

Nomination to the Commission on Fatherhood: Neel Chauhan

1. Why do you wish to be a member of the Commission on Fatherhood?

Fatherhood is one of the most profound and defining roles in a man's life. As a father myself, I understand the challenges, sacrifices, and immense rewards that come with raising a child. I have personally navigated the complexities of co-parenting, legal battles, and maintaining a strong bond with my son despite adversity. My lived experience, combined with my professional leadership background, gives me a unique perspective on the support fathers need to be present, engaged, and empowered in their children's lives.

Hawai'i's families deserve a fatherhood system that is fair, supportive, and accessible, and I want to contribute to meaningful policy discussions, community engagement, and initiatives that help fathers be the best versions of themselves, which, in turn, strengthens families and communities.

2. What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Commission on Fatherhood?

The Commission on Fatherhood plays a crucial role in advocating, educating, and reviewing policies that support fathers across Hawai'i. As a commissioner, I see the following as key responsibilities:

- **Advocacy & Policy Development** – Identifying barriers that prevent fathers from fully participating in their children's lives and working with legislators to address them.
- **Community Engagement & Support** – Partnering with local organizations to promote fatherhood initiatives and ensure resources are reaching those who need them.
- **Awareness & Education** – Encouraging a cultural shift in how fatherhood is perceived, ensuring fathers feel valued, supported, and equipped to succeed in parenting.
- **Strategic Leadership & Decision-Making** – Bringing my leadership experience to help steer the commission toward data-driven, impactful solutions for Hawai'i's fathers.

3. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities as a member of the Commission on Fatherhood, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position?

I bring a unique combination of personal experience, professional expertise, and leadership skills that make me well-suited for this role.

- **Leadership & Problem-Solving:** I currently serve as the Regional Manager overseeing Primary care at Queen's Health System, where I lead complex system transformations, develop innovative care models, and drive operational efficiency, all skills that translate directly to strengthening policies and initiatives for fatherhood.

- **Advocacy & Family Support:** My background includes leading high-impact projects, advocating for better family services, and creating systems that improve well-being, all crucial aspects of this commission's work.
- **Lived Experience & Empathy:** As a father who has navigated divorce, I have firsthand experience in the legal and emotional struggles that many fathers face. I bring a deep understanding of father's rights, family court challenges, and the importance of parental involvement, ensuring my advocacy is both practical and impactful.

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

I aim to make tangible improvements in fatherhood policies and support systems in Hawai'i. Specifically, I would focus on:

- **Strengthening Fathers' Rights & Support Systems** – Advocating for fair legal processes that ensure fathers remain active participants in their children's lives, especially in cases of separation or divorce.
- **Mental Health & Well-being for Fathers** – Developing resources and programs that address mental health, stress management, and emotional support for fathers.
- **Workforce & Family Balance** – Promoting workplace policies that encourage paternity leave, flexible work schedules, and support for working fathers.
- **Community & Educational Initiatives** – Partnering with local organizations to create fatherhood mentorship programs, support groups, and parenting workshops.

5. Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will benefit the Commission on Fatherhood.

- **Strategic & Results-Driven:** I excel at solving complex challenges, whether in healthcare leadership or family policy, and will apply the same data driven, results-oriented approach to this commission.
- **Empathetic & Passionate:** My personal journey as a father facing significant challenges makes me deeply invested in supporting other fathers, ensuring they have the tools and opportunities to succeed.
- **Innovative & Transformational:** I have a track record of leading change, driving innovation, and building systems that work, skills I will bring to develop impactful, long-term initiatives for fathers.

6. Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a member.

A defining experience that will greatly inform my work on the Commission is my leadership in healthcare. I have led the development of comprehensive plans that integrated staffing, financial processes, patient quality metrics, and innovative care models, transformations that require collaborating with multiple stakeholders, advocating for policy change, and ensuring high impact, sustainable results.

These experiences directly translate to fatherhood advocacy, as it demonstrates my ability to navigate complex systems, influence policy, and implement meaningful change, all of which are critical for improving fatherhood initiatives across the state.

7. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Commission on Fatherhood? How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

At this time, I do not foresee any direct conflicts of interest.

To ensure transparency and integrity:

- I will recuse myself from any discussions or decisions where a potential conflict arises.
- I will adhere to all ethical guidelines and state policies to avoid any undue influence.
- I will always prioritize the best interests of fathers and families in Hawai‘i, ensuring that my contributions remain objective, equitable, and impactful.

I am deeply honored to be nominated for this role, and I believe my leadership, personal experience, and commitment to fatherhood advocacy make me well-equipped to serve, uplift, and empower fathers in Hawai‘i. I look forward to collaborating with fellow commissioners and community leaders to drive meaningful change and create a brighter future for fathers and families across the state.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Neel Chauhan

Date: February 24, 2025

To: Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Servicers

From: Jeff Esmond

Subject: Neel Chauhan, MD – Hawai'i State Commission on Fatherhood

I am the Chair of the Hawai'i State Commission on Fatherhood and would like to offer a recommendation of support for Dr. Neel Chauhan's nomination to a position as Commissioner.

Since Dr. Chauhan first expressed interest in becoming a Commissioner in 2023, he has been attending meetings regularly and when offered the opportunity to contribute, he has presented his unique point of view.

I believe Dr. Chauhan will offer a valuable perspective as a physician working in health care that will benefit not just fathers, but also the keiki of Hawai'i.