

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'AINA O KA MOKU'AINA 'O HAWAII



KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

March 23, 2023

The Honorable Joy San Buenaventura
Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair San Buenaventura:

As First Deputy, my responsibility to the Department of Health is not only to my own administration, which houses the District Health Offices of Maui, Kaua'i and Hawai'i Island, the Administrative Services Office, the Health Information Systems Office, the Office of Planning, Policy and Program Development, the Human Resources Office and the Office of Health Status Monitoring, but runs across the department with administrative support.

(1) *Experience:*

I come to the Department of Health after time spent with the Kaiser Permanente, the House Finance Committee, the Department of Human Services, the University of Hawaii at Hilo, and as an entrepreneur.

(2) *Strengths:*

I am the first First Deputy in many years from outside. This fresh perspective, and my questioning of basic processes and reasoning that long timers can no longer see, helps break the inertia common in government. Seeing this, the staff is also able to view operations through my own new eyes, and the gems of ideas generated from them are inspiring.

I use my strong administrative experience in operations, budgeting, and metrics every day in this position. My entrepreneurial experience, where I wore many hats at once, certainly helps me juggle the demands of this position.

My wholistic approach, where I see everything as being connected, ties in the often isolated offices and staff, creating a synergy that helps staff understand our whole is much richer than the sum of our parts.

To make institutional change, to manage people well, there cannot be a fear of conflict; not everyone will want the change you bring. It is in my approach, I believe, that helps bring change; by being firm and fair, I can make movement. In meeting with direct reports to communicate my expectations, several have said that in their more than dozen years, or longer, in the department it was the first such conversation with their Deputy.

Weaknesses:

I don't always pace myself. My personal expectations are high, and there are things I want to accomplish in my time at DOH. The day to day demands of this position easily crowd out the ability to work on the long-term changes I want to set in place. I am not always great asking for help. I recognize this and am currently looking for that help.

I commute for this job from my home on Hawai'i Island, which carries a personal cost. In this I must also temper my pace.

(3) *Department strengths:*

There is a general commitment among staff that is uncommon. I am told it is the nature of public health, which attracts a more value driven worker. The ready willingness to help, directed both outside the department and within, is cited by staff as a strength, especially in crisis situations, and I believe them. Whether frontline or management, the public health staff keep the walls of the department standing as leadership changes and crisis come and go.

Subject matter expertise is strong. The programs and offices are knowledgeable and well versed in general about their subject areas, to the point where my administration hopes to create an internal library that can be easily accessed when issues come up.

DOH has a strong regulatory mindset with clear expectations. Funded in large part with federal funds, which come with strict guidelines and reporting requirements, staff is conscious and diligent about regulatory compliance.

Department weaknesses:

The infrastructure is weak from years of underfunding. Systems are outdated and fragile, with frequent breakdowns that compromise getting the work done.

Weak and outdated systems translate into an absence of meaningful metrics by which to manage. DOH is missing robust, current, updated data systems that tie us in to each other.

Physical plant is old and poorly maintained, compromising safety and health. Kina'u Hale should be razed. There are no current plans to relocate the offices in the building and rebuild.

Outdated processes hamper efficiency. Redundancy in paperwork, old manual systems, and inconsistent applications tie us up and are frustrating to staff. We are currently going through these processes to simplify and update, and, where possible use technology, to streamline.

(4) *Vision for the DOH:*

That all Hawaii residents have a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health and wellbeing. We will be developing benchmarks in the coming months to measure outcomes and progress.

I also include here my goals for my administration;

To create and enable a healthy environment for my staff, where they feel heard, valued, given the tools they need to be successful in their work, and to grow in themselves and their position.

To improve the systems and processes in our daily work so we can accomplish the big picture, which is,

To deliver services to the community as we are meant to, fully, with compassion and competence.

(5) *Top budgetary priority for the biennium:*

To strengthen our public health infrastructure on Oahu and the neighbor island District Health Offices; to address growing critical mental health needs for children and adults, resourcing our State Hospital; to protect our drinking water through CIP state match for water treatment and testing.

(6) *Staff morale:*

In this post COVID period, DOH staff are in the recovery phase. The attention of the past administration was outwardly focused on COVID and less towards the operations of the department. Staff voices were not always heard, some offices more isolated from the whole than others. Bringing these offices and staff back into a feeling of inclusion and trust is a priority for me.

Additionally, staff cuts have been demoralizing to those left doing the work of 2 or 3. Staff want to perform well, people want to do the right thing, but the steady erosion of positions demonstrate a counter narrative to the belief in the importance of public health. Everyone wants the vacancies filled so we can fully deliver on the services we are charged with providing, which cannot happen with inadequate staff and position counts.

The Department of Health does not collect data on staff turnover.

(7) *Conflicts of interest:*

I do not hold a second job, no longer own a business or was ever in partnership with anyone. I can foresee no conflicts.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Susan Lehua Fernandez
Deputy Director of Health



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Testimony in SUPPORT of GM527
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director, Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, SUSAN FERNANDEZ, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

SENATOR JOY SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: 3/31/2023

Room Number: 225

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports the nomination
3 of Susan Fernandez as the First Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

4

5 Ms. Fernandez is the first nominee from outside the Department of Health in over 20 years, and
6 she has brought a fresh perspective on agency policies and procedures that have been well-
7 received. She has expressed a sincere desire to improve the way the department listens to and
8 communicates with staff, and has already identified several initiatives to this end. While she
9 emphasizes accountability for the quality of work DOH staff produces, she is a willing
10 participant in analyzing and committing resources to address barriers preventing optimal
11 function.

12

13 Ms. Fernandez's resume describes a professional interested in problem-solving, which is to say
14 making things work better, but also in innovation, or seeing unrealized opportunities and
15 implementing. Given the lessons-learned from the pandemic and previous public health threats,
16 this skillset in the hands of the First Deputy Director will help department infrastructure improve
17 on yesterday's performance while pivoting towards tomorrow's public health issues.

18

1 Lastly, her experience in public and private sector HR, finance, strategic planning, legislative
2 and budget management, performance evaluation, accreditation support, and neighbor island
3 issues align with the functions of the staff offices reporting to the First Deputy.

4

5 In three months, Susan has earned the respect of senior staff from her willingness to listen, desire
6 to be a part of solutions, and follow through. Her nomination is strongly supported by DOH.

7

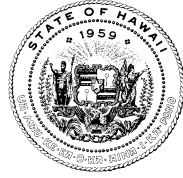
8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

9

10 **Offered Amendments:** None

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o
Hawai'i*

SYLVIA J. LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina
'o Hawai'i*



KALI WATSON
CHAIRMAN, HHC
Ka Luna Ho'okele

KATIE L. DUCATT
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN
Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawai'i

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

**TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
HEARING ON MARCH 31, 2023 AT 1:05PM IN CR 225**

IN SUPPORT OF

GM 527

for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director,
Department of Health,
Gubernatorial Nominee, **SUSAN FERNANDEZ**,
for a term to expire 12-07-2026

March 31, 2023

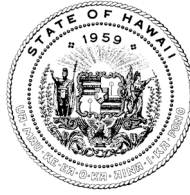
Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director for the Department of Health (DOH).

Ms. Fernandez's background in the health sector is made obvious through her work for the Hilo Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii, and the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services. DHHL is also confident that her previous leadership at the City and County of Honolulu and service as a Budget Chief/Analyst for the State of Hawaii House Finance Committee will be useful for the collaborative work that will be necessary for the success of DOH and the State of Hawaii.

DHHL looks forward to working in partnership with Susan Fernandez and we respectfully ask your committee to advise and consent to this nomination. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



DOUGLAS MURDOCK
CHIEF INFORMATION
OFFICER

OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HI 96810-0119
Ph: (808) 586-6000 | Fax: (808) 586-1922
ETS.HAWAII.GOV

Testimony of
DOUGLAS MURDOCK
Chief Information Officer
Enterprise Technology Services

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 527
NOMINATION OF SUSAN FERNANDEZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Friday, March 31, 2023

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the committee:

I am writing in support of Governor Josh Green's nomination of Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

Ms. Fernandez has served as the Deputy Director of the Department of Community Services at the City and County of Honolulu where she functioned as the Chief Operations Officer of the department, managing day-to-day operations, building systems to improve and streamline systems, tracked employee performance metrics, and developed innovative processes to increase efficiency.

She also worked as the Assistant Hospital Administrator for Hilo Medical Center, Chief Budget, Planning, and Management Officer for the Department of Human Services, Budget Chief for the Hawai'i House Finance Committee, and an Operations Senior Manager for the New Ventures and Optical Department at Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i.

Throughout her career, she has gained valuable insight into healthcare program development, effective implementation strategies, and budget policies and procedures.

She is also a Hospice volunteer, and I am happy to support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



TESTIMONY BY:
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

Friday, March 31, 2023
1:05 P.M.
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
State Capitol

In consideration of
Governor's Message 527
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director, Department of
Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Susan Fernandez

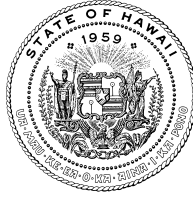
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** the confirmation of Susan Fernandez as Deputy Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

Ms. Fernandez received her M.B.A. and B.A. from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She has a strong background in public service and has held positions with the House Finance Committee at the state Legislature, the Department of Human Services, Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation, and the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

She is an accomplished public servant and has the right qualifications to serve as the Deputy Director for DOH.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony of
Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawaii

Before the
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Friday, March 31, 2023
1:05 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

In consideration of
Governor's Message No. 527

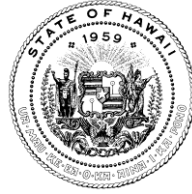
Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

I respectfully request your favorable consideration of Governor's Message No. 527, the appointment of Susan Fernandez to serve as the Deputy Director for the Department of Health.

Susan has over a decade of service in various administrative and managerial government positions. As the Deputy Director of the Department of Community Services at the City and County of Honolulu, Susan oversaw the day-to-day operations, building systems to improve and streamline departmental efforts, and developing innovative processes to increase the Department's efficiency. Additionally, Susan also served as the Assistant Hospital Administrator for Hilo Medical Center, as the Chief Budget, Planning, and Management Officer for the Department of Human Services, the Budget Chief for the Hawaii House Committee on Finance, and with the Applied Research Department at Kaiser Permanente Hawaii. Through these roles, she gained valuable insights in budget policies and procedures, effective implementation strategies, and healthcare performance metrics.

I am confident that with her experience, Susan will serve the State well in her role as the Deputy Director for the Department of Health.

Mahalo for your consideration.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

Testimony of
DEAN I HAZAMA
Deputy Director for the
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Friday, March 31, 2023
1:05 PM
Conference Room 225

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 527 RELATING TO
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE SUSAN FERNANDEZ
FOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the committee:

I strongly support the confirmation of Susan Fernandez to the position of Deputy Director for the Department of Health.

As a prior First Deputy Director and Budget Chief for the Department of Health, Ms. Fernandez has the knowledge and experience necessary to lead the many diverse and critical responsibilities of the department. In addition, she has worked as an administrator for various private health organizations throughout the state. Susan has also worked for the Legislature as Budget Chief for House Finance.

She has always demonstrated her willingness to help those in need, unafraid to tackle the tough issues but most importantly, she is the best person for this position.

As Governor Green's administration is committed to addressing the many issues facing our State in a direct and forthright manner, Susan Fernandez will be an integral

Testimony of Dean I Hazama
G.M. 527
Page 2 of 2

part of the team to achieve the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

In consideration of G.M. No. 527

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial nominee, Susan Fernandez

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

DATE: Friday, March 31, 2023
TIME: 1:05 p.m.
LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 225

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

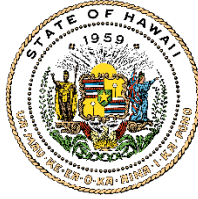
Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the confirmation of Ms. Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

I believe that Ms. Fernandez's experience in the legislature and her administrative background in other state and county agencies makes her an excellent candidate to help lead DOH. I believe Ms. Fernandez will do a great job in that role.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 527.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA**

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Friday, March 31, 2023
1:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 527
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SUSAN
FERNANDEZ, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026**

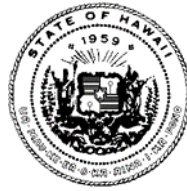
Governor's Message 527 submits for consideration as the Deputy Director, Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Susan Fernandez, for a term to expire 12-07-2026. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department credits Ms. Susan Fernandez for exemplary work in administration, strategic planning, budget management, and program development throughout a distinguished career on behalf of the people of Hawai'i. Roles as Senior Manager with Kaiser Permanente, Chief Budget, Planning and Management Officer with the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services, and Deputy Director with the City and County of Honolulu Department of Community Services have challenged and prepared her for the demands of this position.

Currently serving as the First Deputy Director for the Department of Health, tasked with overseeing eight divisions, further demonstrates Ms. Fernandez's qualifications and competency as the ideal candidate for Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 527.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWÉ KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 30, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **Testimony in Support**
G.M. 527, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy
Director, Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee,
SUSAN FERNANDEZ

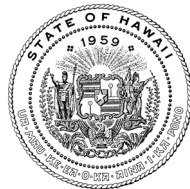
Hearing: March 31, 2023 at 1:05 pm
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of GM 527, for the appointment of Susan Fernandez to the role of Deputy Director for the Department of Health.

Ms. Fernandez has exemplary and longstanding experience in government and public service. Having previously worked for the Department of Human Services, she understands the impact that government programs and budgets have on our residents. Her ability to work collaboratively and with innovation are critical assets for a government leader to possess. We look forward to continuing our collaborative work with DOH on important issues impacting the social determinants of health and well-being of our residents.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of GM 527, Susan Fernandez.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY
LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 527

March 31, 2023
1:05 p.m.
Room 225 & Videoconference

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SUSAN FERNANDEZ, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the appointment of Susan Fernandez to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Health (DOH). I am working with Ms. Fernandez in my professional capacity as Director of Finance.

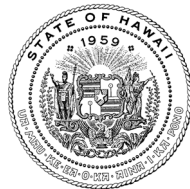
Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Ms. Fernandez is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Ms. Fernandez has been serving as the Deputy Director at DOH since January 2023. Prior to that, she worked at the Department of Human Services, the Hilo Medical Center, and most recently as the Deputy Director at the City Department of Community Services. Her work experience will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY
SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 527

March 31, 2023
1:05 p.m.
Room 225 & Videoconference

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SUSAN FERNANDEZ, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the appointment of Susan Fernandez to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Health (DOH). I am working with Ms. Fernandez in my professional capacity as Deputy Director of Finance.

Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Ms. Fernandez is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Ms. Fernandez has been serving as the Deputy Director at DOH since January 2023. Prior to that, she worked at the Department of Human Services, the Hilo Medical Center, and most recently as the Deputy Director at the City Department of Community Services. Her work experience will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 12:47:05 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Tsuji	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I fully support the nomination of Susan Fernandez. For the past 2 months, I have worked with Susan at the Department of Health. She has the knowledge and skills for this complex administrative position. I have also found her to be hard working and committed to public service. I am confident she is can handle this challenging position.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 10:03:40 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Oku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Sen.San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Sen. Aquino, and members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

I support the consideration and confirmation, of Susan Fernandez to serve as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:52:57 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Cook	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for considering this nomination - I have known and worked with Susan Fernandez on numerous public and private sector projects for more than 30 years. She is knowledgeable about budgeting and the state's legal procedures for managing - with transparency and integrity - federal and state funds having served on the House Finance Committee staff several years. She is fiscally prudent and no-nonsense about accountability. She will be a major asset to the Department of Health. Please support her nomination. Mahalo, Patti Cook - Waimea, Island of Hawai'i

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 12:43:34 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Taylor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stronly support.

Thank you

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 1:10:22 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne S. Higaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support Susan Fernandez's nomination and ask your positive consideration.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 2:23:14 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Riley Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Susan Fernandez as Deputy Director of the Department of Health. Her background and familiarity with State government will enable her to be an effective part of the leadership team at DOH.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 6:43:04 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
charles fernandez jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the nomination of Susan Fernandez for Deputy Director of the Dept of Health. She has the right character, determination, and ability to understand the issues facing the state, and to make the change needed. I believe her people skills will help in her ability to work with staff and frontline workers.

Please confirm her nomination.

Thank you.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA
SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

March 29, 2023

To: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair,
The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair,
Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Date: Friday, March 31, 2023

Time: 1:05 p.m.

Place: Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference

From: Nadine Ando

Re: G.M. 527, SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SUSAN FERNANDEZ, FOR TERM TO EXPIER 12-07-2026.

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

I write to express strong support for the confirmation of Susan Fernandez as Deputy Director, Department of Health.

Ms. Fernandez has extensive background and experience in government agency administration and management, private sector health provider administration and operations, and budget and planning for the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services. She also brings legislative experience working as a budget chief/analyst for the House Finance Committee. In short, her skillsets and expertise developed through her work in both public and private sectors makes her uniquely qualified to serve as the Deputy Director for the Department of Health.

On a personal note, I have known Ms. Fernandez socially for over 30 years and can attest to her impeccable moral and ethical character. She will serve the State of Hawaii well in this position

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 9:23:35 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Katres Kopper	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this nominee

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 10:42:25 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to support Susan Fernandez's nomination for Deputy Director of the Department of Health for the State of Hawaii. Ms. Fernandez's resume demonstrates an impressive grasp of the issues the DOH faces in these challenging times. She has a diverse background which is an asset as the Administrative Deputy Director for the DOH. The State will benefit from her varied experience, professional accomplishments, and commitment to service.

I have witnessed Susan's work ethic and commitment to consensus-building with her team. She is a leader with compassion. Her knowledge of the Legislative process and budget is impressive. She is a quick learner with excellent analytical abilities. She possesses a commendable and demonstrated commitment to service. She has an impressive educational background that she can draw upon to fulfill her responsibilities and duties as the Deputy Director for the Department of Health for the State of Hawaii.

Susan truly believes in the mission of the DOH to protect public health, and I trust that she will make a positive contribution to the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:18:51 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Elia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 5:41:11 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
D. Keith Kopper	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I write in strong support of GM 527, for the consideration and confirmation of Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

Ms. Fernandez' appointment provides this committee with the opportunity to confirm that experience, public service, and integrity are ideal qualities of our government officials. Ms. Fernandez has a long track record of managing staff, providing financial oversight, ensuring statutory compliance, and executing all aspects of government service with skill and transparency. She has many years of experience working for and with all branches of government, and has shown that she is always supremely loyal to the public's interest over her personal gain. She has worked in and alongside the healthcare industry and community services at the private, county, and state levels. She is no doubt a perfect fit as First Deputy for our State's Department of Health.

Beyond her resume, Ms. Fernandez possesses the personal character needed to discharge the Department of Health's administrative duties. She is open-minded, driven, intelligent, and caring. She possesses an incredible work ethic and leads by example. She is supremely committed to public service and lets that commitment guide her work. Outside of work she is a mother, writer and artist who has a strong love of family and community.

Ms. Fernandez is more than qualified for this position. Confirming her nomination is the right call.

Sincerely,

D. Keith Kopper

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 7:41:02 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Obrey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support GM 527 for the consideration and confirmation of Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health. She is extremely qualified for this position, and her leadership will be an asset to the DOH.

Testimony of
CHRIS J. SADAYASU
to the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Friday, March 31, 2023
1:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of
GM 527
**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director,
Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, SUSAN FERNANDEZ, for a term to
expire 12-07-2026.**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee.

I support the appointment of Susan Fernandez to serve as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

Ms. Fernandez has extensive experience in both the private and public sectors. She has held leadership positions at Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i and the Hilo Medical Center. Ms. Fernandez brings a diverse background at both the State and County levels, with senior positions with the State of Hawai'i House Finance Committee, State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services, City and County of Honolulu Department of Community Services, and in her current position with the State of Hawai'i Department of Health. Her experience in planning, policy, and program development will continue to be an asset in her role.

I respectfully ask for Ms. Fernandez's confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 9:39:36 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Puna Na'auao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express strong support of Susan Fernandez for the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Health. I had the pleasure of working together with Susan during her time with the House Finance Committee. Throughout those years I was able to witness Susan's demonstrated competence, qualifications, knowledge, professionalism and integrity. She maintains a strong understanding of the health-related needs of our state and can clearly articulate priorities and objectives to effectuate meaningful solutions.

She has already proven to be a valuable asset to the Department and Administration and I urge the Senate to confirm the appointment of Susan Fernandez as Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

Mahalo for your consideration.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 10:19:40 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harvey Maxwell Kopper	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in strong support of GM 527, for the consideration and confirmation of Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 11:35:35 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Kaetsu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I strongly support Susan Fernandez for this position. Ms. Fernandez is both highly qualified for this position and dedicated to public service. I think she would be a valuable addition to the Department of Health and help improve their operations to better serve the people of Hawaii.

Thank you.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 2:11:15 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Summer Sylva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Ms. Susan Fernandez's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Health. Her extensive management experience administering state and county programs, in addition to her work for health and human service providers (both public and private) all across the state, make her ideally suited to deliver on the mission of the department: to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawaii.

Ms. Fernandez is an individual who possesses the high integrity, strong work ethic, and servant leader traits that inspire public confidence and trust in government. I respectfully urge you to confirm Ms. Fernandez for Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 2:13:10 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorrin Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Friday, March 31, 2023 at 1:05 p.m
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol

**GM 527 SUSAN FERNANDEZ
Gubernatorial Nominee for Deputy Director of Health**

Good afternoon Chair Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Henry Aquino, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is Debbie Kim Morikawa and I stand in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the nomination of Susan Fernandez to serve as Deputy Director of Health.

While I have only known Susan for a little over a month, I know that Susan has an incredible background in health and public service. Her skillset is well matched to the challenges ahead as the Hawaii State Department of Health goes forward into our new, near post-pandemic world. She understands the state budget having served with the Legislature's House Finance Committee, understands public healthcare reimbursement from her time at the State Department of Human Services, and understands healthcare from the perspective of serving with our public hospitals system (a.k.a. the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation). Her MBA, earned at the University of Hawaii, along with time spent in the private sector with Kaiser Permanente's Applied Research team, also lets her understand the challenges of healthcare from a business research lens. With these kinds of career accomplishments and experiences, Susan is an ideal candidate to serve Hawaii as the Deputy Director of Health.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of my testimony in support of gubernatorial nominee for the Deputy Director of Health, Susan Fernandez.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 3:22:44 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Odell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I write in strong support of GM 527, for the consideration and confirmation of Susan Fernandez as the Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

Ms. Fernandez has a long track record of managing staff, providing financial oversight, ensuring statutory compliance, and executing all aspects of government service with skill and transparency. She has many years of experience working for and with all branches of government and has shown that she is always puts the public's interest first. She has worked in and alongside the healthcare industry and community services at the private, county, and state levels. She is a perfect fit to serve as First Deputy for our State's Department of Health.

Beyond her resume, Ms. Fernandez possesses the personal character needed to discharge the Department of Health's administrative duties. She is open-minded, driven, intelligent, and caring. She possesses an incredible work ethic and leads by example. She is supremely committed to public service and lets that commitment guide her work. Outside of work she is a mother, writer, and artist who has a strong love of family and community.

Ms. Fernandez is more than qualified for this position. Please confirm her nomination.

Sincerely,

Andrew Odell

Melissa Pavlicek
1099 Alakea Street, Suite 2530
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Date: March 31, 2023
Committee: Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Re: GM 527, Nomination of Susan Fernandez

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the committee!

My name is Melissa Pavlicek. I am an attorney and small business owner who resides in Honolulu. I am a graduate of Baldwin High School in Maui, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and the Wm. S. Richardson School of Law. These educational experiences – and the life experiences that come with them -- have given me an appreciation for the kind of diligent leader that I know Susan Fernandez will be if confirmed as deputy director of the Department of Health.

I first met Susan when she served as a staff member at the state legislature and I had just begun serving as a first-time advocate for Hawaii public charter schools. As you know, the budget process itself can be difficult to understand and challenging for busy public servants like charter school leaders to navigate. Susan – in her role with the House Finance Committee -- was so kind, patient, and compassionate as I learned how to read budget worksheets, communicate with many stakeholders, and advocate in the right way and at the right time. That was well over ten years ago and I have continued to observe her as a public service-minded community leader. She has not only the right temperament, but also the governmental experience that is needed to be an effective deputy director. I have every confidence in her ability to serve Hawaii well in a leadership role at the Department of Health.

Please favorably approve her nomination.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 8:09:34 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tehani Rawlins	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

My name is Tehani Rawlins.

I have been working at the Department of Health for over 15 years; 13 of those years have been with the Office of Health Status Monitoring (OHSM), better known as vital records, in the Issuance Office and currently as the supervisor of the Marriage & Civil Union License Office.

On February 24, 2023 I was called into a meeting with the Issuance Office supervisor, Acting OHSM Chief Jean Luka, and Deputy Director Susan Fernandez. During this meeting I was:

- Accused of fraud and abuse of overtime
- Reprimanded for training new Issuance staff on how to determine legal entitlement
- Reprimanded for vetting the backlog of mail in orders spanning the period of October 2022 – December 2022.
- Intimidated when I attempted to speak and offer clarification I was cut off and told “You may not respect me, but you will respect my position” with a finger pointed at me. Intimidated again, when given an ultimatum that if I didn’t like it here, I could leave.
- Belittled and humiliated when myself and the Issuance Office supervisor were made to repeat “I will not do mail orders” before we were able to be excused from the meeting.

After being excused from the meeting, the Issuance Office supervisor & I went to the basement vault to talk as we were both in shock. A few minutes later, Jean Luka and Susan Fernandez were knocking on the basement vault door and Susan Fernandez asked if we were working down here. I replied no that we were decompressing after the troubling interaction we just had. Both continued to stand in the narrow doorway and ask questions. I became increasingly uncomfortable in the environment; stated such and my need to remove myself from the environment. Neither Jean Luka or Susan Fernandez moved aside so I could more easily exit the basement vault; so, I had to uncomfortably squeeze past them and wait outside the vault door area till we were again dismissed. I have never been more uncomfortable in the workplace. My heart was racing, and I was overcome with dizziness. I feared for my health and safety, notified my employer, and immediately left the office.

Since that date I have been under medical care for work related stress and anxiety. I have difficulty sleeping, stomach pains, tension in my body, and other physical symptoms when I am at work and when I am at home thinking about work or the upcoming work week. I do not enjoy coming to work. I find this even more troubling because at a OHSM staff meeting with Susan

Fernandez on 2/23/2023 she stated that one of her three main goals as the Deputy Director was to ensure that employees feel comfortable and safe in the workplace. I do not feel comfortable or safe at work because of this incident and why I oppose this measure.

Thank you for your time.

GM-527

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 9:12:26 PM

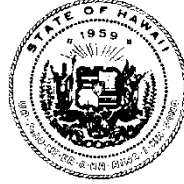
Testimony for HHS on 3/31/2023 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B M M	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cannot support based on the time S Fernandez has worked at the Health Department.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 17907
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Friday, March 31, 2023
1:05 PM
Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
GM 527
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR,
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SUSAN FERNANDEZ,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

Honorable Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 527, to consider and confirm Susan Fernandez to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Health.

It is truly my honor and privilege to be working alongside with her and there is no doubt in my mind that she will continue to bring a fresh perspective on how to deliver services, improve the experience of those we serve, and strive to maximize taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.

The HPHA urges the Committee to pass GM 527 and confirm Susan Fernandez to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Health.