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STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
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April 25, 2022

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hawaii State Capitol
State of Hawaii

Dear Senator Rhoads:

SUBJECT: GM 593 and GM 594 - Nomination of Ms. Sheryl Nelson to the statewide voters with special needs advisory committee

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** the nomination of Ms. Sheryl Nelson to sit on the statewide voters with special needs advisory committee.

Ms. Nelson has an uncompromising belief in civil rights, independent living and individual choice. She is currently the executive director of the Statewide Independent Living Council and is a strong advocate in having individuals with disabilities becoming involved in civic engagement for systems change.

In the early 2000's Ms. Nelson worked for the Office of Elections and was a statewide trainer for people with disabilities with the electronic voting process. Her knowledge of best practices in disabilities will help the committee to improve the service delivery system.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support for Ms. Sheryl Nelson to the statewide voters with special needs advisory committee.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator

GM 593 & GM 594 Sheryl Nelson Response

1. Please describe your understanding of the role and jurisdiction of the Statewide Voters with Special Needs Advisory Committee (Committee).

Answer: The committee members give their experiences and knowledge regarding accessible voting and other access concerns statewide. The discussions and questions answered will contribute to an accessible voting and transportation future over time.

2. How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Committee?

Answer: I perceive that as a committee member I will share my knowledge of access and ask questions that may not have been asked before.

3. Why do you wish to serve as a member of the Committee? Please note if you initially applied to be nominated to the Committee or if you were invited to apply.

Answer: I was invited to apply to be a member of this committee. I believe I was chosen because of my personal and professional experiences and knowledge.

4. Please describe why you believe that you are qualified to be a member of the Committee. Please discuss any skills, expertise, knowledge, or volunteer involvement that would aid in your decision-making ability.

Answer: I have both a personal and professional background of experiences regarding access to voting and transportation. I've conducted trainings about the attitudes about disabilities people have which can be barriers or contribute to success of people with disabilities in areas such as voting, transportation, employment, public places and moving through life. The more inclusive access is will result to assist the public to see people as independent rather than perhaps helpless.

5. What do you hope to accomplish during your term as a member of the Committee?

I hope that the committee can pick one or two projects that are completed, marketed as accessible, meet the needs of people with and without disabilities and the projects may be completed and not just talked about. Results make a difference.

6. As this is a new Committee, what issues do you believe the Committee should address?

Answer: Since access law has been around for quite some time the committee should be able to really make a difference. I think that the committee could move forward in partnership with the state. I hope that soon access is a very high priority and funds are available in the budget to make a difference statewide a model for successful and accessible for everyone.

7. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Committee?

Answer: No, I cannot see any conflict.

How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

GM 593 & GM 594 Sheryl Nelson Response

Answer: It would depend on what the conflict is and how it is presented. I may need to do a little research and explain my commitment

8. Is there any other information regarding your experience and background that you believe should be considered for your nomination?

Answer: I was a Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) member for a total of 16 years with a break after the first eight years.