

April 6, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is written in strong support of Mr. Bill Arakaki as a nominee to the Hawaii Board of Education. I have known Mr. Arakaki for many years as a school administrator in the DOE and was able to work closely with him as part of the DOE State Leadership from 2012 as Complex Area Superintendents. I have witnessed his visionary leadership and commitment to the Kauai students, families and community.

His philosophy of service and making a positive difference was so evident in his hands on approach in building community support for the schools. He was always present at District events, schools activities and projects that brought needed resources into the schools. He was always willing to share the many accomplishments of the Kauai Complex Area so others could learn and he did so with much pride for what the students and teachers achieved.

Mr. Arakaki is exemplary in developing partnerships with community organizations, higher education and businesses as he is always willing to meet and share the needs of the schools and propose ideas on how these groups can help in meeting the goals of the programs. He is open and approachable, collaborative in his leadership style and values the diversity of ideas that are brought to the table for discussion.

He is well versed in the operations of the DOE as he has been a teacher, school administrator and Complex Area Superintendent. He understands the issues of instructional leadership, student support services, facilities and operations, personnel, athletics and the current needs of schools and students.

Over all of the years as an educator, Mr. Arakaki has demonstrated the highest level of integrity and commitment in his duties and responsibilities and as a Complex Area Superintendent ensured that the rules and regulations set forth in Hawaii statute, Board of Education policies and Department of Education rules and procedures were adhered to in all of the schools and programs under his charge.

In the years that I have worked with Mr. Bill Arakaki, he has always held to the highest standards of performance and is always willing to use his knowledge to support innovation and improvements that will assist our schools in providing the very best for our Hawaii students. I have the utmost professional respect for him and know that he will always do his very best as a member of Hawaii Board of Education.

Sincerely,

Ann A. Mahi, Retired DOE Educator

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 6:42:14 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marlene Leary	Testifying for Hawaii State Department of Education	Support	No

Comments:

I support the confirmation to the Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, WILLIAM ARAKAKI for the following reasons: 1) His long standing experience as a public school educator, Mr. Arakaki has both historical and current knowledge and understanding of the issues relevant to educating all our public school students, 2) Mr. Arakaki has utilized his leadership role to build positive relationships between schools and the community to benefit student outcomes and achievements as well as meet the needs for students. This was evident in his work in the Distance Learning Project on Kaua'i last spring and 3) Mr. Arakaki would bring a balanced perspective to the Board of Education in terms of speaking to the specific strengths and challenges of our neighbor island public schools. This provides the promise of access and equity for the smaller communities of Hawai'i.

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 6:48:39 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jason Yosida	Testifying for DOE	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to submit my support in favor Gubernatorial Nominee, Mr. William Arakaki for Board of Education. Mr. Arakaki has been in the education field for the past 30 years and has the knowledge and background to make critical decisions and policies to support our students education. Please accept my testimony in favor of Mr. William Arakaki.

Sincerely,

Jason Yoshida

Principal



April 8, 2021

Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Education

Monday, April 9, 2021; 3:00 p. m.
CR 229 and via Videoconference

Senate Bill No. GM794 – William Arakaki to the Board of Education

To the Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Chair; Donna Mercado Kim, Vice-Chair; and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of this letter is to strongly support the confirmation of William “Bill” Arakaki to the Board of Education.

Bill was reared in Hawai`i’s public schools and he started his career as an educator in 1978. His 40+ years in the DOE were spent teaching, coaching, and as an administrator. After a successful tenure as the Kaua’i Complex Area Superintendant, he retired last year. His qualifications go well beyond his professional educator role, as Bill immersed himself in numerous professional and community organizations. In fact, despite his retirement, he remains committed to staying active in the community and lending his expertise for the betterment of Kaua’i’s youth.

Now more than ever, it is extremely critical that important decisions regarding our public education system be stewarded by those who have a strong understanding of our community, combined with a “pono” approach in his dealings. There is no more qualified candidate than Bill for this position.

We strongly urge you to support the confirmation of William Arakaki to a position on the Board of Education.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Warren H. Haruki
President and CEO

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 9:20:15 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Corey Nakamura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha!

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony and support for William Arakaki. I served as a principal under Mr. Arakaki's leadership when he was the Complex Area Superintendent for the Kauai District from 2006 - 2020. Mr. Arakaki led with courage, mindfulness and compassion. His priority and focus was students and families. As a member of the Board of Education, I am confident that Mr. Arakaki will continue that focus without the pressure from outside organizations or political influences. He is grounded and his values for students and families are strong. As a principal, I am confident that my school community will continue to benefit from board members like Maggie Cox and William Arakaki. They understand school design both operationally and academically.

Please consider my support and testimony in favor of having William Arakaki serve on the Board of Education.

Sincerely,

Corey Nakamura, Principal

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 9:37:36 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sean Doi	Testifying for Hawaii Dept. of Education	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Sean Doi, and I currently hold the position of Kauai Complex Area District Educational Specialist. I'm writing in regards to Bill GM 794 to express my full support of the nomination of Mr. William Arakaki to serve on the Hawaii State Board of Education. I had the privilege of working under the supervision of William Arakaki for many years and throughout his tenure, he demonstrated his ability to lead a Complex Area with his strong devotion and drive to improve the education and lives of the students, staff, families, and communities of Kauai. Not only does William possess a sound working knowledge of the structure, processes, policies, programs, and operational systems of the HIDOE, but he overlays this with his commitment, dedication, and love for those that he serves. Mr. Arakaki will be a wonderful addition to the Board of Education and will add a voice and input that will undoubtedly help to lead, guide, empower, transform, and govern educational policy that is best for excellence and equity for all students. I humbly ask you to confirm Mr. William Arakaki's nomination. Thank you.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

April 7, 2021

Senator Michele N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of GM 794 - Consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, William Arakaki, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Education. I am submitting this written testimony in support of Mr. William Nobuo Arakaki, nominee to the Board of Education.

I have known Mr. Arakaki through my involvement in high school athletics as a coach and working with him on legislative issues during his previous tenure as Kaua'i District Superintendent.

Mr. Arakaki is very dedicated to education which is reflected in his extensive work experiences. In my opinion he did not hesitate to tackle difficult situations and worked toward a satisfactory resolution time and time again.

He will be a very valuable voice in the Board of Education and his contributions will benefit education in Hawai'i.

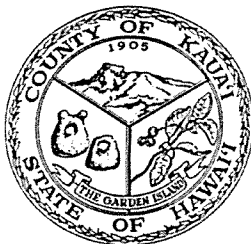
Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in favor of the nominee.

Sincerely,

Daynette "Dee" Morikawa
Majority Floor Leader
House of Representatives
16th District – Ni'ihau, Lehua, Koloa, Waimea

COUNTY COUNCIL

Arryl Kaneshiro, Chair
Mason K. Chock, Vice Chair
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Bill DeCosta
Luke A. Evslin
KipuKai Kualiti



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Scott K. Sato, Deputy County Clerk

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E-mail: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

April 7, 2021

**TESTIMONY OF MASON K. CHOCK
COUNCIL VICE CHAIR, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON**

GM 794, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Senate Committee on Education
Friday, April 9, 2021
3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference
Conference Room 229

Dear Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of GM 794, Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Education—William Arakaki. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a Member of the Kaua'i County Council.

William Arakaki has served in several roles in the Department of Education on Kaua'i for many years and possesses extensive knowledge of the education system and needs of our keiki. Mr. Arakaki will be a great asset to the Board of Education.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony and for your favorable consideration in approving GM 794. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via E-mail to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

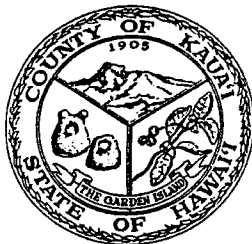
Sincerely,

MASON K. CHOCK
Council Vice Chair, Kaua'i County Council

AMK:mn

COUNTY COUNCIL

Arryl Kaneshiro, Chair
Mason K. Chock, Vice Chair
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Bill DeCosta
Luke A. Evslin
KipuKai Kualii



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Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

April 7, 2021

TESTIMONY OF BILL DECOSTA
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUA'I COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
GM 794, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Senate Committee on Education
Friday, April 9, 2021
3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference
Conference Room 229

Dear Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of GM 794, Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Education—William Arakaki. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a Member of the Kaua'i County Council.

William Arakaki possesses the skills, education, and experience to serve on the Board of Education. Having worked alongside Mr. Arakaki for over twenty years as a teacher on the island of Kaua'i, I have personally witnessed his ability to work well with his colleagues, teachers, and community members. Mr. Arakaki's extensive working knowledge of the educational process and system in Hawai'i will strengthen the Board of Education's ability to make thoughtful decisions for the future of our keiki. Mr. Arakaki will be a great asset to the Board of Education.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony, and I urge your support of GM 794. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via E-mail to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

BILL DECOSTA
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AMK:lc

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 11:57:51 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a Complex Area Resource Teacher, I believe Mr. Bill Arakaki will be a valuable member on the BOE should be confirmed. It has always been clear to me that Mr. Arakaki puts Keiki first and prioritizes relationships and connection in all that he does. During his tenure as CAS, he did his best to cultivate a sense of 'ohana and connection in our organization and schools.

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 12:18:05 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tommy Cox	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of William Arakaki for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education. I have know Mr. Arakaki for many decades, dating back to when I was high school student to my current position of principal at Kapaa HS. I have always known Mr. Arakaki to be compassionate, understanding, and a true leader that I can believe in. He has always been focused on the success of all students, while maintaining strong relationships with all of his colleagues. Mr. Arakaki has experience in many levels of public education which will make him a huge asset to the Board of Education. I know that Mr. Arakaki will not only do what is best for our students and schools on Kauai, but he will do what is best for students and schools throughout our state.

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 1:46:09 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Cox	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm the outgoing Kauai member of the Hawaii State Board of Education and am recommending William (Bill) Arakaki be appointed to the vacated position. He brings school and complex area experiences and knowledge to enhance the board's role in working with the superintendent, board members and government officials to provide needed insights in improving policy and processes to improve the educational system for increased student achievement and welfare. I've known and worked with him for many years, and he is what I call a "people person" meaning he establishes congenial working relationships with many different groups to get the job done. He will be an excellent addition to the board.

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 3:23:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jason	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

March 7, 2021

The Honorable Michelle Kidani

Hawaii State Capitol

Room 228

RE: GM794

Aloha e Senator Kidani:

This letter is in support of Bill Arakaki's nomination to the Board of Education representing Kauai. As the previous Complex Area Superintendent (CAS) of Kauai, Bill Arakaki has experience working with our local and elected officials. He has a the knowledge of our district's educational strength and needs .

Bill Arakaki has the ability to work with parents, teachers, administrators, legislators, county officials and the public as shown during his tenure as the CAS of Kauai. He has been the CAS on Kauai for over a decade and has been in the department for over 30 years prior to his recent retirement. He has a strong knowledge of the current educational challenges and opportunities that exist on Kauai.

The position of CAS on Kauai is a very political position. The CAS meets regularly with county officials and when there are any emergencies, the CAS reports to the Kauai Emergency Management Head Quarters. The CAS works closely with all sectors of the community on Kauai. Thus the CAS is very visible in the community. During his work as CAS, Bill Arakaki has established his position as a valued community leader of Kauai.

I believe that Bill Arakaki will serve as a good Board of Education member and represent Kauai and the state well. With his first hand educational knowledge and experiences combined with the community outreach he has demonstrated during his time with the Hawaii Department of Education, he will be able to hit the ground running to address the educational needs of Kauai's children.

Mahalo,

Jason Kuloloia

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 3:33:20 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
LEILA H. KUBOYAMA	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This submission is in support for the nomination of Mr. William "Bill" Arakaki to the Hawaii Board of Education. I have worked with Mr. Arakaki since 1999 when he was the Principal of Waimea High School and also while he was the Complex Area Superintendant for the Kauai Complex Area. I have worked as a school counselor and a district resource teacher under his charge and have served on several boards and committees with him.

Mr. Arakaki lives his vision for education. He truly cares for the successes for all students and consistently challenged educators to best serve our students and families. He is skilled at listening and understanding concerns brought before him. He is a problem solver who is skilled at bringing various parties, to the table.

The 40 plus years that Mr. Arakaki has served as an educator, gives him a vast experienced-based knowledge that will be valuable to the Board of Education. He has served our education system in capacities at all levels; from the classroom teacher to becoming an administrator, to eventually retiring as the Complex Area Superintendant. He has worked successfully with the "high risk" students to teachers and families in a variety of situations. He will bring critical knowledge to this group.

Without reservation, I would like to support Mr. Arakaki's nomination to the Hawaii Board of Education. He will be an asset to this prestigious body whose ideas and decisions are critical to the education of our children.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this nomination.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KALANI HIGH SCHOOL
4680 KALANIANAOLE HIGHWAY
HONOLULU, HI 96821-1299

April 7, 2021

Senator Kidani and members of the Education Committee
31st Legislature of the State of Hawaii

On behalf of Mr. William Arakaki, Complex Area Superintendent (Kauai District) – retired, I am pleased to offer my personal and professional reference in support of his nomination to the Hawaii State Board of Education.

Mr. Arakaki has distinguished himself for over 42 years as a strong advocate of public education. During his stellar career, Mr. Arakaki has served in the Hawaii Department of Education as teacher, vice-principal, principal and from 2007 to 2020, as the Complex Area Superintendent for the Kauai Complex Area. Furthermore, during his time as Complex Area Superintendent, Mr. Arakaki served as the Department's liaison to the Oahu Interscholastic Association.

I have known Mr. Arakaki since 1980, meeting him during his time as a teacher / coach at Waipahu High School. I have watched with much interest, Mr. Arakaki's growth as a leader over the past 40 years and I am happy to call him a friend and a trusted colleague.

As a knowledgeable individual who distinguished himself with his innovative ideas and work ethic, Mr. Arakaki is aware of the responsibilities and challenges of public education. As Kauai Complex Area Superintendent and as a leader in education in Hawaii, Mr. Arakaki knows the realities of establishing priorities in order to best use the limited resources that are appropriated for the benefit of all. He played a vital role in helping his schools provide a wide range of learning opportunities for their students to help meet the needs of the individual school communities.

Mr. Arakaki is personable, flexible and hard-working. He is a lifelong learner who seeks professional development opportunities that will increase his knowledge base and help to impact student achievement. He brings to the table friendship, loyalty, cooperation, industriousness and enthusiasm. Of great importance is his ability to bring people together which amplifies all of the positive, proactive activities that raises the level of excellence for all of the schools in the Kauai Complex Area.

I believe that Mr. Arakaki would provide the requisite experience along with a broad base of knowledge about the Hawaii School System, and, therefore, I recommend him without reservation

Sincerely,

Mitchell Otani
Principal

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 3:57:53 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leila Maeda-Kobayashi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Governor Ige's nomination of William Arakaki to the Board of Education.

I have known Mr. Arakaki as the Principal of Waimea High School and more recently as the Kaua'i Complex Area Superintendent. There is no doubt that he truly believes in Public Education in Hawaii. Mr. Arakaki's experience as an educator is vast. From Teacher and Coach to Administrator and Superintendent, his experiences give him the knowledge to be a positive contributor to Hawaii's Education Policy Board.

As a new Principal, I always knew that Mr. Arakaki would be there to support me. He cares deeply for our island and for our children. As our Superintendent, I knew that he cared about my success as he supported me with advice as I took on my new role.

I am honored to provide this testimony on behalf of William Arakaki. I humbly ask that you approve Governor Ige's nomination in order for Mr. Arakaki to advocate not only for children of Kaua'i, but for all public school children in Hawaii.

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 4:02:51 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mahina Anguay	Testifying for Waimea HS, HIDOE	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of Mr. Arakaki's consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.

I have known Mr. Arakaki for 10 years as he was my Complex Area Superintendent on Kauai. He played an active role in supporting our development of the Academies of Kauai and our own Waimea High School Academies as he saw the benefit of working closely with business/community partners as well as our community college to ensure seamless transitions for our graduates. He ensured that there was funding and support available to all three high schools in order to move this initiative forward.

At the start of the pandemic, he worked closely with our legislators and private funders to help garner private funding to help support distance learning on Kauai. Through these efforts, many of our students and families received chromebooks and mifi devices, which helped to bridge the gap between the 'haves and the have nots.'

He pours himself heart and soul into his work and feel he would definitely do the same as our BOE representative.

Thank you very much.

Mahina Anguay

Principal, Waimea HS

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/7/2021 8:53:25 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michelle Molina	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Hawaii State Senate,

My name is Michelle Molina. I am writing as an individual in opposition of the appointment of Willam Arakaki to the Hawaii State Board of Education. As a former teacher at Kapaa Middle School and Waimea Canyon Middle School, and a current teacher at Waimea High School, I have experienced several school environments under Mr. Arakaki's jurisdiction as CAS. Although Mr. Arakaki is a kind and personable man, I do not feel he has effectively dealt with the challenging circumstances at several schools in crisis on Kauai.

In my experience, problems reported to Mr. Arakaki were heard, but never effectively dealt with. This resulted in years of inaction causing teachers, students, and communities to suffer under ongoing problems. Sometimes parents, teachers and community members--frustrated with Arakaki's inaction--would take matters into their own hands and publicly protest ineffective school administrators, or circulate petitions for their removal.

As a teacher in several struggling schools I saw first hand the toll this took on my co-workers, who regularly left their teaching positions after trying unsuccessfully to address issues at our school. The disproportionate staff turnover at these schools affected the overall effectiveness of our schools and ultimately the learning outcomes of our students. When these issues were brought to Mr. Arakaki he listened, but ultimately never was willing to address or fix the issues and so they persisted, in some cases for years. It often seemed that Mr. Arakaki's primary concern was not making anyone mad, even if that meant avoiding the very conflicts he was hired to address.

I now teach at a school with a very effective administrator. My decision to leave my former teaching positions came out of frustration over teaching and learning conditions, and more importantly, a lack of hope that there would be any improvement. Mr. Arakaki was made aware of the challenges these schools face, but was known for avoiding conflict and no one had any hope he would take any decisive action to improve our school's circumstances.

I humbly ask that you do the right thing for the keiki on Kauai and do not approve this appointment. There are other qualified people, capable of making tough decisions with the best interest of our students in mind. As conflicted as I feel about submitting this testimony publicly, I feel it simply wouldn't be right to let this man be appointed as our Kauai BOE representative without voicing my concerns, and asking that someone else be considered for this position.

Mahalo,

Michelle Molina

April 8, 2021

Dear Education Committee of the Hawai‘i State Legislature,

My name is Sarah Tochiki and I am the band director at Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School in Lihū‘e. I am writing, as an individual, in opposition of the appointment of William Arakaki for the State of Hawai‘i Board of Education. We need a Board of Education that is transparent and will hold the leaders of the Department of Education accountable. We need a board that is going to listen to all stakeholders. We need a board that will think progressively. Arakaki is a nice man. He is friendly and approachable. However, he should not be placed in a position to make decisions about public education in our state.

School empowerment allows for those who directly work with students to make decisions to support student success. At times, the staff of a school has difficulty making decisions in a way that is collaborative. The complex area superintendent is the person stakeholders should be able to reach out to when an issue cannot be resolved through this collaborative process. This creates checks and balances at a school to ensure decisions are made in the best interests of the students and stakeholders.

When issues and mismanagement occurred in the Kaua‘i Complex Area, Arakaki avoided the concerns. Complaints were unaddressed. Concerns were deflected. Administrators remained on paid department directed leave for years with stalled investigations. On School Quality Surveys, results were not shared or addressed for school improvement. Colleagues would write in the comments, “Why are we even taking this survey? Mr. Arakaki will not help us to address the issues at our school. We feel hopeless for any type of positive change for our school.”

Many Kaua‘i schools struggled because of his lack of leadership. Even after trying to solve things diplomatically through the system set in place for accountability, problems persisted. Thus, school stakeholders had no choice but to organize and use the media to amplify their voice. These situations did not suddenly happen. People tried to reach out to him repeatedly and with multiple attempts to solve things by appealing to him because of the position he held. These are some examples of how things escalated because he would not address issues as they arose:

- Kekaha Elementary School
 - <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/30430136/kauai-principal-under-fire-for-controversial-comment/>
 - “Arakaki said Beralas's comments were ‘misconstrued.’”

- <https://www.thegardenisland.com/2015/11/05/hawaii-news/kekaha-elementary-parents-picket/>
 - “This isn’t the first protest at an elementary school on Kauai. In September, parents at Hanalei Elementary School picketed for two days calling for the removal of Principal Lisa McDonald, who was later transferred to the district office. Dela Cruz said that HIDOE is looking at why parents are taking to picketing at Kauai elementary schools and trying to come up with solutions. The first thing the department is focusing on is communication breakdown between parents, principals, teachers, and HIDOE.”
- Only after this made it to the media was this principal removed from the school and given a job at the district office.
- Hanalei Elementary School
 - <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/30036554/principal-of-hanalei-school-reassigned-following-days-of-protest/>
 - “Parents, teachers and community members described the school as being in ‘crisis’ because of McDonald’s ‘abrasive’ management style, unethical choices and communication style. Many were also unhappy with her decision to create a combination class of kindergarten and first-grade students. Several educators left as a result of her leadership.”
 - <https://www.thegardenisland.com/2015/09/11/hawaii-news/hanalei-principal-under-fire/>
 - ““Last year we sent over 30 written letters to Mr. Arakaki and he never responded to one of them,’ said Missy Hedstrom, mother of two children in the school. ‘Nobody is listening to us and it’s frustrating for our community.’”
 - <https://www.thegardenisland.com/2015/10/04/opinion/lack-of-leadership-to-blame-for-hanalei-school-mess/>
 - “Parents wrote angry letters to Bill Arakaki, the state Department of Education’s superintendent for Kauai. But Arakaki ignored them. Although he visited the school a few times and heard out complaints from teachers, he did nothing and failed to respond or even acknowledge the parents’ complaints.”

- <https://www.thegardenisland.com/2015/09/16/opinion/praise-concern-for-principal-outcome/>
 - “All of this might have been avoided, too, if superintendent Arakaki had responded sooner to parent concerns raised last year.”
- Only after this made it to the media was this principal removed from the school and given a job at the district office.
- Kapa‘a Middle School
 - <https://www.thegardenisland.com/2013/07/17/hawaii-news/kapaa-middle-school-principal-reinstated/>
 - “Officials from the DOE declined to comment on the nature of the complaint, but an online petition calling for the removal of Aiwahi pointed to his ‘dictatorial, authoritarian leadership style.’ Petitioner’s accuse the dissolved PTSA, high faculty turnover, low enrollment and math scores below No Child Left Behind standards have taken place under Aiwahi’s leadership.”
 - <https://www.thegardenisland.com/2013/05/28/hawaii-news/state-investigating-complaint-against-kapaa-principal/>
 - ““The Department of Education is currently investigating an alleged complaint against Principal Aiwahi, who has been on leave since April 17,’ Bill Arakaki, the Kauai Complex Area Superintendent, wrote in an email.”
 - Only after this made it to the media was this principal removed from the school and given a job at the district office.
- Waimea Canyon Middle School
 - https://www.change.org/p/governor-david-y-ige-state-of-hawaii-department-of-education-state-superintendent-s-office-improve-waimea-canyon-middle-school?use_react=false

- “These ongoing issues remain unresolved, impacting both our student's educational experience on a daily basis and affecting the teaching environment due to the existing poor work conditions coupled with the need to adapt to the unexpected teacher turnover.”

It would be prudent to look into how these situations were handled after they became news. What happened to these administrators? Was anything done by Arakaki to fix the issues within the school or were they still ignored? How many investigations are still undecided? How are state funds being spent on personnel when these situations occur? Do the teachers and community feel the problems brought to Arakaki were ever addressed or did he make them dissolve without action? Furthermore, these issues are just the ones highlighted in the media.

Submitting public testimony in opposition of the appointment of my former boss, for this seat, places me in a vulnerable position. I am leaving myself open to repercussions because of the delicate nature of these statements related to my employer and employment. There are other people, especially other teachers, who will not submit testimony because they are afraid. However, I know it is important to say something and am willing to take this risk for the sake of schools in Hawai'i.

Arakaki's retirement was an important step to healing our island's schools. There is good work in our Kaua'i schools despite his legacy of poor leadership. In this time of great change due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have an opportunity to rethink how schools can be. Let us find someone who will think of creative solutions. Let us find someone who will truly listen to all stakeholders and take creative action to solve problems. Let us find someone with integrity. Please ask the governor to find someone who will truly listen to the concerns of the public rather than ignore them or conceal them.

Sincerely,



Sarah Tochiki

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 8:06:00 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carrie Leoiki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Bill Arakaki is able to see the far reaching connections and consequences that will follow any decision that needs to be made - the bigger picture. Also, he always has the good of children and of people in general, at the heart of everything he does.

April 9, 2021

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and Committee Members,

It is my pleasure to recommend William Arakaki for a position as member of the Board of Education (BOE).

My name is Melvin Horikami, the project lead of the Kauai Education Technology Pilot. Since my retirement as a senior executive from Verizon Communications, Inc., I have spent the past 10 years supporting educational leaders at the Department of Education (DOE). Mr. Arakaki stood out on the island of Kauai for the leadership he provided during his tenure as Complex Area Superintendent (CAS).

At the ending of the fourth quarter of 2020, when there was much uncertainty about the upcoming 2020-2021 school year, we needed to swift action to make sure our students and staff were going to be prepared for the 2020-2021 school year. CAS Arakaki, the Kauai legislative delegation and I felt that the schools should prepare for total distance learning in the event that the schools had to remain closed. During this time, CAS Arakaki immediately gathered data from schools on internet connectivity, devices and participation to determine the gaps. He was also instrumental in reaching out to philanthropists to raise funds for the pilot program. Through these efforts, all students on Kauai had devices and access to the internet, and teachers were trained on distance learning.

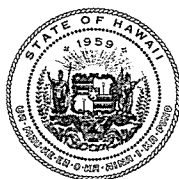
Mr. Arakaki would be an ideal BOE member because he was a career educator in Hawaii, who knows the inner workings of the DOE. In order to make sound educational policy, it is extremely useful to have experience at the school level. As a former school administrator and leader, Mr. Arakaki would recognize the qualities of an effective educational leader.

I, therefore, urge the Senate Education Committee to support Mr. Arakaki's nomination.

Sincerely,

Melvin Horikami

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



DR. CHRISTINA M. KISHIMOTO
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WAIPAHU HIGH SCHOOL
94-1211 FARRINGTON HIGHWAY
WAIPAHU, HAWAII 96797

April 7, 2021

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chairperson
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chairperson
Senate Committee on Education

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 794, CONFIRMATION OF WILLIAM ARAKAKI TO THE HAWAII STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Aloha Chairperson Kidani, Vice-Chairperson Kim, and members of the Senate Committee on Education. Mr. William Arakaki is a respected educator of impeccable character, strong values grounded in the inherent importance of people and relationships, and an individual of the highest morals and integrity. It is out of a deep respect and admiration that I wholeheartedly support the confirmation of Mr. William Arakaki to the Hawai'i State Board of Education.

As a former Complex Area Superintendent, I've had the distinct pleasure of working alongside Mr. Arakaki during our tenure together as complex area superintendents. His passion and commitment to ensuring high levels of student achievement, his tenacity in supporting all stakeholders in his school communities, and his ability to secure effective business and community partnerships are all truly essential strengths. Together with his calm and pleasant demeanor, he possesses an innate ability to quickly foster trusting and lasting relationships. William Arakaki is the epitome of a selfless and servant leader, an inspiration not only to me, but to other veteran educators as well.

Mr. Arakaki's belief in the importance of positive relationships, without compromising his core values, will make him an effective and essential team member on the Hawai'i State Board of Education. He brings a unique leadership perspective and tremendous value through his experiences as a lifelong educator of forty-two years; serving as teacher, principal, complex area superintendent, and the superintendent's liaison to the Oahu Interscholastic Association. Mr. Arakaki will definitely complement the diverse experiences and backgrounds of the other board members.

Mr. William Arakaki's effective leadership in supporting the Hawai'i State Department of Education is truly impressive. I am confident that with his passion and commitment to serve, his appointment to the Board of Education will be a definite asset to the State of Hawai'i. I wholeheartedly support his confirmation. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Hayashi".

Keith Hayashi
Principal



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

April 9, 2021

Committee on Education
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN supports GM 794, which submits for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, William Arakaki, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.

Mr. Arakaki is an experienced leader with a strong track record of service to the students of Kauai. He is an innovative thinker, from working collaboratively across traditional, charter, and private schools, to jumping into action to stand up the Kauai Education Technology Project to address digital equity concerns with the start of the pandemic. His deep knowledge of the current system and willingness to think outside the box is a powerful combination.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances. Part of our kuleana is to serve as a resource for policymakers, including the BOE and legislature, as you work to build a better future for all kids. We've been grateful to meet with Mr. Arakaki in the past, and we look forward to continuing to share guidance we receive from students, parents, educators, and policy experts on the challenges and opportunities facing our schools.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 11:42:04 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alex Nelson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Hawai'i State Legislators-

My name is Alex Nelson. I am a teacher at Kauai High School and a former teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School. It has been brought to my attention that Governor David Ige has nominated William Arakaki to serve on the Board of Education as the Kaua'i representative for the next term. I am writing as an Individual in opposition of this appointment.

As a resident of Kaua'i and an educator on Kaua'i, this is very concerning to me. During his time as Kauai Complex Area Superintendent, Mr. Arakaki demonstrated ineffective and unethical leadership. Many students, teachers, and the greater community suffered due to his inaction in solving problems and improving the educational experience for Kaua'i. I am nervous to write public testimony but I feel compelled to speak up based on previous experience with William Arakaki as the Kauai Complex Area Superintendent.

Mr. Arakaki's resume looks impressive and he is a genial man. However, he is not the advocate we need for public education in this state, and especially for Kauai. There are numerous examples of long term problems occurring at Kauai schools that Mr. Arakaki was well aware of. He would listen to problems when pushed to do so, but in very few situations he did anything to help address those problems. When he did, it was because of public outcry, sign holding and protesting. We have lost many good teachers on Kauai due to Mr. Arakaki's ineffective leadership and tendency to back up horrible administrators no matter what. Mr. Arakaki is not the advocate we need. He is unwilling to make tough decisions and do what is right if it will make him unpopular with those he deems important. We need a BOE representative who truly listens and acts for the students, families, teachers and community members they are supposed to serve. There are other qualified candidates and Kauai, and Hawai'i as a whole, deserve better.

Mahalo,

Alex Nelson

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 1:31:32 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brent Mizutani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please accept my written testimony in support of William Arakaki as the Gubernatorial nominee to the BOE until 6/30/24. Mr. Arakaki has many years of experience as a dedicated and compassionate educator. He deeply cares for the students and is a great supporter of public education. He has the context and experience as a classroom teacher, school administrator and Complex Area Superintendent to guide his thoughts and decisions. Please accept my testimony in support of Mr. William Arakaki and vote to approve him. Thank you for your consideration.

The Honorable Ronald Kouchi, President,
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senate President Kouchi and Members of the Senate:

Please accept my written testimony in support of William Arakaki as the Gubernatorial nominee to the Board of Education (BOE) until June 30, 2024. Mr. Arakaki has a great deal of experience in the classroom as a teacher, a coach, a school administrator and the Complex Area Superintendent for the island of Kauai for the past 13 year until recently retiring. In addition, William is a very dedicated educator and will be a great asset on the BOE. Please accept my testimony in support of Mr. William Arakaki and vote to approve him. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Gail Nakaahiki

April 8, 2021

Dear Senator Kidani and Members of the Education Committee:

It is with honor that I write on behalf of a Hawaii Board of Education (BOE) member nominee, Mr. William Arakaki. Mr. Arakaki has consistently demonstrated his alignment with the Hawaii Department of Education's vision, mission and goals by his ability to collaborate with his school administration team and complex area team to ensure that each Kauai school operates efficiently while focusing on student achievement. Mr. Arakaki not only served as a critical facilitator of the complex area's leadership team, but also demonstrated skills in conflict resolution and facilitative leadership with difficult conversations and when decisions need to be made. One of his strengths is building strong professional relationships with colleagues and staff to enable data driven team decision making, secure consensus when needed, and to evoke willingness when implementing new initiatives.

I first worked with Mr. Arakaki when I served as former Superintendent Hamamoto's Special Education Director of Federal Compliance. During that time, I was the state lead for Special Education to support our system to navigate the furloughs from SY 2009-2010 to SY 2010-2011. I facilitated a Furlough Task Force comprised of Complex Area Superintendents, Principals and District Educational Specialists. Mr. Arakaki was the Kauai representative on the Furlough Task Force. I found him to be a valuable contributor of the effort and his perspectives and ideas were well received, respected and often contributed to the group decision making. By working together on the Furlough Task Force, Mr. Arakaki and myself have maintained a positive professional working relationship.

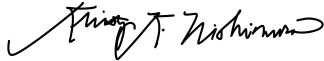
Currently, I have the privilege of serving as the Director for Alternative Learning Programs for the past 2 years and work closely with the Complex Area Superintendents, Principals and program staff. Mr. Arakaki served as a member of the Alternative Learning Workgroup which were the state-wide leadership team that established the vision and mission for the redesigning of Alternative Learning Programs (formerly known as the Comprehensive School Alienation Program, CSAP). Mr. Arakaki's range of experience as a former CSAP teacher in Waipahu and Kauai provided the background knowledge and ability to effectively understand and meet the needs of the at-risk population of students. He willingly participated in the Alternative Learning Program Workgroup and served as one of two Complex Area Superintendent representatives to reestablish a statewide system to support the implementation of alternative learning at all secondary schools (BOE policy 105-10). His ability to maintain the vision for a program implemented across the state while advocating for diverse student populations were evident in his consistent participation, constructive feedback and systems level perspective. Mr. Arakaki maintains a passion to support all students, and he holds a special place in his heart as an educator to meet the needs of our vulnerable youth. He has the empathy, understanding and compassion to prevent students from dropping out of school, increase graduation rates and engage all students in their learning. He has consistently demonstrated his ability to lead school change, implement programs to support students and is ALWAYS motivated to effectively meet the needs of all students.

Mr. Arakaki demonstrates strong leadership, organizational, interpersonal, management and facilitative skills to support our HDOE system towards positive outcomes for students. He is energetic and consistently goes above and beyond in every endeavor he undertakes. His positive attitude and motivation contribute to problem solving and a solution-based approach that considers all facets of the challenge presented. He has passion for students to develop to be college, career and

citizenship ready. Mr. Arakaki also strongly believes in being a supportive administrator to the schools and personnel in all roles. His fair and equitable practices are character traits that both schools and complex area staff appreciate about him. I have observed these skills and qualities in Mr. Arakaki, and believe it enables him to be an effective BOE member and great leader for students, families, staff and community.

Should the committee have further inquiry or seek clarification, I welcome being contacted on my personal cell phone (808) 221-6732 to share my insight and perspective of Mr. William Arakaki.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristy Nishimura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kristy Nishimura

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Testimony of Derek S.K. Kawakami

Mayor, County of Kaua'i

Before the

Senate Committee on Education

Friday, April 9, 2021; 3:00 PM

Conference Room 229 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of

GM 794 Relating to the Appointment of

William Arakaki

To the Board of Education

Honorable Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Honorable Members:

I am honored to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of William Arakaki's appointment to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. His institutional knowledge, collaborative skills, and willingness to serve others will strengthen the Board's role in directing the education of our state's youth.

Mr. Arakaki has been a lifelong mentor. As my high school football coach, he taught us about teamwork, integrity, dependability, and leadership. As our former Kauai Complex Area Superintendent, he brings a unique view and perspective on what is needed to strengthen our existing public school system and as a life-long educator he understands the need to transition our system into the 21st century to give our students a competitive edge.

Mr. Arakaki spent the first ten years of his educational career as a teacher on Oahu. As a life-long learner, he realized how much better life was on our wonderful island of Kauai and transitioned to teaching here. Shortly after that, Mr. Arakaki developed his credentials in administration and began his tenure in educational leadership.

Administering at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, as well as his experience as a motivational and alternative learning teacher, provided the solid foundation for Mr. Arakaki's role as the Kauai Complex Area Superintendent. During this time, he directed our schools and community with his ability to consider all aspects of a situation. He listened to the suggestions and complaints of all parents and did his best to provide the best academic path for each child.

Lately our north shore community has been hit with several natural disasters. Mr. Arakaki always worked with our Emergency Management Team to make sure our keiki from Hanalei Elementary School were safely united with their parents during flood days. After our 2018 April floods, many of those same students were cut off from their school due to landslides. Mr. Arakaki thought out of the box, and a

temporary satellite school in Wainiha served those students and even some from the middle and high school.

Since his retirement, Mr. Arakaki has continued to serve our community volunteering with food distribution during the pandemic and as a volunteer with our Agency on Elderly Affairs. He is truly someone who care about others.

I ask this Honorable Committee to advise and consent to Mr. Arakaki's nomination, and forward to the full Senate for consideration. Mahalo for the opportunity to present this testimony.

LATE

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 4:51:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chesne Cabral Kitamura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please consider this testimony as my support for Mr. Bill Arakaki's consideration as a Boardmember for the Board of Education.

I have worked under Mr. Arakaki for six years as a District Educational Specialist for the Kauai Complex Area. As a Complex Area Superintendent, Mr. Arakaki has faced multiple challenges on a daily bases, although he has had to make tough decisions that did not always receive the support from others, he never faltered from his professional philiosphy of supporting his staff and students of Kaua`i. His intentions and work have always been to better our community, schools, families and students, with that I believe he is the right canidate to help our entire Department of Education in staying steadfast to helping all of our students in Hawai`i nei.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Chesne Cabral Kitamura

LATE

GM-794

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 5:01:22 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/9/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heidi Aceret	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting this testimony in support of Mr. Bill Arakaki as a Board of Education member. I have worked under Mr. Arakaki at the Kaua`i Complex Area for 3 years as a resource teacher. As the superintendent for Kaua`i, Mr. Arakaki lead with the students, staff, and community at heart. His strength was in building and maintaining relationships with those he worked with. When faced with difficult situations, Mr. Arakaki consistently did what he thought was right for our students. I believe he will continue to do the same and keep Hawai`i's young people as the priority when making decisions. Mr. Arakaki has worked with many different leaders in the department and within the community. Through these relationships, he has been part of innovative and successful initiatives that have and continue to benefit our island youth. Mr. Arakaki's years of service in the department makes him familiar with the lay of the land, with the reality of the day to day in the school. As a recent retiree, he continues to contribute to his community by supporting the efforts of ensuring young people have access to mental health during these turbulent times we are facing.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Arryl Kaneshiro, Chair
Mason K. Chock, Vice Chair
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Bill DeCosta
Luke A. Evslin
KipuKai Kualii



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Scott K. Sato, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
E-mail: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

April 9, 2021

**TESTIMONY OF FELICIA COWDEN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON**

GM 794, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Senate Committee on Education

Friday, April 9, 2021

3:00 p.m.

Via Videoconference
Conference Room 229

Dear Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of GM 794, Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Education—William Arakaki. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a Member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I enthusiastically SUPPORT Mr. William Arakaki for the Hawai'i Board of Education. For roughly two decades, I have had the opportunity to work with "Bill" Arakaki in a number of capacities including as a regular participant in the Kaua'i Educators Leadership Alliance (KELA) of principals and school leaders that met roughly bi-monthly to learn from each other across public, private, parochial, and home school pathways. He had the humbleness of bringing a home-cooked breakfast for all of us each meeting. Years earlier, Mr. Arakaki was my instructor to gain my substitute teaching license animating our learning with many insightful stories. He was in principal or administrative leadership at each of our Kaua'i high schools. I had interface with him while I was the president of Kapa'a High's SCC (School Community Council). Those are but some examples of our overlap in education and youth-at-risk focus on Kaua'i. In all my experience with him, I have only seen him in the capacity of managing ideas and differences with calm competence and treating others in an environment of respect. Never have I seen him in a bad moment or be the subject of animated community complaints. He holds my full respect.

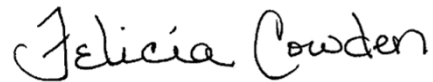
"Bill" Arakaki has the broad career background in education, coupled with the receptive, empowering temperament to be a strong member on Hawai'i's Board of Education.

LATE

Senate Committee on Education
RE: GM 794, Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Education
April 9, 2021

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony and for your favorable consideration in approving GM 794. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via E-mail to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Felicia Cowden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

FELICIA COWDEN
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AMK:dmc