



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM648**  
**Confirmation of Dr. Gloria Fernandez to the Center for Nursing Advisory Board**  
**for a term to expire 06-30-2026**

SENATOR DONNA MERCADO KIM, CHAIR  
SENATOR MICHELLE N. KIDANI, VICE CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Hearing Date: 3/31/2022 Room Number: 229

1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health **strongly supports** the confirmation of Dr.  
2 Gloria Fernandez, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC to the Center for Nursing Advisory Board for a term to  
3 expire June 30, 2026.

4 Dr. Fernandez is a consummate professional whose service to the public over the past 20 years in  
5 the Public Health Nursing Branch has been outstanding. Her first ten years were spent  
6 supporting vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, homeless, and medically fragile, followed  
7 by six years as Section Supervisor of the Leeward Public Nursing Section, supporting  
8 communities in Waipahu, Ewa, Kapolei, Makakilo, Nanakuli, Maili, Waianae, and Makaha. In  
9 2018, she was selected as the Quality Assurance Coordinator for the Department of Health's  
10 (DOH's) Public Health Nursing Branch (PHNB), ensuring first-rate, evidenced-based nursing  
11 practice for approximately 100 public health nurses.

12 Dr. Fernandez served as the Acting Branch Chief, PHNB from November 2019 through August  
13 2020. During this period and continuing to the present, she led the pandemic response for the  
14 DOH PHNB, providing community outreach to underserved populations, including Native  
15 Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Filipino populations, that were disproportionately affected by  
16 COVID-19. This improved the knowledge of COVID-19 countermeasures in the community,  
17 greatly increased vaccination rates, and reversed the disproportionate percentage of deaths in  
18 these communities.

1 Dr. Fernandez is completely dedicated to nursing and community support with a track record of  
2 consistent success. She has exceptional skills as a nurse, educator, committee worker, manager,  
3 and leader. People look up to her for her knowledge, professionalism, and diplomacy, earning  
4 their trust and respect. She has a collaborative leadership style that ensures unity of effort and  
5 maximal efficiency. Dr. Fernandez' list of awards attests to her remarkable achievements and  
6 include the State of Hawaii DOH Sustained Superior Performance Award (2011), DOH  
7 Sustained Superior Performance Team Award (2012), and UH at Manoa School of Nursing  
8 "Sensational 60" Honoree (2016). Dr. Fernandez was inducted into the UH School of Nursing  
9 Alumni Hall of Fame in 2018.

10 The department highly recommends Dr. Gloria Fernandez as a member of the Center for Nursing  
11 Advisory Board and respectfully requests your confirmation of her selection. Thank you for this  
12 opportunity to testify.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, March 31, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

By

Clementina D. Ceria-Ulep, PhD, RN  
Interim Dean and Professor  
Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing  
(formerly the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene)

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

GM 648 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Center for Nursing Advisory Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Gloria Fernandez, for a term to expire 06-30-2026

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to give our strong support to the appointment of Dr. Gloria Fernandez to serve on the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing Advisory Board.

Dr. Fernandez has extensive experience and education in public health nursing receiving her graduate degrees in nursing from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). In 2018, she was inducted into the UHM School of Nursing's Alumni Hall of Fame for her outstanding leadership and service in nursing and to the community. We are confident that Dr. Fernandez will be an asset to the Advisory Board providing a perspective and passion for evidence-based practice, culturally sensitive care and practices, community and public health, and nursing workforce development.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to write in strong support for Dr. Gloria Fernandez to be a member of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing Advisory Board.



**Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, March 31, 2022 at 3:00 pm  
by  
Laura Reichhardt, MS, AGNP-C, APRN  
Director, Hawai'i State Center for Nursing  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

**Testimony in Support for GM 648**

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education. Thank you for hearing this nomination. The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing offers strong support for Dr. Gloria Fernandez to serve as member of our Advisory Board for a term to expire June 30, 2026. Dr. Fernandez is a longstanding leader in nursing, currently serving as the Quality Assurance Coordinator for the State of Hawai'i Department of Health Public Health Nursing Branch.

Dr. Fernandez will provide critical expertise to the Advisory Board. She has 20 years of experience as a public health nurse and continues to serve the state in this role. As a public health nurse, her advocacy and impact include infectious disease community management, education for vulnerable populations, consultation with the Department of Education on school health topics, as well as emergency and disaster preparedness. In 2015, she received a doctor of nursing practice degree with her dissertation focusing on "Improving public health nursing capabilities for building not for profit organizations capacity for disaster continuity of operations planning." Over her career, Dr. Fernandez has built expertise that is more important than ever before.

The Center continues to fulfill its mandates, grow its reach, and consider how to focus our efforts to ensure that nurses are accessible across all regions statewide while addressing nurses' professional development needs. Dr. Fernandez is uniquely positioned to help us ensure our impacts and efforts reflect the entire workforce, including public health- and community-based nurses as well as geographically remote nurses.

The Center also has a duty to respond to existing and emerging needs. The Advisory Board membership ensures that critical considerations and implications in nursing care are voiced. As a public health nursing expert with specific expertise in disaster planning and representation of public health nurses across the state, Dr. Fernandez will contribute significantly to the planning and activities of the Center for Nursing. Thank you for providing opportunity to testify in strong support of her consideration and confirmation to our Advisory Board.

*The mission of the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is that through collaborative partnerships, the Center provides accurate nursing workforce data for planning, disseminates nursing knowledge to support excellence in practice and leadership development; promotes a diverse workforce; and advocates for sound health policy to serve the changing health care needs of the people of Hawai'i.*

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
MAJOR BRYCE YAMAMOTO  
TO THE

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Thursday, March 31, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

G.M. 648

Submitting for Consideration and confirmation of Gloria Fernandez  
For Center for Nursing Advisory Board

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I am Major Bryce Yamamoto, Hawaii Air National Guard, USINDOPACOM Command Surgeon's Office, Chief of Southeast Asia Regional and ASEAN Health Engagement Medical Desk Officer. I am also an emergency/trauma nurse at The Queen's Medical Center for over 15 years. It is my pleasure to provide testimony in strong support of the confirmation of Gloria Fernandez for the Center for Nursing Advisory Board.

I have had the great opportunity to work alongside Gloria Fernandez while deployed on behalf of Gov Ige, MG Hara, and the Hawaii National Guard to support Hawaii and our community in response to COVID-19.

I first met Gloria in March 2020 during the initial phase of Hawaii National Guard (HING) and Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) collaboration and coordination with COVID-19 reporting and mitigation measures. Gloria brought her Public Health Nurse (PHN) expertise and knowledge to the forefront of the response and provided critical situational awareness to the HING in order to develop and deploy the necessary efforts needed. Gloria was able to share HDOH COVID-19 plans and operations and identify the necessary needs and personnel to meet the demands of COVID-19 effects on the community and State.

Gloria's participation in multiple meetings, working groups, and Video Teleconferences (VTCs) were invaluable because she was able to describe and articulate HDOH and PHN capabilities and shortfalls that were critical to HING, Honolulu Fire Department (HFD), Honolulu Police Department (HPD), Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), County HDOH Offices, Hawaii Dental Services (HDS), University of Hawaii (UH) – John A Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), School of Nursing and Dentistry (SONDH), Applied Research Laboratory (ARL); local hospitals, and private/local organizations. Gloria's friendly and professional personality allowed her to develop and befriend many leaders and officers among these organizations and departments that allowed for a whole of community approach to helping Hawaii retain one of the lowest rates for COVID-19 infections and deaths, and highest rates of COVID-19 vaccinations.

I had the opportunity to work alongside Gloria when COVID-19 vaccines were starting to be released and I was then shifted from HI-EMA to the HDOH Department Operations Center (DOC) as Operations Section Chief for COVID-19 vaccine and testing operations. Gloria's experience of leading the HDOH Stop Flu at School Program and nursing career demonstrated her leadership skills and effectiveness especially with the City and County of Honolulu COVID-19 Vaccine Point of Distribution (POD) at Leeward Community College (LCC). Gloria lead the clinical portion of the POD with her HDOH PHN Team, health contractors, and UH (Medical and Nursing Students) which included medical screening, vaccine administration, vaccine storage and preparation, and medical monitoring. The LCC POD supported not only City and County First Responders, but also State and Federal leaders and employees, HING, and public and private employees of critical infrastructure businesses and occupations providing first and second doses of over 3700 local employees.

Gloria and I also partnered with UH JABSOM and UH SONH in establishing a POD at UH for UH medical and dental students and UH faculty and staff. Gloria was the POD Commander and I her deputy in successfully completing vaccine administrations for first and second doses of over 300 UH students and faculty and staff.

I humbly nominate Gloria Fernandez to the Center for Nursing Advisory Board. Gloria's expertise, wisdom, and operational knowledge will provide the Nursing Advisory Board the competency and strategic guidance for the future of Hawaii's nurses and medical community. Nursing has blessed us both with unseen opportunities to help not only our patients, but our community, our colleagues, and our keiki. Mahalo.

**GM-648**

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 4:40:13 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/31/2022 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Holly Ann Kataoka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Gloria Fernandez' confirmation for Center for Nursing Advisory Board.

**GM-648**

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 4:53:58 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/31/2022 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kyle Kataoka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Gloria Fernandez' confirmation for Center for Nursing Advisory Board.



**GM-648**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:46:22 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/31/2022 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Calderon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Gloria Fernandez's confirmation for Center for Nursing Advisory Board. Ms. Fernandez has decades of various nursing experience. Her knowledge and application of research, quality assurance and work with the community will be an asset to the Board. Thank you for the opportunity to support Ms. Fernandez.

Sincerely,

Michelle Calderon

**GM-648**

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:27:34 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/31/2022 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nagisa Kimura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support Gloria Fernandez's confirmation for the Center for Nursing Advisory Board. Ms. Fernandez's breadth of knowledge, work experience, and passion for nursing will be a great asset to the advisory and its work initiatives.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
JOAN TAKAMORI  
TO THE

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Thursday, March 31, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

G.M. 648

Submitting for Consideration and confirmation of GLORIA FERNANDEZ  
For Center for Nursing Advisory Board

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I am Joan Takamori, Public Health Nursing Branch (PHNB) Chief for the Department of Health (DOH). It is my pleasure to provide testimony in strong support of the confirmation of Gloria Fernandez, DNP, MSN, BSN for the Center for Nursing Advisory Board.

Dr. Fernandez is a leader in our nursing profession who exemplifies a professional who not only has a solid foundation in her nursing practice, but one who also assures she knows who she serves. She's been a registered nurse for 19 years serving a community in which she comes from. In those years she's worked as a public health nurse serving the Leeward community, a supervisor for that same community, and currently is the Quality Assurance Coordinator that assures standards of clinical practice for our public health nursing profession statewide.

Dr. Fernandez's strengths lie in her exceptionally solid foundation in population-based public health nursing, standards for quality assurance and the means to achieve it, community engagement and capacity building, and cross sector collaboration. A recent example of her collective strengths was exhibited when she supported DOH's pandemic response. Her leadership and solid foundation in nursing supported the collaboration with multiple agencies to stand up vaccination sites and lead outreach efforts in the community. The key approach was to listen and learn from the communities before responding with outreach efforts. The first step in serving people is to listen.

The nursing profession is a continuum of care. It covers a vast range of specializations, serves individuals to populations, and works in various locations from hospitals to the community. One of the basics of our nursing practice is the relationship we build with the people we serve. Dr. Fernandez will bring to the advisory board her solid foundation in nursing as well as her understanding and commitment to people of Hawai'i.

I respectfully ask that you support the confirmation of Dr. Gloria Fernandez.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
LT COL JASON K. IYOMASA  
TO THE

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Thursday, March 31, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

G.M. 648

Submitting for Consideration and confirmation of Gloria Fernandez  
For Center for Nursing Advisory Board

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Higher Education:

I am Lt Col Jason K. Iyomasa, from the Hawaii Air National Guard where I serve as the Deputy Commander of the Detachment 1, 154<sup>th</sup> Medical Group. In the civilian sector, I am a Registered Nurse at the Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific working as a Charge Nurse on the Spinal Cord Injury Unit for the past twenty-five years. It is an absolute honor to provide my testimony strongly endorsing the confirmation of Gloria Fernandez for the Center for Nursing Advisory Board.

I've had the privilege of working with Gloria through partnerships between the DOH Public Health Nursing Branch (PHNB) and the Hawaii Air National Guard (HIANG) since 2013. The framework of the charter was to familiarize both organizations with their respective capabilities and to effectively serve the community in times of a natural or manmade disasters. Gloria's impact on the charter was invaluable. Being so well respected in many communities across Oahu, she singlehandedly navigated the charter to train with various community-based organizations and provided an opportunity to build disaster preparedness capacity at the community level. As a National Guard all-hazards first responder medical unit, this was and a win-win on all levels. The result of the successful events and mutual trust between both organizations and community-based organizations would pay future dividends none more evident than when Hawaii was stricken by the pandemic.

At the very onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DOH PHNB partnered with Hawaii National Guard Joint Task Force (HING JTF). During this uncharted and chaotic beginning, the JTF leaned heavily on Gloria's trusted leadership and expertise in public health. She provided critical assessments necessary to strategically deploy HING assets in communities and clearly articulated a plan for resources and personnel requirements. Together, the PHNB and HING JTF worked in tandem canvassing over 20 low-income Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) properties and homeless shelters across Oahu. Teams provided door to door testing and covid education, rapidly identifying potential clusters and reducing further spread in congregate settings. Essentially, early detection and education prevented major outbreaks and reduced the

burden of serious covid hospitalizations. Additionally, Gloria coordinated multi-agency (state, city & county, and federal) pop-up testing and vaccination sites throughout Oahu. Her efforts directly contributed to Hawaii's high rate of vaccination and low covid infection rate nationwide.

I cannot begin to acknowledge just how much Gloria has served as a mentor to both my military and nursing career. She is the epitome of a nursing leader and possess the natural ability to bring people together from all walks of life. This special gift encourages healthy collaboration and galvanizes working groups to strive for a common goal. Her PHD in Nursing and years of experience at all levels provides instant and undeniable credibility. She is a strategic thinker and innovator. Her character is unquestioned and is aligned with the Air Force Core Values; Integrity First, Service before self, and Excellence in all we do.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my complete endorsement of Gloria Fernandez to the Center for Nursing Advisory Board. It is my strong belief that Gloria will make a positive impact to the Nursing Advisory Board and future of Hawaii's healthcare should she be confirmed. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to provide testimony and would like to thank the selection board for consideration of this exceptional candidate and nursing executive.

Very Respectfully,  
Jason K. Iyomasa