

Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
Office of Language Access

Testimony in Support of  
Language Access Advisory Council Nominee:  
DR. TIN MYAING THEIN

Good morning, Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor :

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, and I am the Executive Director with the Office of Language Access (OLA). The Office of Language Access strongly supports the appointment of DR. TIN MYAING THEIN to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Dr. Tin Myaing Thein is the Executive Director of Pacific Gateway Center, a nonprofit organization that assists immigrants, refugees, and low-income residents. An important part of the Center's mission is to provide bilingual services. As such, the Center has already served as an important resource for OLA's translation needs in developing multilingual signage for government offices to use.

For over 25 years, Dr. Thein has served national and international communities as a strong advocate of minority small business. Born and raised in Myanmar (Burma), Dr. Thein knows the obstacles and communication barriers that immigrants and limited English proficient persons are often faced with. She also knows the challenges involved when immigrants try to start their own businesses. Throughout her work, Dr. Thein is dedicated, passionate, and committed to assisting low income and disadvantaged minority individuals to realize their dreams of starting their own businesses. In addition, she has a wealth of experience in program planning and fundraising.

Given her background, OLA believes that Dr. Thein is a sound representative of a bilingual referral service or program. For these reasons, the Office of Language Access strongly supports the appointment of DR. TIN MYAING THEIN to the Language Access Advisory Council.

## Testimony

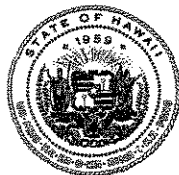
Presentation before  
The Senate Committee on JUDICIARY AND LABOR  
October 26, 2007

Tin Myaing Thein

Chair Taniguchi, members of the Senate Committee on JUDICIARY AND LABOR, thank you for this opportunity to present background about myself in your consideration of my confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council

With over 25 years of experience in community and economic development, I have served national and international communities as a strong advocate of minority small business. Born and raised in Myanmar (Burma), I know the obstacles and communication barriers which immigrants are often faced with. I also know the challenges involved when immigrants attempt to start their own businesses. As the Executive Director of the Pacific Gateway Center in Honolulu, I oversee PGC's 14 community-based programs assisting immigrants, refugees, and low-income individuals to succeed in their efforts to become economically and socially self-sufficient. The Pacific Gateway Center has extensive experience providing information and services in a culturally sensitive manner in over 10 different languages in the areas of business and finance, housing, health, education and employment

I am dedicated, passionate, and committed to assisting low income and disadvantaged minority individuals to realize their dreams of starting their own businesses. I welcome the challenges ahead, and my personality, background, education and experience give me the tools to succeed. I ask for you to support my nomination to the Language Access Advisory Council. Thank you.



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

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October 25, 2007

To: The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Date: October 26, 2007  
Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Place: Conference Room 229, State Capitol

From: Darwin L.D. Ching, Interim Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

**RE: DR. TIN MYAING THEIN  
Language Access Advisory Council ("OLA")**

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations ("Department") strongly supports the confirmation of DR. TIN MYAING THEIN.

Dr. Tin Myaing Thein is the Executive Director of Pacific Gateway Center, a nonprofit organization that assists immigrants, refugees, and low-income residents. An important part of the Center's mission is to provide bilingual services. As such, the Center has already served as an important resource for OLA's translation needs in developing multilingual signage for government offices to use.

For over 25 years, Dr. Thein has served national and international communities as a strong advocate of minority small business. Born and raised in Myanmar (Burma), Dr. Thein knows the obstacles and communication barriers that immigrants and limited English proficient persons are often faced with. She also knows the challenges involved when immigrants try to start their own businesses. Throughout her work, Dr. Thein is dedicated, passionate, and committed to assisting low income and disadvantaged minority individuals to realize their dreams of starting their own businesses. In addition, she has a wealth of experience in program planning and fundraising.

Dr. Thein qualifies to serve on the OLA as a representative of a bilingual referral service or program.

In summary, DR. TIN MYAING THEIN is well-qualified and deserving of confirmation for the OLA.

6/11/07

**Letter of Recommendation**

**Submitted by email: October 25, 2007 6:00 a.m.**

**In support of the nomination of Dr. Tin Myaing Thein to the Language Access Advisory Council at a hearing by the Senate Committee on JUDICIARY AND LABOR on Friday, October 26, 2007 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Dear Chairman Taniguchi and members of the Senate Committee on JUDICIARY AND LABOR:**

**I have been a volunteer, member of the Board and now President of the Board of Directors at the Pacific Gateway Center for more than twenty years. During almost all of that time the Center was under the direction of Dr. Tin Myaing Thein.**

**I and many other professional people willingly give of our time to support her and the mission of the center to help immigrants, refugees and low income people become self-sufficient. We have seen many people become contributing members of society through the work of the Center.**

**We continue in our long term support because of the integrity, the vision and the leadership of Dr. Myaing. Her personality and experience make her a valuable member of the Council. I urge you to confirm her nomination.**

**Respectfully,**

**Dorothy B. Douthit, Ph.D.  
President, Board of Directors  
Pacific Gateway Center**

GMI00

**Aloha United Way**

200 N. Vineyard Blvd., Suite 700  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-3938  
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Website: www.auw.org



October 24, 2007

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi  
Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Friday, October 26, 2007; 9:00 a.m.  
Fax: 586-6659

Re: The Nomination of Dr. Tin Myaing Thein to the Language Access Advisory Council

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Committee Members:

Aloha United Way wishes to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Tin Myaing Thein to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Dr. Myaing has over 20 years of experience working for community and economic development organizations – most recently as Executive Director of Pacific Gateway Center. AUW has enjoyed a long and beneficial relationship with Pacific Gateway Center and Dr. Myaing. As one of our partner agencies, we have funded the excellent work of this organization for many years.

The Mission of Pacific Gateway is to assist immigrants, refugees, and low-income individuals succeed in their efforts to become economically and socially self-sufficient. They currently offer information and services in over 10 languages. Dr. Myaing is the perfect candidate for the Language Access Advisory Council.

Sincerely:

Susan Au Doyle  
President

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October 24, 2007

2007 Senate Judiciary Committee  
c/o Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 219  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and Senate members of the Judiciary and Labor Committee:

I've known the nominee Dr. Tin Myaing Thein for over ten years in her capacity as executive director of the Pacific Gateway Center (PGC). As a commercial real estate broker I have transacted a couple of real estate acquisitions with her in the purchase of a property in Chinatown for a retail incubator facility and an affordable rental apartment complex as well as leasing temporary spaces to immigrant retailers/entrepreneurs. Also, I am a member with her in the Kalihi/Palama/Chinatown Community Implementing Group, which is part of Empower Oahu. The group's goal is to pool the member's resources to obtain funding for qualifying non-profit organizations to enable the socioeconomic revitalization of the communities in these areas.

While interacting with Dr. Myaing in the above activities, I have had the privilege of observing her in her dealings with people from all walks of life, but mainly immigrants. There are Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Micronesian, Hawaiian, Burmese, and many other ethnicities. She's had to coordinate, through her staff, social, economic, legal and educational services for these people who know little, if any, English. While there are language and cultural barriers to overcome she's been very successful in serving these individuals and families through PGC's staff translators/social workers. During visits to their offices, I often hear them bustling to find temporary shelters for refugees and domestic abuse victims in life threatening situations, assisting immigrants and low income residents in societal assimilation, job training/placement, and legal issues. I might note that PGC's Kapalama offices are austere but the good that they do is positively disproportionate to their low budget.

I highly recommend your confirmation of her as an Advisory Council member of the Office of Language Access.

Sincerely,

  
Ronald Y.K. Lee