

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3902**

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 19 2024

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 594

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water and Land, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 594, submitting for study and consideration the nomination of:

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

G.M. No. 594 RYAN KANAKA'OLE,
for a term to expire 12-31-2026. (Term
expiration date amended to 12-07-26 by
GM693),

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by Ryan Kanaka'ole for service as the Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Ryan Kanaka'ole from the Office of the Governor; Department of Budget and Finance; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Department of Agriculture; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Department of Transportation; Department of Taxation; Department of Law Enforcement; Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Department of Defense; Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Department of Health; Department of Accounting and General Services; Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation; Hawaii Public Housing Authority; Hawai'i State Energy Office; Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawaii State Aha Moku; Division of State Parks of the Department of Land

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and Natural Resources; Office of Enterprise Technology Services; Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission; one member of the Hawai'i County Council; and fifty-four individuals.

Your Committee received comments on the nomination for the appointment of Ryan Kanaka'ole from one individual.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. Kanaka'ole's extensive experience in various state and county positions and community involvement qualify him for appointment to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committee finds that Mr. Kanaka'ole has served as the interim Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources since January 2024 where he assumed the role of Legislative Coordinator, reviewing and weighing in on hundreds of bills that directly impact the Department. Mr. Kanaka'ole previously served as a Deputy Attorney General, providing counsel for the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, Mauna Kea Stewardship Oversight Authority, and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. In addition to his service in the Department of the Attorney General, Mr. Kanaka'ole served as General Counsel and as an analyst in the Office of the Auditor, as Deputy Corporation Counsel in the Office of the Corporation Counsel of Hawai'i County, and as a Law Clerk to the Honorable Steven S. Alm in the First Circuit Court of Hawai'i. Mr. Kanaka'ole's legal expertise in real property, land use, Native Hawaiian law, civil litigation, trusts, contracts, and administrative law will enhance the effectiveness of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committee further finds that Mr. Kanaka'ole is active in his community and served on the Board of Directors for Nā Mamo o Kāwā, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides cultural and environmental stewardship for seven hundred eighty-five acres of undeveloped shoreline in the Ka'ū District of Hawai'i Island from 2017 to 2020. While there, he created the group's coastal and dryland forest revegetation program and secured over \$250,000 in grant funding. Your Committee notes that Mr. Kanaka'ole served as the O'ahu Director for the Young Lawyers Division of the Hawai'i State Bar Association from 2020 to 2021. Mr. Kanaka'ole holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with Highest Honors from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and a Juris Doctor and Certificate in



Native Hawaiian Law from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's William S. Richardson School of Law.

Testifiers frequently highlight Mr. Kanaka'ole's calmness and even temperament, his cultural foundation growing up in Ka'ū, and work with community stakeholders who share a similar mission to the Department of Land and Natural Resources that benefits both the Department and the people of Hawaii. Mr. Kanaka'ole's experience, effective leadership, and utmost dedication to his job and his community will be assets to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Your Committee therefore recommends that Ryan Kanaka'ole be appointed to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources based on his experience, knowledge, and commitment to public service.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water and Land that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominee, has found the nominee to be qualified for the position to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water and Land,


LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair



