

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 4049

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 21 2022

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 574

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 574, submitting for study and consideration the nomination of:

COMMISSION ON FATHERHOOD

G.M. No. 574 JOSEPH O'CONNELL,
for a term to expire 06-30-2023,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by Joseph O'Connell for service on the Commission on Fatherhood.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Mr. O'Connell from one individual.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. O'Connell's experience in working with youth and families in Hawaii, knowledge as a general licensed resource caregiver formerly known as foster parent for the past seven years, and commitment to improving the lives of Hawaii's youth qualify him for appointment to the Commission on Fatherhood. Your Committee finds that as an individual who aged out of foster care, became a foster parent, and works in the child welfare sector, Mr. O'Connell has a unique and well-informed perspective of the child welfare system and its challenges. Your Committee notes that after passing the General Educational Development test, Mr. O'Connell earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and



Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Business Administration from the University of Hawaii at Hilo. He is currently a Program Supervisor at PARENTS, Inc., a service contractor for the Department of Human Services' Child Welfare Services Branch, where he oversees the company's Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services program that supports families involved in the child welfare system. Mr. O'Connell also serves as a Financial Literacy Facilitator with the HI HOPES Division of EPIC 'Ohana Inc., where he teaches financial literacy to youths who are fifteen to twenty years of age. Prior to taking on these positions, Mr. O'Connell served as a financial literacy trainer and counselor at Hawaii First Federal Credit Union where he created individualized financial plans for low-income families.

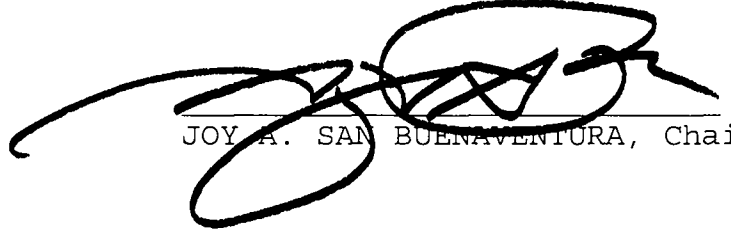
Your Committee further notes that from 2019 to 2020, Mr. O'Connell worked with Kamehameha Schools on a program aimed to increase engagement of the community and families of Native Hawaiian children in foster care. In December 2019, Mr. O'Connell was named by the Honolulu Star-Advertiser as one of the "Heroes Next Door" who, as a one-time foster child, has devoted his life to improving the child welfare system. Mr. O'Connell's commitment to improving the lives of Hawaii's youth is also evidenced by his on-going service as a team leader, facilitator, and staff trainer at Hawai'i Leadership Academy's Winners Camp, a residential camp for teenagers on Oahu open for four to six weeks a year that is focused on increasing the academic performance of participating teens.

Your Committee therefore recommends that Joseph O'Connell be appointed to the Commission on Fatherhood based on his experience, knowledge, and fervent commitment to improving the child welfare system and the lives of Hawaii's youth and promoting healthy family relationships between parents and children.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominee, has found the nominee to be qualified for the position to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Human Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



