



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM0696
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawaii Advisory Commission on
Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances, Gubernatorial Nominee, DIANA FELTON, for
a term to expire 06-30-2025**

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOOLE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 3/31/2021

Room Number: Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None

2 **Department Testimony:** The subject matter of this measure falls within the scope of the
3 Department's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) whose statutory mandate is to assure a
4 comprehensive statewide behavioral health care system by leveraging and coordinating public,
5 private and community resources. Through the BHA, the Department is committed to carrying
6 out this mandate by reducing silos, ensuring behavioral health care is readily accessible, and
7 person-centered. The BHA's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) provides the following
8 testimony on behalf of the Department.

9 The Department of Health strongly supports the nomination and confirmation of Diana
10 Felton, MD, to the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances
11 (HACDACS) for a term to expire 6/30/2025.

12 HACDACS appointees represent a cross-section of the community, including, but not
13 limited to pharmacological, medical, community and business affairs, youth action, educational,
14 legal defense, enforcement and corrections segments of the community, pursuant to HRS §329-2.

15 Dr. Felton is currently the State Toxicologist with the Hawaii Department of Health
16 Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) Office. The HEER office is a division of
17 the Hawaii Department of Health aimed at protecting human health and the environment from

1 threats related to hazardous substances. She works with many state and community partners on
2 issues such as childhood lead poisoning prevention, safe fish consumption, air pollution risks,
3 pesticides, and other environmental health hazards. She collaborates on poisoning prevention
4 with the Hawaii Poison Center and is a member of the Hawaii Advisory Committee on Drug
5 Abuse and Controlled Substances.

6 Dr. Felton is board certified in Medical Toxicology and Emergency Medicine. She
7 received her bachelor's degree from the University of California, Berkeley, attended medical
8 school at the University of California, Davis and completed her emergency medicine residency at
9 Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Her fellowship training was at
10 the Harvard Medical Toxicology Fellowship at Boston Children's Hospital in conjunction with
11 the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Poison Control Center.

12 We respectfully request your expeditious and favorable consideration for the nomination
13 of Diana Felton, MD, to serve on HACDACS.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of a committed volunteer
15 whose appointment adds to the cross-section of community interests represented on HACDACS.

16 **Offered Amendments:** None

GM-696

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 11:20:53 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/31/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julia Wieting	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I write to support Dr. Diana Felton's confirmation to the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances, in the strongest terms.

Dr. Felton is dedicated to the health and wellbeing of citizens of the State of Hawai'i, as her career as a physician, and ongoing toxicological work with the State Department of Health, manifestly demonstrate. Her leadership in guiding the State to increased prevention and remediation of childhood lead exposure will have profound effects on health equity and quality of life. Similarly, she is at the forefront of advocating that the State understand the prevalence of other dangerous, systemically persistent toxins. This forward looking commitment to creating health-in-place results not only from her extensive toxicological expertise, but also her depth of experience with caring for patients during her career in emergency medicine. Many of those patients have dealt with drug addiction, and Dr. Felton is well positioned to thoughtfully advise about drug addiction in the context of its complicated social, cultural, medical, and economic pathways.

In my personal interactions with Dr. Felton, I know her to be a person of immense integrity and concern who strives, always, to provide an exceptional standard of care whether that be a patient in a clinical setting or evidence-driven policy decision making. I believe that she will continue to be a high quality member of the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances.

Mahalo piha for your consideration,

Julia Wieting, PhD