

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1825

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 22 2021

RE: GOV. MSG. NOS. 526,  
668

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2021  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Housing, to which was referred Governor's Message Nos. 526 and 668, submitting for study and consideration the nominations of:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

G.M. No. 526      DONN MENDE,  
for a term to expire 06-30-2025; and

G.M. No. 668      SEAN SASAKI,  
for a term to expire 06-30-2024,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the personal histories, resumes, and statements submitted by Donn Mende and Sean Sasaki for service on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC).

DONN MENDE

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Donn Mende from the HHFDC, EAH Housing, Takamine Construction, Michaels Organization, and one individual.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that with over twenty years of experience in the finance and banking industry, Mr. Mende is well-qualified to serve on the board of

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directors of HHFDC. Mr. Mende has worked for several of Hawaii's largest lending institutions and currently serves as the lending manager at HFS Federal Credit Union. He can rely on his years of experience in finance to make valuable contributions to the board. Mr. Mende also has a substantial record of service to the community as a board member of several nonprofit organizations and governmental bodies. Your Committee notes that Mr. Mende currently serves as the chair of HHFDC and his previous experience on the board gives him a thorough understanding of the roles and responsibilities of board members and that he will continue to be an asset.

SEAN SASAKI

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Sean Sasaki from HHFDC, EAH Housing, and one individual.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. Sasaki's experience in project management and project controls qualify him for appointment to the board of directors of HHFDC. Your Committee notes that Mr. Sasaki has over twenty years of experience in these roles, working at every level of the project lifecycle from initial proposal to closeout. His experience will bring a diverse perspective and valuable insight to the board in reviewing affordable housing projects applying for HHFDC financing. Your Committee also notes that Mr. Sasaki has a background in engineering and believes that this experience will be a benefit to the board.

Finally, your Committee would like to take this opportunity to note its dissatisfaction with the worsening housing shortage in Hawaii. The State is obligated to "[e]ffectively accommodate the housing needs of Hawaii's people" under the Hawaii State Planning Act, section 226-19(b)(1), Hawaii Revised Statutes. Despite this statutory obligation, and despite its mission as the State's housing development agency, HHFDC has not articulated a plan to end the housing shortage, to produce enough housing to meet demand, to bring down home prices, or to reverse the population exodus from the State. While your Committee feels that these nominees to the board are well-qualified and fully supports their appointment, it is imperative for the HHFDC board to understand the urgency of the ongoing housing crisis. Your Committee expects to see progress from the state housing agencies, particularly HHFDC, on providing sufficient affordable housing to the people of



Hawaii and expects future nominees to fill board vacancies to come equipped with plans on remedying the housing shortage in the State.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committee on Housing that are attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominees, has found the nominees to be qualified for the positions to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nominations.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Housing,

  
STANLEY CHANG Chair





