



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • Fax (808) 586-8129

April 8, 2022

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Governor's Message 669 - Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Anthony Akamine for a Term to Expire June 30, 2026

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the nomination of Mr. Anthony Akamine to the Board. This will be a reappointment of Mr. Akamine to serve on DCAB.

Mr. Akamine would be continuing to serve on the Board in the capacity of a consumer/person with a disability representing the population of individuals who are blind or who have low vision. He also brings the perspective of a caregiver for an adult family member who is disabled.

Mr. Akamine is currently employed as an Elections Specialist with the State Office of Elections. In his capacity he is responsible for providing guidance and conducting public education and awareness efforts to ensure that the voting process is accessible to people with disabilities.

Mr. Akamine is active with the local chapter of the American Council for the Blind, and also serves as a member of DCAB's Legislative Committee, and on the Special Parent Information Network, a joint program of DCAB with the Department of Education to provide parents of children with disabilities access to information on services and rights to a free, appropriate public education.

Mr. Akamine has a wealth of knowledge and experience to serve in the best interests of people with disabilities.

We thank you for your positive consideration of reappointing Mr. Akamine to the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRBY L. SHAW
Executive Director

April 7th, 2022

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Governor's Message 669-Submitting to Consideration and Confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Anthony Akamine.

I support the nomination of Mr. Akamine to the Disability and Communication Access Board. Anthony is a consumer with multiple disabilities including blindness. He has family members with disabilities and has been a loving caregiver to some of his family members along life's challenges. I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Akamine for over 15 years. I first met him when we both was helping with a resource ministry called John 17:21 whose focus is to resource the faith community & teach them how they could be more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive to people with disabilities. The year of 2006 the ministry had a camp for those with various disabilities & their family members. He was a part of a dance group that came to teach and encourage those with disabilities. Shortly after the camp, he became a core team member of the John 17:21 Ministry.

Mr. Akamine's dedication to embrace all different types of people in different environments is most valuable. When he came to the John 17:21 camp, he took the initiative to personally engage with each individual that he encountered. If they were not able to do the dance moves, he would demonstrate it to them again and would continue to work patiently with them. Since the camp, he has continued to embrace the spirit of ambassadorship through his willingness to speak with different groups and share stories about his blindness and ideas that the faith community can implement so that those with disabilities are more included. He was instrumental in bringing diversity to the worship service by identifying various musicians in the community who are blind and connecting them to John 17:21. In addition, he is also an active member of various community organizations such as: member of the Hawaii Association of the Blind, & a community representative with a disability for the Special Parent Information Network.

Leadership skills such as ability to inspire people, and a natural relationship builder are just a few of the leadership skills that Anthony possesses. Every person he meets is an opportunity to build upon a person's character and speak encouragement to them.

Sincerely,

Terri-lynn Higashi