

The Senate Office of Joy A. San Buenaventura

Re: Nomination to the State Rehabilitation Council;  
requested information

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the State Rehabilitation Council?  
*I would be a returning, second term Secretary; I made a commitment.*

(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Rehabilitation Council?  
*It's important in that the disability community needs oversight.*

(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Rehabilitation Council, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the State Rehabilitation Council.  
*I've been a recipient of VR services and contracted business entity. I have a current working knowledge of the agency.*

(4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?  
*Serve as Secretary.*

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the State Rehabilitation Council?  
*Smart; older; person with a disability. Best qualities for council business.*

Walter Soares

March 18, 2022

Page 2

(6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the State Rehabilitation Council?

*Past client of VR. I know the process.*

(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the State Rehabilitation Council? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

*No possible conflicts of interests.*

Aloha,

Wally Soares

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
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April 1, 2022

TO: The Honorable Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura  
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director  
Maureen Bates, Administrator, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: **GM 662 – Relating to consideration and confirmation to the State Rehabilitation Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, Walter Soares, for a term to expire on 06-30-2025.**

HEARING: Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 3:00 P.M.  
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference, State Capitol

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Department of Human Services, supports the nomination and confirmation of Mr. Walter Soares to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

Mr. Soares seeks an appointment to the SRC as a representative for the disability advocacy groups representing a cross-section of individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities, and parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves as described by section 348-8(a)(6). Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

Mr. Soares is a person with a disability whose personal experiences can provide insight to advocate for the disability community regarding the vocational rehabilitation process. Mr. Soares is a small business owner and is the President of Island Skill Gathering, which provides assistive technology, independent living skills, vocational counseling, and

disability awareness and ADA training. Mr. Soares' knowledge of assistive technology that can assist an individual with a disability accomplish almost any job task and his advocacy on behalf of individuals with disabilities would benefit the State Rehabilitation Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this nomination.