



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony in SUPPORT of GM641
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the
Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board
Gubernatorial Nominee, MEGAN KOSAKA,
for terms to expire 06-30-26.

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 4/8/2022

Hearing Time: 1:00 p.m.

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) **SUPPORTS** the nomination
2 and confirmation of Megan Kosaka to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service
3 Area Board.

4 **Department Testimony:** The role of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service
5 Area Board is to advise, monitor, review and evaluate the provision of mental health services in
6 Maui County. Its membership is comprised of nine dedicated volunteers representing
7 consumers, family members, community members and providers who give their time, energy,
8 expertise and experience to improve and advocate for a system of care that provides quality
9 mental health service to the people of Hawaii. The Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui
10 Service Area Board reports County updates to the Hawaii State Council on Mental Health which
11 is administratively attached to the Department.

12 Ms. Kosaka fills the mental health stakeholder/community member role on the Mental
13 Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board pursuant to Chapter 34-11, Hawaii
14 Revised Statutes. She is a licensed marriage and family therapist currently working as a
15 Behavioral Health Specialist V supervisor with the Hawaii Department of Education.

1 Ms. Kosaka is the 4th generation in her 'ohana born and raised on Maui. She continues
2 to live on Maui as a working mother raising her young children. Her commitment to volunteer
3 and serve her community is deeply-rooted with her 'ohana, her island upbringing, and her work
4 within the educational setting. She fosters self-compassion amongst youth by helping them to
5 overcome challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6 She is aware that mental health and substance abuse issues need community-based
7 solutions and believes that working to address behavioral health care early on in a person's life
8 can have positive impacts that carry over to future generations.

9 Her background in family therapy as well as her education and experience working with
10 keiki and 'ohana will be an asset to the Maui Service Area Board.

11 The Department strongly supports the appointment of Ms. Kosaka to the Mental Health
12 and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.