

Deborah Kobayakawa
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June 25, 2020

Re: Board Member, Developmental Disabilities Council

To Whom It May Concern:

I'd like to become a member of the Board on the Developmental Disabilities Council for many reasons but the most important one is so that I can give back to my community. The disability community is my son's world and has become my life both personally and professionally. It would be an honor to serve as a member of the Board to assist the DD Council in their work on the Council's State Plan and in advancing the agenda for individuals with developmental disabilities.

It's my understanding the roles and responsibilities of being a member of the Board on the DD Council include: attending all DD Council meetings, the DD Council Annual Meeting and to select a committee to join that addresses the Council's State Plan. In addition, we are to actively engage in the design of community supports, individualized supports and resources that assist families and individuals with developmental disabilities. We may also be asked to conduct outreach, training, technical assistance, develop coalitions, remove barriers, encourage community participation and keep our legislatures up to date and informed on disability related issues important to our community.

I feel that I can help to protect consumers because I will be representing Parents on the DD Council. I consider myself a consumer as I'm involved in all of my adult son's services, plans, and supports that make his life work for him. This gives me first hand experience with navigating the myriad of services available to individuals with developmental disabilities, which are not always consumer friendly. I am aware of my son's rights and vocal in the disability community when needed, and sharing resources and information with others.

My biggest qualification for being a Board member on the DD Council is being a parent. I've been on this journey for 30 years now. At times I've had to advocate hard for what he needs or what his rights are, so I "get it" what parents go through. Through it all we've been able to create a good life for my son and he's truly living his best life. Being a former special education teacher in HIDOE, disability advocate, and co-creator and facilitator of parent support groups all should be beneficial in my role as a Board member. My professional work has helped me to build relationships with various stakeholders in the disability community over the years.

It is my hope that during my term of service on the DD Council that I am able to have a positive effect on the Council. I hope to assist the Council in meeting the goals identified in their current State Plan and also help to identify new areas to address with the pandemic issue impacting the lives of all our developmental disability community. My wish is that my personal and professional experience will help with solutions to some of the obstacles and barriers that

the Council may face in the upcoming years. I'd also like to help the DD Council to work on developing their new Five-Year Plan.

Three qualities that best describe me are: passionate, enthusiastic and determined. I believe my passion is my strongest quality and will be beneficial to the DD Council as I feel strongly about the rights of our disability community. It's my passion that ignites my determination and enthusiasm for the work that I do. I think my determination and enthusiasm will be an asset to the Board as it's often needed for advocacy, systems change, and for the work that brings about self-determination, integration and inclusion.

I have served one term of as a Governor appointed Board member for the State Rehabilitation Council, representing the Parent Training Information Center (PTI) as a parent, and found that the input that I provided as the only parent on the board was valuable. Being the owner and operator of my own independent consulting business that provides advocacy and parent training may also be beneficial to the Board of the DD Council.

I do not foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise from my service on the Board of the DD Council. If for any reason, should a conflict of interest arise, I would resolve it by immediately contacting the DD Council Executive Administrator and then taking whatever steps were necessary to resolve the conflict. I would follow whatever recommendation the Executive Administrator felt was appropriate to the situation.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information about myself.

Sincerely,

Deborah Kobayakawa
"Ian's Mom", Parent & Advocate



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
1010 RICHARDS STREET, SUITE 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
July 1, 2020

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Thirtieth Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Baker, Senator Chang, and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: GM 852 – State Council on Developmental Disabilities
Gubernatorial Nominee Deborah Kobayakawa

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS GM 852** to confirm the nomination of Deborah Kabayakawa for a term to expire June 30, 2023.

The Council's Federal mandate (P.L.106-402 - DD Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000) is clear in determining the composition of this body to ensure that all the stakeholders are represented and engaged in the development and implementation of a comprehensive system of services and supports for individuals with DD.

The Council's Federal mandate (P.L.106-402) is clear in determining the composition of this body to ensure that all the players involved in the development, implementation, and use of DD supports are represented. The law specifically requires that not less than 60 percent of the membership of the Council be comprised of individuals with DD, parents, immediate relatives or guardians. Additionally, each Council shall include representatives of relevant State entities, including State entities that administer funds provided under Federal laws related to individuals with disabilities, including the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), and Titles V and XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 701 et seq. and 1396 et seq.); Centers for Excellence in DD Education, Research, and Service; State Protection and Advocacy system; and representatives, at all times, of local and non-governmental agencies, and private nonprofit groups concerned with services for individuals with DD in the State. The Governor's nominee meets all the Federal requirements for Council membership.

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker
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Mrs. Kobayakawa is the parent of a son with a developmental disability. Her appointment to the Council fulfills the Federal requirement of parents serving on the Council. As a parent consultant and Co-Facilitator of parent support groups, she will be an asset to the Council in navigating and understanding the DDD system both within the DoE and DoH programs. Mrs. Kobayakawa worked as a special education teacher on Oahu for 11 years. Her professional experience working within the DoE system will bring an invaluable perspective to the Council. Her expertise goes beyond professional as she has served on the State Rehab Council as a representative for the Parent Training Information Center. She is well versed in lending a parents perspective to pertinent discussions surround developmental disabilities

The Council appreciates the opportunity to express our **STRONG SUPPORT FOR GM 852** to confirm the appointment of Deborah Kobayakawa to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Sincerely,



Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator

Kathryn Heath
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Hau'ula, HI 96717
(808)-783-6443
hauulakat@gmail.com

June 25, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the nomination of Deborah Koboyakawa for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. Deb has been my friend for over a quarter century. We met while she was doing her student teaching for Special Education at Kelekehe Intermediate on the Big Island in 1994, where I was the ELL teacher. At the time we bonded as single mothers of young children and have been friends and colleagues ever since. She is one of the most devoted parents I have ever met. The care, love and work she has done to ensure that her younger, special son, Ian, would have a full, active working and personal life has been impressive, most especially because her son has just that as a young adult.

Equally impressive has been her work with special needs individuals, both within the Department of Education during her tenure with them, and beyond. Deb was always my first go-to person when I had questions regarding special education for any ELL student I had, and in turn she would ask me ELL questions; our relationship has had great symbiosis. In recent years Deb has run her own special needs advocacy business, Heart-to-Heart; and it is important to note that she works with parents who can pay as well as those who pay in services. In addition, she has been contracted by Windward District to run parent support group for parents of autistic children.

In all the years I have known her, Deb has been constantly involved in groups and organizations (I could hardly hope to list them all, though Special Olympics and Goodwill Industries stand out in my mind) and is thoroughly devoted to the improvement of life and living conditions for special needs individuals. Deb always goes that one step beyond the necessary to ensure not only that information is shared with appropriate individuals, but also that appropriate actions and results occur. A classic recent example was her schooling of Hawaiian Airlines on special need support when her son was denied what he needed to travel independently. Certainly, when Deb is on a mission to ensure that the rights of special needs individuals are both understood and met, she has no match.

Deb's own advocacy outreach company to support other parents who struggle with the various systems and agencies while seeking support for their own special individual, has only given her knowledge of these matters greater depth and breadth. Her worth as an advocate, and as an ally is well known, and respected. Deb is well versed on the laws and rights of Special Individuals at both a national and state level, and she has worked hard to ensure these are met even in the difficult COVID times.

Deb has the drive, energy and determination to make positive changes occur. The state could not hope for a better representative on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities than Deborah Koboyakawa; and I endorse her for this role 100%. Should there be any questions or concerns surrounding her suitability for the position I am happy to respond, and intend on being at her side during her confirmation should such a need arise.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Heath
Adjunct Professor Chaminade University



Special Parent Information Network

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June 25, 2020

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 230
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: GM 852
Deborah Kobayakawa

Dear Senator Baker,

This letter is in strong support of your consideration and confirmation of Ms. Deborah Kobayakawa to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities for a three-year term. I am writing from my position of Coordinator of the Special Parent Information Network (SPIN). SPIN is a program within the Disability and Communication Access Board that is co-sponsored by the Hawaii Department of Education. Our purpose is to connect parents of children and young adults with disabilities with information, referral and support.

I have long admired Ms. Kobayakawa as an exemplary advocate for people with disabilities and their families. She is able to work effectively with a wide variety of stakeholders in the special education and disability fields having experienced disability from many perspectives in her own life experiences. She has been a supportive parent of a young man with significant disabilities who is living a self-determined life (thanks in large part to his mom's advocacy), a special education teacher in Hawaii for 15 years, a disability advocate at Leadership in Disabilities and Achievement of Hawaii (LDAH), a special education consultant, and currently the co-facilitator of Ho'omana--a unique support program for parents in Windward District whose children have been diagnosed with autism.

Ms. Kobayakawa has also been an active and engaged volunteer for the disability community, giving of her time and expertise to many organizations, including Special Olympics, the Special Education Advisory Council, the Windward Community Children's Council, and SPIN. She was nominated and awarded SPIN Parent of the Year in 2016 for making a meaningful difference in the lives of children and young adults with disabilities and their families. I am certain she will contribute substantially to the work of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, should you confirm her as a Council member.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this exceptional candidate.

Respectfully,

Susan Rocco,
SPIN Coordinator

* Offering a world of support to families of children with disabilities *

A Partnership Between the Disability & Communication Access Board and the Department of Education

GM-852

Submitted on: 6/28/2020 2:53:30 PM

Testimony for CPH on 7/1/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: