



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**STATE COUNCIL**  
**ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**  
**PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING**  
**1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122**  
**HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813**  
**TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543**

March 31, 2021

The Honorable Jarret Keohokalole, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health  
Thirty-First Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: GM 583 – State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Gubernatorial Nominee Amara Coon**

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS GM 583** to confirm the nomination of Amara Coon for a term to expire June 30, 2024.

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 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. Ms. Coon's appointment to the Council would fulfill the Federal requirement for representatives of individuals with DD.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities Gubernatorial Nominee  
Amara Coon  
March 31, 2021  
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For half a year she has been attending the Council meetings and providing valuable input for our Mission and Vision statements.

Ms. Coon's appointment for to the Council would assist us in finishing our 2017- 2021 State Plan goal addressing self-advocacy and self-determination that states, "Self-advocates have the supports needed to build a statewide self-advocacy network that helps individuals have the life they want through leadership, education, and full participation in the community." Ms. Coon currently lives on Kauai. Her perspective from a neighbor island is indispensable in regard to developing and implanting our new five-year state plan in the coming year. We look forward to Ms. Coon's appoint to the Council and the numerous contributions she will make representing individuals with DD.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our **strong support for GM 583** to confirm Amara Coon to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Sincerely,



Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



BRUCE ANDERSON, Ph.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
KAUAI DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICE  
3040 UMI STREET  
LIHUE, HAWAII 96766

JANET BERREMAN M.D. M.P.H.  
KAUAI DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICER

March 29, 2021

**LATE**

Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Attn: Amelia Kyewich-Kaneholani  
3060 Eiwa St. #207  
Lihue, HI 96766

Dear Mrs. Amelia Kyewich-Kaneholani,

As a Case Manager with the Department of Health Community Services for the Developmental Disabilities, I applaud your work on disability issues. In particular, including people with disabilities on the Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

I write in support in nominating Amara Coon for a term on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. I've known Amara and her family for almost nine years; Amara is engaging, kind, dependable, and supportive of others. She has the full support of family and friends. Her life experiences has not only brought her perspective, it has been a milestone in her own progress, especially during these times of uncertainty.

Her confirmation to a term representing Kaua'i would benefit people with developmental disabilities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alma Valvieja Umalla  
Case Manager

March 25, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am delighted to submit this letter of recommendation for Ms. Amara Coon, nominee for the Developmental Disabilities Council.

I have known Amara for over 27 years and can vouch for her personal and professional integrity and general all around smarts. She is extremely helpful and perceptive, dedicated and hardworking. Amara is a leader among her peers, cheerful, engaging and caring. A joy to everyone she meets. Her experience on the Council would not only bring her wonderful unique perspective to the State, but will be a milestone in her own progress as well.

If you have any questions I can be reached at (808) 634-8713. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lani Ridings