

March 30, 2023

Senator San Buenaventura
Chair
Health and Human Services Committee
Senate
State of Hawaii

Subject: State Council on Mental Health

Dear Senator San Buenaventura,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions regarding my interest in the State Council on Mental Health. Please find below my answers to your questions with regards to the State Council on Mental Health.

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the State Council on Mental Health?

I have a personal interest in improving mental health services in Hawaii. I have a sibling and his wife who lived in the state for more than 12 years and suffered from serious mental health illnesses. One suffered from bipolar disorder and the other suffered from schizophrenia. During acute instances, I tried many times to obtain health services for them, however the law precluded services at the time. As such, I am glad to see some improvements in mental health laws, including ACT; some of which I was fortunate to work on with other committed individuals.

(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Council on Mental Health?

I believe the State Council should look at ways to improve services in Hawaii to those with mental health issues. Moreover, we should advise the Department of Health (DOH) on how to improve their mental health services, in addition to preparing annual and long-term mental health plans for Hawaii.

(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Council on Mental Health, 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 Council on Mental Health.

In addition to helping family members deal with mental illness in Hawaii, by being involved in mental health nonprofit organizations, I have experiences in organizational budgeting and planning. Specifically, I've been on the board of Mental Health America of Hawaii for over 25 years; for about 12 years I've been on the Hawaii Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness advisory board; and am currently serving on the board of Hawaii Disability Rights Center. I've also participated in several informal committees of individuals that are interested in improving Hawaii mental health laws. Finally, I have budgeting and planning experiences at different organizations.

(4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

I hope to help conduct an extensive review of mental health laws to see if they serve their purposes, develop laws to aid those with mental illness, and modify laws that would more effectively serve this population. I also hope to help improve services for those suffering from mental illness, including in-patient and out-patient. This includes developing short- and long-term plans to meet these needs.

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the State Council on Mental Health?

I will discuss three qualities: assertive, integrity, and an understanding of the State of Hawaii legislative process.

Assertive: I will take action to do what needs to be done to improve the State's mental health.

Integrity: I will always do what I believe is right for our population and the State of Hawaii.

Understand the legislative process: This will help SCMHS review, change, or initiate laws to benefit the mentally ill.

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

When my niece was about 3 years old her mother had a psychotic break. Her dad was taking care of her mother and I was taking care of my niece. My niece asked me "If my mom couldn't take care of me who would take care me?" This question profoundly affected me. From that time on I committed myself to helping improve the lives of individuals who suffer from mental illness and their family members.

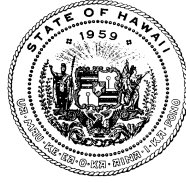
(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the State Council on Mental Health? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

Since I'm involved with mental health nonprofit agencies there could be a conflict of interest. However, it has not been an issue in the past.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Mary Pat Waterhouse



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 629
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the
State Council on Mental Health
Gubernatorial Nominee, MARY PAT WATERHOUSE,
for a term to expire 03-31-2024**

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

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: Friday, March 31, 2023, 1:05 p.m. in Rm. 225/VIDEO

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) **SUPPORTS** the nomination
2 and confirmation of MARY PAT WATERHOUSE to the Hawaii State Council on Mental Health
3 (“SCMH”) and offers comments.

4 **Department Testimony:**

5 Ms. Waterhouse fills the mandated SCMH membership position of family member,
6 pursuant to Chapter 334-10, Hawaii Revised Statutes and Federal Law, Public Law 102-321,
7 Section 1914(c).

8 Ms. Waterhouse joined the SCMH as an interim member in July 2022. She immediately
9 worked to become an informed member, learning about the SCMH’s priorities, and was willing
10 to lead a permitted interaction group. She credits a strong support system for being able to
11 remain an active community member, and life and work experiences for the know-how that she
12 brings to her volunteer work. She has lived experience as a family member of individuals who
13 live with serious mental illness and is deeply motivated to do what she can to improve laws that
14 can lead to better mental health care.

1 Her understanding of the mental health system is most evident in her knowledge of the
2 legislative and government processes in general. Her resourcefulness and personal motivation
3 to make a difference are just a few of the reasons why we look forward to her continued
4 participation as member of the SCMH.

5 We respectfully request your favorable consideration in confirming the appointment of
6 Ms. Waterhouse to the Hawaii State Council on Mental Health.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on her behalf.

8

9 **About the SCMH**

10 The SCMH is an active advocacy group with 21 volunteers representing service
11 recipients, family members, community members and state agency representatives who
12 provide a voice for children, youth, adults and their families on behavioral health issues.
13 Established in 1984, the SCMH's mission is to advise, monitor, review and evaluate the
14 provision of mental health services in the state. Collectively, the SCMH advises the Department
15 through the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD), and
16 Child Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) on issues of concern, policies and programs;
17 providing guidance in the development and implementation of the state mental health plan,
18 and serving as an advocate for adults diagnosed with serious mental illness (SMI) and for
19 children and youth diagnosed with serious emotional disturbance (SED).

GM-629

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 4:24:16 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Testifying for Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are pleased to offer strong support for GM 629 nominating Mary Pat Waterhouse for a term on the State Council on Mental Health. I have worked with Mary Pat for decades and I do not know anyone who approaches her level of passion, commitment and knowledge of the issues our state faces as it deals with the crisis of mental health. Mary Pat has served on our PAIMI Council-which is an acronym for Protection and Advocacy for Mental Illness. It is essentially an advisory council for us on issues relating to mental health. She also has been on our Board of Directors and currently serves as the Board Chair. Her connection between the Mental Health Council and us is invaluable. For example, she recently was able to have the Chair of the State Council on Mental Health make a presentation to a Joint Meeting of our Board of Directors and our PAIMI Council. This meeting will undoubtedly lead to greater coordination between the two entities.

She has already served with distinction on the State Mental Health Council and will be a true credit and tremendous asset to them going forward. For all those reasons we express our strongest possible support and urge the Committee to support her confirmation.



THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SERVICES, INC.
Ending the Cycle of Homelessness

March 30, 2023

Senator Joy San Buenaventura
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S Beretania Street #213
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Senator San Buenaventura,

I am Connie Mitchell, Executive Director for the Institute for Human Services and write in support of Mary Pat Waterhouse's appointment to serve on the State Council on Mental Health.

Having served at IHS for the past 17 years, I have known Ms. Waterhouse for over 13 years as a colleague as we interfaces in the field of mental health having served with her on the Mental Health America (MHA) Board and as advocates for different pieces of legislation to advance accessibility of mental health treatment.

I have always known Mary Pat to be a staunch supporter of shaping a more responsive mental health system. But her career in fiscal management at both the City of Honolulu and the State of Hawaii also demonstrates a deep appreciation for how we need to support responsible operations that deliver the impact intended when funded. She has worked as a Director of Budget and Fiscal Services for Honolulu, Comptroller at DAGS and in the private sector with both Catholic Charities Hawaii Community Foundation for an even broader understanding of how funding must be extended responsibly. She also appreciates how poor systems of care cost taxpayers overly much.

The State Council on Mental Health would be blessed with very relevant skills and knowledge by Mary Pat's service on that Board. Her current and past service as President of the Hawaii Disability Rights Council and officer at MHA and her volunteering at the Waipahu Clubhouse Program that supports the recovery and psychosocial rehabilitation of mentally ill consumers. She understands well what people who are afflicted with mental illness face in terms of challenges and their needs. Her empathy motivates generous hours devoted to advocacy and encouraging mentally ill persons to speak out for themselves.

Mary Pat's ability to organize, educate and advocate are impressive. She is also unafraid to challenge the status quo and her ability to quickly pick up on how our mental health system could be improved makes her a valuable thought partner.

In the past year that she has served on this Council, she has added items to the agenda that has brought new life to the Council from the perspective of someone who sees a need for there to be a greater voice for the community and persons who are actually experiencing mental illness.

Please confirm her nomination to serve on the State Council on Mental Health.

Sincerely Yours,

Connie Mitchell
Executive Director

IHS, The Institute for Human Services, Inc. is Hawaii's oldest, largest and most comprehensive homeless services agency focused exclusively on ending and preventing homelessness in Hawaii. IHS is a 501 (c) (3) charitable non-profit organization. IHS EIN: 99-0199107



GM-629

Submitted on: 3/30/2023 12:48:12 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Tsuji	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support the nomination of Mary Pat Waterhouse to the State Council on Mental Health.

I have known Mary Pat for the past twenty-eight years, as a colleague in various government and non-profit capacities and in various volunteer roles. She is smart, capable and very thoughtful. I have the utmost respect for her integrity and work ethic.