

# The Senate Ka 'Aha Kenekoa

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Aloha Emily Andrade:

Congratulations on your nomination to the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances. To assist the Hawaii State Senate with its confirmation process, we request that you submit the following information to our office no later than March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to ensure that we proceed in a timely manner:

1. Why do you wish to be a member of the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances.

*As an expert in the field of homelessness, poverty, and government administration, I am looking forward to the opportunity to provide insight, support and advice around best practices in the field of substance abuse as it relates to some of our most vulnerable people within the state of Hawai'i. I want to be a member of the commission to assist The Alcohol and Drug Abuse division of the state of Hawai'i due to my deep commitment to working with the community in which I reside. I have a strong focus on the interconnection of how drug abuse may become an output of poverty and homelessness. My experience managing Federal and local funding will be integral to the growth of this division. I am passionate about harm reduction philosophies and can work with the HACDACS committee to continue exploring best practices that will benefit the state of Hawai'i and its residents while assisting with efficiencies in overall government functions. Additionally, I hold a Masters of Social Work and am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with the state of California. In my professional experiences, I have relied heavily on my social work experience and training and would bring that lens to the Commission as well. I believe it is important to have social workers in areas of policy-level making as the ethics that guide our professional work align with the direction of the division.*

2. What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances.

*I understand the role and responsibility of a Commissioner is to attend monthly meetings and to provide meaningful feedback and discussion about community & government programs that promote the health and wellness of Hawaiians and specifically within the*

*field of substance abuse prevention and treatment. The role of commissioners is to contribute to potential solutions to problems that arise from alcohol and substance abuse. Commissioners are expected to understand how the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division is working with the community and to provide recommendations to other state departments. This role includes developing an annual report that is submitted to the state legislature in January to provide recommendations to the legislature based on best practices, new technology, current advocacy efforts, updated research, and general community feedback. This is a Governor appointed position that is voted upon by the State senate and is an unpaid, voluntary role.*

3. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities as a member of the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the board.

*I have been working in communities for over twenty years and have a detailed understanding of the impact that community members have when working with government. Not only do I have the clinical experience of working with people who are addicted to drugs, but I have experience leading efforts to draw communities together. In this role, I specifically represent businesses and the community as a whole. I know many local business owners and have meaningful discussions with community members regarding substance abuse and controlled substances and issues that can arise with unhealthy use. I also have family members and friends who have had personal experience with substance abuse and controlled substances which provides me with a personal intimacy with the topic. Substance abuse impacts many people across this country and the state of Hawai'i. As a member of this commission, I would lean on my training as a social worker, use my current knowledge of homeless systems and other programs of care, and government service access to assist the commission with annual recommendations. I would also lean into my personal and professional relationships across the state to support the work of the commission and the state agencies that interact with the impacts of alcohol and substance abuse.*

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

*I hope to make meaningful and practical recommendations to the state legislature around substance abuse and controlled substance prevention and treatment policy for the state to consider when making budgetary considerations. I would like to give the legislature helpful information that stems from the impactful work of local business owners, residents, non-profits across the state, and government agencies. I would also like to educate my circle of influence about the extensive work that the government is doing to positively support its community. This role is about helping government legislators and providing education to the public around substance and alcohol abuse such as the systemic issues that have contributed to these concerns.*

5. Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances.

1. **Experience:** *I have experience working in the medical setting as a social worker. I have worked in hospice, home health, emergency room, primary care and specialty care clinics and have worked with people who use drugs in all those locations regardless of economic, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds. This experience has taught me how to interact with various disciplines who work in the medical field, understand research, and how to manage medical and community-based alcohol and substance abuse, prevention, and harm reduction programs.*
2. **Knowledge:** *Since 2012, I have been working with government grants, initially through the Veterans Affairs Administration (by administering grants) and later through Los Angeles- based homeless program grants (City, State, Federal, and County funding) specifically for homeless services. I have an extensive amount of experience with complex government funding and understand the intricacies, benefits, challenges, and opportunities that it can provide. I also have experience with philanthropic funding. Having knowledge of the funding impacts that the state may encounter regarding alcohol and substance abuse treatment will be of value to the Commission when evaluating options for the future of the field.*
3. **Understanding:** *Finally, I have been living in Hawai'i since 2022, and my husband is of Hawaiian heritage. My children attend public schools here, and I have joined a nonprofit board of directors to impact the community. I am dedicated to building strong relationships as we settle here, and I continue to expand my circle of influence through family, new friends, and colleagues. This experience will guide my work with the Commission because it represents the diversity of the community. We have friends and family of different backgrounds and have relocated here mainly to assist our kapuna remain healthy and independent as they age with dignity.*
6. Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a member.  
(Managing Director of LAHSA)

*In 2019, I was hired by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) as the Director of Performance Management. The agency is a joint powers authority that is governed by an appointed LA City and LA County Commission. My experience as a director allowed me to learn and grow to be an effective leader who can work with professionals of all backgrounds including but not limited to: elected officials, LA County and City Department Chiefs, people in receipt of services and leaders across the nonprofit community. I learned the importance of determining when to use directive or collaborative decision-making skills. I learned how to do this in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This experience during COVID-19 also taught me the most important skill as a leader which is to listen. I listened to staff and supported agency-wide policies to assist staff who were working on the front lines during the emergency. My experience as a leader will be beneficial to this working group because I am able to listen to advice, learn from best practices, and trust in the positive intentions of the non-profit, government, and philanthropic community that supports services for people who use drugs.*

7. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances. How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

*At this time, I do not foresee any conflicts of interest that may occur at this current time. I have worked in government since 2009 and am acutely aware of the ethics and boundaries that arise from this work. When I worked at the Department of Veterans Affairs, I attended annual trainings around ethics and conflict of interests. I submitted financial disclosure forms starting in 2012 to ensure that I did not have any financial conflicts of interest.*

Please be aware that testimony submitted to committees – including your responses to the above questions - is posted on the Legislature's website; you may wish to remind individuals who intend to submit testimony on your behalf of the public nature of the testimony.

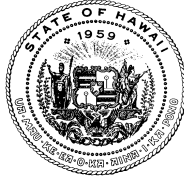
Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Here is the link to your nomination on the State Capitol website:

[Measure Status Details for GM 544](#)

Mahalo,

Amelia Dudley  
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Office of Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventura  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 213  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
808-586-6890  
a.dudley@capitol.hawaii.gov



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM0544**  
**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on**  
**Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances, Gubernatorial Nominee, EMILY ANDRADE,**  
**for a term to expire 06-30-2028.**

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

April 7, 2025, 1:00PM, Room 225

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** None
- 2 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (Department) strongly supports this measure.
- 3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health strongly supports the nomination
- 4 and confirmation of Ms. Emily Andrade to the Hawaii Advisory Commission and Drug Abuse
- 5 and Controlled Substances (HACDACS) for a term to expire on June 30, 2028. HACDACS
- 6 appointees represent a cross-section of the community, including, but not limited to,
- 7 pharmacological, medical, community and business affairs, youth action, educational, legal
- 8 defense, enforcement, and corrections segments of the community, pursuant to HRS §329-2.
- 9 Ms. Andrade currently serves an interim appointment for HACDACS within the Community and
- 10 Business Affairs category.
- 11 Ms. Andrade is a licensed clinical social worker and seasoned leader, proven to direct large-
- 12 scale, complex programs designed to serve the most needy and vulnerable populations, including
- 13 those experiencing homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence, from
- 14 strategic development through tactical implementation.
- 15 Ms. Andrade has extensive experience overseeing interdisciplinary clinical staff, providers,
- 16 contracts, and annual budget allocations. Her expertise in administering, developing, executing,

1 and managing grants and contracts with high-quality results makes her a sought-after mentor and  
2 expert in housing, poverty, and healthcare policy. We respectfully request your expeditious and  
3 favorable consideration for the nomination of Emily Andrade to serve on HACDACS.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of a committed volunteer whose  
5 appointment adds to the cross-section of community interests represented on HACDACS.

April 04, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President  
Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Third Legislature  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senate President Kouchi and Members of the Senate,

I am honored to submit this letter of support for Emily Andrade's appointment as a member of the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances (HACDACS). As Co-Chair of HACDACS, I am confident that Ms. Andrade's extensive experience, leadership, and unwavering dedication to serving marginalized communities make her an exceptional candidate for this role.

Ms. Andrade has a distinguished career spanning over 15 years in social work, with a demonstrated commitment to addressing homelessness, mental illness, substance misuse, and domestic violence. Her ability to strategically develop, implement, and oversee large-scale programs has resulted in measurable success for some of the most vulnerable populations. She has consistently leveraged her bilingual skills and clinical expertise as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker to foster collaboration, build high-performing teams, and implement evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for those in need.

Currently serving as a Senior Advisor at the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), Ms. Andrade has played a critical role in managing an annual budget exceeding \$200 million while overseeing a network of more than 50 nonprofit partner agencies. Her leadership has not only strengthened interim housing initiatives but also contributed to significant progress in the region's complex response to homelessness. Her past leadership at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs further underscores her ability to navigate large systems, enhance service delivery, and drive meaningful policy change.

Beyond her professional achievements, Ms. Andrade is widely recognized as a mentor and subject matter expert in housing, poverty, and healthcare policy. Her commitment to equity and accountability aligns seamlessly with the mission of HACDACS, and her experience in program administration, grant management, and community engagement will be invaluable assets to the Commission. I strongly urge you to confirm Emily Andrade's appointment to HACDACS. Her expertise, leadership, and passion for serving vulnerable populations will be instrumental in advancing the Commission's efforts to address substance use disorders and promote public health across Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me should you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Ku'uleialohaonālani Salzer  
Co-Chair, Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances (HACDACS)

**GM-544**

Submitted on: 4/4/2025 11:50:16 AM

Testimony for HHS on 4/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Clark	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am writing in support of Emily Andrade. I had the pleasure of collaborating with Emily on several projects under the PTSA at our children's elementary school. Specifically, Emily's organized and knowledgeable feedback regarding a grant application was critically helpful for us. I believe Emily will be an asset to this advisory commission.**



**GM-544**

Submitted on: 4/4/2025 11:06:17 AM

Testimony for HHS on 4/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rachelle Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha President Kouchi and Members of the Senate,

I fully support the appointment of **Emily Andrade** to the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances.

I had the pleasure of working with Emily, who served as a Board member when I was executive director of Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i, a nonprofit mental health counseling organization. Emily is knowledgeable, articulate, and organized. She will be a strong and caring voice on the Commission.

Thank you for considering my testimony. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at [rachelle.chang@gmail.com](mailto:rachelle.chang@gmail.com) or cell 808-221-2438.

Sincerely,  
Rachelle Chang  
Board Member/Treasurer  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Hawai'i Chapter

**LATE**

**GM-544**

Submitted on: 4/7/2025 7:47:05 AM

Testimony for HHS on 4/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Rich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Linda Rich and I am submitting testimony in support of Emily Andrade's confirmation. Emily is an active member of the board of the Samaritan Counseling Center of Hawaii and serves as its secretary.. I know her to be a person of excellent character and with a wide range of experience appropriate to her appointment I believe that she would be a tremendous asset. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**GM-544**

Submitted on: 4/5/2025 12:48:53 PM

Testimony for HHS on 4/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debra Ludowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have known Emily Andrade since 2007. We worked together at a Los Angeles area Home Health/Hospice Agency. Emily started as a colleague and then we became friends. We also worked at the VA together where she quickly excelled into leadership roles. She is reliable, always demonstrates a commitment to the community through various activities, keeps the best interest of her clients at the forefront of her work, and has always worked for mission driven organizations. While we no longer live in the same time zone, we connect regularly around social justice, leadership challenges, and continue to provide mentorship for each other. Emily would be a wonderful addition to the commission. Not only because of who she is, but the passion she will bring to the community around best practices for people with substance abuse issues. I wholeheartedly support her nomination.

**GM-544**

Submitted on: 4/5/2025 6:09:06 AM

Testimony for HHS on 4/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kate Stevens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I had the privilege of collaborating with Emily on a non-profit/grant project supporting the wellness of our community's keiki. Emily is thoughtful, resourceful, and committed to enhancing the health of our community. I recommend her for this appointment with enthusiasm.

**GM-544**

Submitted on: 4/4/2025 8:48:30 PM

Testimony for HHS on 4/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alder Olive	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing on behalf of Emily Andrade and requesting consideration and confirmation to the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Sunstance. I had the pleasure of writing a grant with Emily and she was highly educated, very motivated and would certainly be an asset to any position.

Mahalo,

Alder Olive