:29 PM

I, Shirley Lee strongly support the director of Dept of Taxation Rona M Suzuki as a gubernatorial nominee.

Thank you
Shirley Lee

From: [TJ Thompson](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 8:33:47 PM

I am writing to express my strong support for Roma Suzuki as Director of the Department of Taxation. Thank you

Thomas J Thompson
45-204A KA HANAHOU CIRCLE
KANEEOHE HI 96744
808-351-7548

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chris Tanaka](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503 Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki-SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 10:09:27 AM

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of Rona Suzuki. She is hard working and very dedicated to her work.

Mahalo for your consideration

Chris Tanaka

From: [Daniel Luke](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503 / Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 9:19:58 PM

Aloha Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing in **support** of Rona Suzuki in her bid for the Director of the Department of Taxation. I am an associate attorney at the Law Office of Howard K. K. Luke and have had the opportunity to socialize with Ms. Suzuki on numerous occasions through her significant other, David Hayakawa, Esq., who shares office space with my firm.

It is my opinion that Ms. Suzuki is rational and level-headed, but also possesses an extremely strong will and impressively tireless goal-oriented attitude. I fully agree with her stated objectives to modernize government functions through upgraded computerization and maximize efficiency of personnel and workers. She has good energy and experience in the field. From what I can see she has a robust desire to improve the Department of Taxation. Ms. Suzuki has an enduring work ethic. As a private attorney working with other lawyers, I am accustomed to long and irregular hours, but Ms. Suzuki time and focus on her job are impressive. I have no doubt this work ethic will be retained should she receive this appointment.

I am honored to write in support of Ms. Suzuki for this position, and respectfully ask that you strongly consider her candidacy. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Thank you,
Daniel Luke

--

Daniel K. K. Luke, Esq.
Associate Attorney
Law Office of Howard K. K. Luke
cell: (808) 285-4288

From: [Elizabeth Watanabe](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 8:51:42 AM

Chairman Donovan Dela Cruz

I would like to submit my strong support of Ms. Rona Suzuki for the position of Hawaii State Tax Director.

I met Ms. Rona Suzuki 15 years ago while working on community projects. Her tireless efforts for the betterment of our state have long been recognized.

I can attest that Ms. Rona Suzuki's selfless character and impeccable integrity make her the ideal candidate for the Director of Taxation.

Ms. Rona Suzuki's dedication has been exemplary. Especially now in this time of uncertainty, it is imperative we rely on Ms. Rona Suzuki's expertise and leadership. She has many proven years of experience in both finance and technology.

I strongly urge the committee to confirm Ms. Rona Suzuki.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Elizabeth Watanabe
President Burgers on Bishop
745 Fort Street Mall #130
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
808.586.2000

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Evan Tokunaga](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT.
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 3:32:44 PM

I strongly support this nomination.

From: [Florence Tanaka](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 12:07:31 AM

I support the nomination of Rona M. Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation for the State of Hawaii. She is intelligent, hard working and dedicated to serving the people of the State of Hawaii. We need someone like her to get us through these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Florence Tanaka

From: [James Escobido](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503 Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki (SUPPORT)
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 9:26:00 AM

To whom it may concern,

I have known Rona Suzuki for over 15 years, and her hard work, dedication, and commitment to the State of Hawaii is extraordinary. She will be a great asset to the State of Hawaii.

I Strongly Support Rona Suzuki for election. Thank you!

James Escobido

From: [James Yamamoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 9:50:03 PM

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Chairman Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

My name is Jimmy Yamamoto, a licensed Hawai'i civil engineer. I am writing to highly recommend Ms. Rona Suzuki for the position of Director of the Hawai'i State Department of Taxation. She is an extremely competent, highly dedicated and very intelligent person who has all the qualifications to lead this department. I have had the good fortune to know Rona and her family for over 20 years so I know that she has solid family support in all her endeavors and that she has never let them down. Her background including business, technology and government is both extensive and impressive and will enable her to excel in this position. I am confident that she will make a significant contribution to our community during these trying times when her knowledge and abilities are really needed.

From: [Jeffrey Fabry](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 10:14:01 AM

I strongly support the appointment of Rona Suzuki.

From: thompsonj004@hawaii.rr.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT.
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 12:37:28 PM

STRONGLY SUPPORT. John and Rita Thompson

From: justincruz@yahoo.com
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Strongly Support Rona Suzuki's nomination
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 5:46:17 PM

This letter is in support of Rona Suzuki's nomination. You will be hard-pressed to find a more qualified candidate.

Jus

From: [Kathleen Tanaka](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 8:44:04 PM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I am writing in strong support of Ms. Rona Suzuki's nomination to serve as the Director of the Department of Taxation. Having known Ms. Suzuki personally for about a decade, I can attest to her strong leadership and organizational skills, as well as her ability to confidently make decisions and take initiative. These qualities make her the right choice for this position.

Thank you,
Kathleen Tanaka

From: [Nick Allday](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 2:34:24 PM

Aloha,
I support Rona's nomination.
Nick

From: [Peggy Miyashiro](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Friday, July 3, 2020 7:55:23 PM

Hi,

I want to say that I have known Rona Suzuki for nearly 30 years.
I believe she will be a fantastic Director for the Department of Taxation!

Mahalo,

Peggy Miyashiro

Peggy Miyashiro
peggymiyashiro@icloud.com

From: [Richard Fried](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Dir. of the Dept. of Taxation, Gov. nominee, Rona M. Suzuki
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 9:46:52 AM

I strongly support Rona Suzuki's nomination. In bringing in N-95 masks for the C&C, she was helpful is directing me to the people to contact at the State for the same purpose. This is not relevant to the position she has been nominated for, but I raise it because she working after 8PM. Several people who have interacted with have spoken highly of her knowledge in her area of expertise. Thank you.
Rick Fried

L. Richard Fried, Jr.
Cronin, Fried, Sekiya, Kekina & Fairbanks
[841 Bishop Street, Suite 600](#)
[Honolulu, HI 96813](#)

Telephone: [808-524-1433](tel:808-524-1433)
Fax: [808-536-2073](tel:808-536-2073)
Email: rfried@croninfried.com

From: [Richard Sing](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki -STRONG SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 2:33:45 PM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz,

I write you today in strong support of the nomination and confirmation of Ms. Rona Suzuki.

I have known Ms. Suzuki for many years and can attest that Ms. Suzuki is an individual of high integrity with a tremendous work ethic. She is patient, kind, and superbly competent.

She has made important contributions in the many areas of government in which she has worked. As a small business owner I have seen the Department of Taxation go from taking sometimes months to cash a check from me, to me being able to handle matters over a website any have my payments processed within days. Ms. Suzuki's contributions at the Department of Taxation are clear and so much appreciated.

I urge you to hang on tight to this talented and devoted public servant and confirm Ms. Suzuki. The people of our great state need and deserve her skill and enthusiasm now more than ever before.

Please feel free to contact me should I be able to provide further information.

Very Truly Yours,

Richard H.S .Sing

Richard H. S. Sing, Esq.
The Law Offices of Richard H.S. Sing
Davies Pacific Center
841 Bishop Street, Suite 410
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone (808) 537-1529
Fax (808) 523-9137
Website www.hicriminallaw.com

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From: [THLC Accounting](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503 Director of Dept of Taxation- SUPPORT RONA SUZUKI
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 9:16:22 AM

July 3, 2020

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Committee on Ways and Means
Hawaii State Capitol, Auditorium
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: IN SUPPORT for Governor's Message 503 submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, RONA M. SUZUKI

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee:

I have known Rona and The Suzuki Family for over thirty five years. I can attest that there is no one else that I would support (or consider) for the honor of the appointment as Director of the Department of Taxation. Throughout Rona's career, she has always shown loyalty, impeccable ethics, level-headedness, and perseverance. I've always admired her dedication and she has inspired me from hanna buttah days up until now, as a business owner who knows the value of hard work.

I robustly encourage the Ways and Means Committee to advise the Senate to confirm Ms. Suzuki's nomination as Director of the Department of Taxation.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of my request and allowing our testimony.

Respectfully,
Summer Lee Campos
The Hawaiian Lei Company
849 Halekauwila Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 593-7400/Fax: (808) 593-7471

From: [Teresa Fabry](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503 Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 7:39:58 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I've known Ms. Suzuki for over 15 years and I find her to be a strong and capable leader, one who brings people together to find common ground to achieve goals. She is a good listener and a team player. Rona would do an excellent job as Director of the Department of Taxation and I strongly encourage you to approve her nomination.

Sincerely Yours,

Teresa D Fabry
1388 Ala Moana Blvd Apt 8803
Honolulu, HI 96814
808-265-4732 (cell)

From: [Tony Hall](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 1:15:08 PM

Hi,

Just supporting Rona Suzuki, for Director of Taxation.

She'll be as dedicated and hard working in that role as she has been for our State over the years!

Aloha,
James Hall

From: [Val Baliad](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 7:22:21 AM

Aloha,

I support the nomination of Rona M Suzuki for Director of the Department of Taxation. She is an excellent and qualified candidate for this job.

Val B. Baliad M.D.

From: [Valerie L Moss](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: "GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT."
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 9:06:18 AM

Hello, I'm writing to inform that I STRONGLY SUPPORT Rona Suzuki for Director of Dept of Taxation.

Aloha,
Valerie L Moss
ph. (808) 292-8393

From: [Vincent Kimura](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Governatorial Nominee, Rona Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 11:26:25 PM

Aloha,

This email is to show my STRONG SUPPORT of Rona Suzuki for the Director of the Department of Taxation.

Thank you,

Vincent

Vincent Kimura

US mobile: +1.808.291.2080

Skype: vincent.kimura

From: [Warren Daniel](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM503, Director of the DEPARTMENT of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki- STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2020 2:17:43 PM



PLEASE NOTE THAT I "STRONGLY SUPPORT" THE NOMINATION OF RONA M. SUZUKI AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION.

Mahalos for your consideration.

Warren J. Daniel (RA) (MM)
Founder/Managing Member
Distinctive Homes Hawaii, LLC

Visit us at: www.dhhre.com

Office: 808-943-8686
Cell: 808-349-3880

From: [Bryan Simpson](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: I STRONGLY SUPPORT RONA SUZUKI
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 10:51:19 AM

Aloha!!

I strongly support Rona Suzuki being confirmed as our Director of Taxation in Hawaii. She does a great job and I believe she is exactly what you are looking for.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Dee Dee](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT.
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 10:12:13 AM

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee

My name is Debby Lee, and I am testifying as an individual, in support of the appointment of Ms. Rona Suzuki to serve as Director of the Department of Taxation, for a term to expire on December 5, 2022.

I had a chance to work with Ms. Rona Suzuki when she held the position as Executive Director of the Office of Community Services. Personally, I found her extremely smart and capable individual to take on hard and complicated tasks, yet very down to earth. The chance to work with her gave me an opportunity to get to know her, her work ethics, and her style of leadership. She has this strong “can do” and “willing to do what it takes to get things done” attitude that will definitely be needed in leading the Tax department to do better. I also found her to be a caring and thoughtful leader, as well as a dedicated public servant.

I strongly believe Ms. Suzuki will be a valuable leader of the Department of Taxation, and respectfully request that you recommend approval of her nomination. Thank you.

--

With much aloha,
Debby Lee

From: [elisha bishaw](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: strongly support Rona Suzuki as State Tax Director
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 9:30:28 AM

Good morning Mr. Dela Cruz,
I strongly support Rona Suzuki as the new Hawaii State Tax Director. You cannot ask for a better person for the job.

Sincerely,
Elisha Bishaw

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From: [Hayley Cheng](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 8:08:21 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Hayley Cheng, and I am writing in strong support of the nomination of Rona M. Suzuki for the position of Director of the Department of Taxation. I have known Rona personally for several years and am confident she is the right person for this critically important position. Her work ethic is unrivaled and I am confident she will continue to work tirelessly for the people of Hawai`i if confirmed.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my strong support for the confirmation of Rona Suzuki.

Mahalo,

Hayley Cheng

From: [Howard K.K. Luke](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of Department of Taxation: Supporting testimony for Nominee Rona M. Suzuki
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 8:09:17 AM

Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 208

Re: Testimony in Strong Support for Rona M. Suzuki
Nominee for Director of State Department of Taxation

Dear Senator Dela Cruz and Fellow Committee Members:

Please accept my testimony in strong support for Rona M. Suzuki as Director of the State Department of Taxation.

Ms. Suzuki has impeccable qualifying credentials as well as a history of outstanding professional experience for this important position. She has justifiably earned the overwhelming support of others who have submitted testimony in support of her nomination.

It is of critical importance that our State resources, both financial and otherwise, be placed in the stewardship of individuals who are truly dedicated to meet the sacrifices necessary to ensure the best interests of our community. Rona is unquestionably such a person. Her commitment to serve the public has been demonstrated in the past in her role as the Director of Community Services with DLIR, and in navigating the daunting challenges in modernizing our tax programs.

Rona is an exceptionally hard worker. She has the reputation of thoroughly immersing herself in her role in running the tax department. She works incredibly long hours, seven days a week. She is wholeheartedly committed to guide our tax department through these extraordinarily challenging times.

In short, Ms. Suzuki is the perfect person for the position of Director of the State Department of Taxation.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard K.K. Luke

From: [Kim Suzuki](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 8:23:18 AM

Dear Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kim Suzuki and I am submitting testimony to **strongly support** the confirmation of Rona M. Suzuki to the position of Director of the Department of Taxation.

I have known Rona for over 12 years. She happens to be my sister-in-law, but more than that, she is also one of the most hard-working, smart, loyal and humble people I know.

Rona is a natural leader and is someone who takes initiative and gets things done. On a personal level, even though she is extremely busy, she has done more for my children and our family than I could ever repay. She takes them on fun outings and introduces them to educational extracurricular activities that they would otherwise probably not be exposed to. (I do not have even half as much energy or the go-getter attitude that Rona does).

Even prior to the COVID crisis, I observed how hardworking Rona was. Whether it was at work or otherwise, she always puts in 110%. When the COVID crisis ensued, I saw her put in even more hours at her job - often working late into the night during the week and every weekend. Her work ethic, dedication, competence, and honest desire to do the right thing for the right reasons is not something you see everyday.

I respectfully request your recommendation for approval of her nomination. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of GM 503.

Sincerely,
Kim Suzuki

From: [ROBERT ROY](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 9:03:16 AM

Testimony of

Robert Roy

Before the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday, July 5, 2020, 12:00 p.m.

State Capitol Auditorium

In consideration of

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 503

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, RONA M. SUZUKI, FOR A TERM TO
EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-05-2022.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Governor's Message 503.

I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** the nomination of Rona Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation. I am submitting this testimony in my personal capacity and not on behalf on any organization.

Ms. Suzuki is experienced, community focused, and highly competent to fill this role. She is forward-thinking and innovative in ways that will benefit all taxpayers in the State of Hawaii during this challenging time and going forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this nominee.

Very Truly Yours,

Robert Roy
(808) 343-2157

From: [Thomas Otake](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Rona Suzuki's Confirmation as Hawaii Tax Director
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 10:27:39 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I write today to voice strong support for Ms. Rona Suzuki's confirmation as State Tax Director. I have known Ms. Suzuki for many years, and in my opinion she is extremely intelligent, professional, hard-working, ethical, and kind. The State is lucky to have someone of her caliber willing to serve in this difficult position and during these difficult times. Right now we need talented, bright, individuals who are willing to lead and serve. Individuals who are willing to sacrifice more lucrative positions in the private sector to serve their community. Ms. Suzuki fits this description. She undoubtedly would have many opportunities in the private sector that would pay more and be less stressful. But her desire to dedicate her time to public service does not surprise me. That is the kind of person she is. She has the experience, leadership skills, and dedication that we need in State Government right now. Please do not play politics with her confirmation, and let her get to work. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Thomas M. Otake
(808) 386-2127

From: [Rai Saint Chu](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM503 STRONGLY SUPPORT Rona Suzuki Dept of Taxation, Governor's nominee
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 12:10:00 PM

This is in strong support of Rona Suzuki's confirmation for the Chair of the Department of Tax.

Rona has been involved in the community and lead various efforts and causes. She is dedicated to help the people of Hawaii with her expertise and knowledge. She communicates well and works well with people. She has a brilliant mind and analytical in her work. She is serious and without fail, loyal to the people she serves. She is not afraid of putting in hard work, because of her dedication to her job and the people she serves.

Without doubt, she is highly qualified to serve as the Chair of the Department of Tax. I strongly urge Rona's confirmation by the Ways and Means Committee of the State Senate. Any questions, please call me 808-528-4000

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Aloha, Rai Saint Chu

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/5/2020 12:43:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Glenn Shinbo	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am in OPPOSITION to the confirmation of Rona Suzuki as the Director of Taxation.

I am a retiree of the state Department of Taxation (DoTax). My permanent position with DoTax was Collections Supervisor.

I was the Acting Tax Collector (Acting Branch Chief of Collections) from September 2016 to September 2017. A new Tax Collector was hired in September 2017 and I retired at the end of 2017. I understand the new Tax Collector resigned around the spring of 2019.

I do not know the nominee Rona Suzuki personally or professionally. Ms. Suzuki came on board at DoTax shortly after I retired.

I have heard that the resignations and premature retirements of managers, supervisors, and specialists during the tenure of the nominee are occurring at heightened levels. Since I do not have access to current or former staffing rosters, my information is anecdotal and I cannot provide any data.

If a vetting process of the nominee is initiated, and if employee turnover becomes a meaningful subject, I respectfully suggest that the committee review the turnover of managers, supervisors, and specialists from 2018 to the present and determine if the turnover is excessive and/or attributable to the nominee.

Sincerely,

Glenn Shinbo

LATE

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/5/2020 2:13:49 PM
Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alice Lau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Ways and Means committee,

I am writing in support of Rona Suzuki as the Director of the Department of Taxation.

I am an employee at the Department of Taxation and have worked with Rona since she joined the Tax System Modernization (TSM) project. She has demonstrated an exceptional degree of dedication and intelligence in understanding tax laws, business processes and system functions.

Rona is a strong leader with integrity. She has sponsored various initiatives to promote the effectiveness and fairness in tax processing and compliance. I truly believe the department is moving towards the right direction with her visions and leadership, especially in challenging times like this.

It is an honor and privilege working for Rona. I respectfully ask for your vote in support GM 503 and confirm Ms. Suzuki to serve as the Director of the Department of Taxation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Alice Lau

LATE

Chairman Dela Cruz, Vice Chairman Keith Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of Rona Suzuki as Director of Department of Taxation. I have worked at Taxation since 1988, and she is the first person that I have seen take serious interest in improving the efficiency of our work. For example, she will ask for insight on different employees' perspectives to see what she can do to make things better for the employees and Hawaii taxpayers. She is not the first director to ask for our suggestions, but she is the first to implement changes to better serve the State of Hawaii.

Rona Suzuki leads by example. She is an active participant in completing our daily tasks. She has made it her responsibility to be involved in the work of the Department's employees. She has also made strategic changes to increase the productivity of the Department. She has coordinated multiple projects and team members to help generate revenue for the State of Hawaii.

Since her arrival to the Department, Rona has shown her dedication by making it her goal to DO BETTER. She is unafraid to point out the areas of inefficiency, and she has taken it upon herself to make those necessary changes. She has devoted much of her time to complete these objectives. She has spent many extra hours in the office long after we've all gone home and has sacrificed many of her weekends to finish the job that the week did not permit.

To put it plainly, she does what she says she'll do. She's shown it to us through her work ethic and the changes that she has made. Over the past six months, my project has brought in tens of thousands of non-filer taxpayer dollars. I believe that Rona Suzuki is the right person to lead us in a positive direction.

Sincerely,

Wendy Tokuda

Department of Taxation

Special Enforcement Sections

LATE

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/5/2020 8:21:52 PM
Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wendy Yoshioka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Rona Suzuki's confirmation as Director of the Department of Taxation. I retired as the Supervisor of the Field Audit Section of the Hawaii District's Hilo Office in December 2019 after 35 years of State of Hawaii service, 33 with DOTax. While most of the "action" happens in our Oahu office, Rona would reach out on occasion to various employees in the District offices for input during the implementation of the Tax System Modernization Project. Although I didn't always agree with her decisions or course of action, I respect Rona and appreciate her willingness to listen to concerns and address problems head-on. While I no longer have a vested interest as an employee, I feel confident in her abilities to lead the Department as a taxpayer of the State of Hawaii.

LATE

GM-503

Submitted on: 7/6/2020 1:36:30 AM
Testimony for WAM on 7/6/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Renee Robinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I am in support of Ms. Rona M. Suzuki to be the Director of the Department of Taxation.

Before retiring on December 31, 2018, I had the privilege of working under Rona Suzuki when she was the project manager of the new computer system. She has the leadership and decisive decision-making skill sets that turned the project to be successful. I admire the hard work and her complete dedication to the project. Ms. Suzuki showed me her courage to make difficult but necessary decisions in order to produce a system to benefit the entire state. She has the qualities to be an effective and productive director.

At this crucial and critical time created by COVID-19, the Tax Department requires a reliable, trusted and knowledgeable leader and I am certain that Ms. Suzuki is that person. I am confident that this committee will make the proper decision in confirming Rona Suzuki as the Director of Taxation.

Mahalo,

Renee H. Robinson, Retired Field Auditor

LATE

From: [Man Yee](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: GM503 - Rona M Suzuki - SUPPORT
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2020 9:09:14 PM

Aloha,

Please accept my email testimony in full support of Rona M. Suzuki for Director of Department of Taxation (DOTAX).

I am a former DOTAX employee and I have the pleasure to work with Rona on the Tax System Modernization project. She has demonstrated her strong and great leadership. When issues arose, she would not just sit in the office making the decision but would get involved and worked with us to resolve the issue. Under her leadership, her extensive knowledge and work ethic, the department was successfully implemented the tax system. Beside her intelligent and diligent, she is approachable and open-minded. We were able to express our ideas or concerns to her. I believe her commitment, her work ethic, and strong leadership will continue to lead the department through this challenge times.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Rona Suzuki.

Sincerely,

Man Yee

LATE

Sakamoto Consulting LLC

Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Honorable Gil Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means
Hawaii State Senate

Re: GM 503, Nomination of Rona Suzuki for Director of Department of Taxation

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

My name is Stefanie Sakamoto, and I am writing in the strongest support of GM 503, the nomination of Rona Suzuki to the position of Director of the Department of Taxation.

I have known Rona personally for over 15 years. I have always known her to be highly intelligent and competent, with a strong willingness to serve. Rona has always done everything to the best of her ability, and has the right temperament for this complex and difficult position. She will be a devoted and collaborative Director, and her commitment to the State of Hawaii will be much needed during these uncertain and challenging times. Further, Rona's educational and professional accomplishments only enhance her qualifications.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Rona Suzuki.

Mahalo,



Stefanie Sakamoto Lee



LATE

July 6, 2020

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Testimony in opposition of GM503, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, RONA M. SUZUKI, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee,

The Managerial and Confidential Employees Chapter (MCEC) serviced by American Federation of State and County Employees (AFSCME) has a membership of one thousand. MCEC members, excluded from collective bargaining are united to preserve their rights under State law and to enhance government service in critical management and confidential positions.

Following Ms. Suzuki's appointment to the Department of Taxation (DoTax) as a special assistant (since March 2018), MCEC has received calls and email reporting her intimidating and hostile actions. According to members, Ms. Suzuki created a work environment in which employees felt compelled to leave, or were forced to resign. It's been reported that at least fourteen managerial employees and/or their direct reports, confidential or exempt employees, left their positions due to Ms. Suzuki's management practices. Some of these employees confided they left despite significant service time with DoTax.

Based on reports from employees, we believe Ms. Suzuki lacks knowledge and experience necessary to direct DoTax operations. They point out she does not have a background in tax law and is not a CPA. They also note she did not possess DoTax experience prior to serving as a special assistant in DoTax, which was only since March 2018. While she is credited with the tax system modernization project, MCEC members and other staff working under her strongly believed she lacked the technical expertise to direct operations. They pointed out that her experience was in computer sales, not in directing technical aspect of the system and not as it relates to the tax function. We understand past DoTax directors have been tax attorneys, CPAs, or long-time employees of DoTax or the IRS. Our members note that Ms. Suzuki possesses none of these qualifications. They view this lack of credentials and experience as extraordinary given DoTax's critical role in State government. According to these employees, it also impacts her ability to relate to managers and staff under her direction.

Managers tell us they were and are at a loss to understand Ms. Suzuki's unwillingness to consider front line information, whereby her managers could be aiding her in carrying out the Department's mandates. Her actions are characterized as "top down" without key managers' collaboration and usually in opposition to the views of those employees with first-hand knowledge and experience in getting the job

done. MCEC has been told her dictatorial management style, without explanation or reason, and behind managers' backs, has left staff demoralized. In some cases, it is reported that she has threatened discipline or dismissal of a manager or their subordinates for doing their jobs as required by job descriptions, legal mandates or departmental policies and procedures. Managers say it is clear to them their efforts are not valued. In their words, they consider her actions as that of "a bully."

We are told, for example, she chose to fire 3 competent exempt employees without explanation to their direct supervisor. This has left existing employees with responsibility for the additional workload, handicapping DoTax's ability to meet demand and despite concerns raised by her subordinates. From her staff's perspective, there continues to be a lack of understanding and explanation on why she takes such actions.

In another case, Ms. Suzuki damaged an employee's reputation by erroneously attributing gross misdeed on his part at a legislative hearing. The unfounded accusation was left uncorrected and made public. As a result, the employee was subjected to a barrage of unwarranted criticism and suspicion which eventually took a toll on the employee's health and forced his resignation. A workers' compensation charge was filed based on the stressful work conditions created by Ms. Suzuki's actions. The Labor Department upheld this claim. The employee who had no desire to leave and had tirelessly worked for years to improve DoTax services was forced to retire, despite his significant value to the Department and to the State.

Other past MCEC members also stepped forward to raise concern about Ms. Suzuki's lack of concern for employee relations. Certain DoTax managerial and confidential employees charged with upholding contracts and personnel policies informed us they felt there was no choice but to leave DoTax in light of on-going violations of established agreements and policies. These employees voiced concern that Ms. Suzuki's management style was contrary to maintaining good employee relations.

We provide this testimony based on the serious nature of complaints brought to our attention. On behalf of our DoTax members, MCEC opposes Ms. Suzuki's confirmation as Director of the Department of Taxation.

Mahalo,

Bronson K. Silva
AFSCME Organizer

LATE

From: [Lynda Camarao](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: RE: GM 503 - Confirmation of Rona M. Suzuki, Director of Taxation
Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 10:41:34 AM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to you all in **STRONG SUPPORT** and asking you to confirm Rona M. Suzuki as Director for the State Department of Taxation.

In the time that I have worked with Rona at Dotax, I have been impressed and awed by her tireless energy and her dedication and love for her job. She takes on a hands-on approach in dealing with any situation that comes up. She does not hesitate to do the same work she is asking her employees to do and then some. She always makes herself available to all of us here and listens to the concerns and suggestions of her employees. She leads by example and I must say that she is an excellent example for all of us.

I thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony for your consideration and I ask that you confirm Rona Suzuki as the Director for the State Department of Taxation.

LATE

From: [Gabaon, Valentin A](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: "GM 503, Director of the Department of Taxation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Rona M. Suzuki - SUPPORT."
Date: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 12:14:02 PM

To whom it may concern,

Rona Suzuki is shaping up the Department of Taxation in a positive, efficient and effective way. I am impressed by her leadership and her guidance. She listened to your concerns and address them accordingly.

What impressed me, is where she focused on while our Building was on lockdown for the public during this pandemic. To give the public better service she prioritized phone calls, processing return/payment and processing return/refunds. She too, joined in with the staff by answering call from taxpayers.

To disrupt and denying her nomination will alter any progressive measure with what is effectively going on here in the Department of Taxation' improvement.

Sincerely,

Valentin Gabaon
Delinquent Tax Collection Assistant III

Compliance Division/Oahu Collection Branch
State of Hawaii – Department of Taxation
830 Punchbowl Street Room 203
Honolulu, HI 96813

Our mission is to administer the tax laws for the State of Hawaii in a fair, consistent, and efficient manner to fund necessary government services.

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LATE

From: [Tracy Matsumoto](#)
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Subject: Rona Suzuki confirmation
Date: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 3:15:51 PM

Strongly support.

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Sincerely,

Tracy C. Matsumoto, DC, DACBR
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