



STATE OF HAWAII  
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM552  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE  
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATING PERSONNEL IN WASTEWATER  
TREATMENT PLANTS, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, ROGER BABCOCK, JR,  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2023**

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date: 3/19/2020

Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (Department) strongly supports the  
3 Governor's nominee, Dr. Roger Babcock, Jr., to the Board of Certification of Operating  
4 Personnel in Wastewater Treatments (Board). Dr. Babcock's confirmation will allow the Board  
5 to continue to operate and perform its duties required under Chapter 11-61, Hawaii  
6 Administrative Rules, entitled, "Mandatory Certification of Wastewater Treatment Personnel in  
7 Wastewater Treatment Plants."

8 Dr. Babcock is a Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering in the College of  
9 Engineering and the Water Resources Research Center at the University of Hawaii at Manoa  
10 where he has been since 1995. He has his Professional Engineering licenses in California and  
11 Hawaii. He has conducted research on biological wastewater treatment, on-site wastewater  
12 treatment, water recycling, membrane reactors, energy efficiency, the effects of sea level rise of  
13 wastewater infrastructure, and bioremediation. The Department believes that Dr. Babcock would  
14 be a great asset to the Board.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

- (1) Why do you wish to be a member of the Board?

To serve the Hawaii community by helping protect public health and the environment as affected by wastewater treatment and disposal.

- (2) What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Board?

The role of the Board is to oversee the licensing of professional wastewater treatment plant operators and the classification of wastewater facilities. The responsibility is to ensure that HRS 340B and HAR 11-61 are implemented and enforced and thereby protecting public health and the environment.

- (3) Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the Board.

One of the Board positions is specifically designated to be a faculty from UH. I am a professor of Civil Engineering and my specialization is in wastewater treatment, disposal and recycling. In addition, for many years, I have taught wastewater operations training courses to wastewater operators. I have visited most of the wastewater treatment plants in Hawaii. I have conducted research on treatment operations at several treatment plants and worked closely with operators at that time. I have worked in treatment plants and also designed such facilities and written operation manuals. As a licensed professional engineer (PE), I had to earn through examination and then maintain an engineering license and also take a pledge to a code of ethics. These are the same things that wastewater operators must do – so I understand the process

- (4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

To serve the public and the wastewater operators by assisting to streamline the Board operations and procedures. In the past I have served as Board secretary – writing all of the minutes. I helped re-designed and clean-up the webpage, I spearheaded the effort to implement the national standardized certification tests from the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC), and the implementation of computer-based testing (CBT) available from ABC as an optional method for Hawaii operators to take the certification tests and to allow an additional attempt each year. In the next 4 years, I will help with similar initiatives, such as redoing the operator lists, plant lists and further improving the website.

- (5) Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will benefit the Board.

I am optimistic, hard-working, and get along with everyone. The Board is a diverse group of folks who are all volunteers, I try to keep everyone looking at the big picture, being efficient, and keeping it “light” and fun as much as possible (where appropriate).

- (6) Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a Board member.

I have served on this Board from 1997-2003 (including as Chair from 2000-2003) and from 2011-2018, so I know how the Board runs, where it has been, and where it is going. I also serve on several other professional and community boards including American Society of Civil Engineers, Hawaii Water Environment Association, Mililani Town Association and others.

- (7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Board? How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

None. But if a conflict does come up, I would inform all the Board members of the conflict and then not participate in the discussions or vote on any decision related to the conflict.