



**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: LITO M. ASUNCION
Language Access Advisory Council ("OLA")**

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations ("Department") strongly supports the confirmation of Mr. LITO M. ASUNCION.

Lito M. Asuncion is experienced in working with the elderly and with the immigrant community. Mr. Asuncion has a Master's degree in Sociology and is currently a Program Planner for the Hawaii County Office of Aging.

In addition to his experience with providing elderly services, he previously worked in immigration as an Immigration Information Specialist for the Hawaii County Office of Management, and as a Program Evaluator/Trainer for the Hawaii/American Samoa Bilingual Education Support Center. Mr. Asuncion is also a leader in the Filipino community.

Mr. Asuncion is qualified to represent the perspective of a bilingual case management worker, or an individual who is or has been employed by a state-funded immigrant service agency or program.

In summary, Mr. LITO M. ASUNCION is well-qualified and deserving of confirmation for the OLA.

Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Office of Language Access

Testimony in Support of
Language Access Advisory Council Nominee:
LITO M. ASUNCION

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

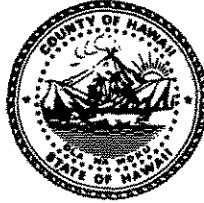
Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, and I am the Executive Director with the Office of Language Access (OLA). The Office of Language Access strongly supports the appointment of LITO M. ASUNCION to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Lito M. Asuncion is experienced in working with the elderly and with the immigrant community. Mr. Asuncion has a Master's degree in Sociology and is currently a Program Planner for the Hawaii County Office of Aging. In addition to his experience with providing elderly services, he previously worked in immigration as an Immigration Information Specialist for the Hawaii County Office of Management, and as a Program Evaluator/Trainer for the Hawaii/American Samoa Bilingual Education Support Center. Mr. Asuncion is also a leader in the Filipino community.

Given his background, OLA believes that Mr. Asuncion can represent the perspective of a bilingual case management worker, or an individual who is or has been employed by a state-funded immigrant service agency or program.

For these reasons, the Office of Language Access strongly supports the appointment of LITO M. ASUNCION to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Harry Kim
Mayor



6m90
Dixie Kaetsu
Managing Director

Barbara Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

Rose Y. Bautista
Immigration Information Specialist

COUNTY OF HAWAII

Immigration Information Office

101 Pauahi Street, Suite 9 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

(808) 961-8220 • Fax (808) 961-8630

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KONA: 75-5706 Kuakini Highway, Suite 103 • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

Sent via email to: testimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

To: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair

Re: Notice of Hearing
Date: Friday, October 26, 2007
Time: 9:00am
Place: Conference Room 229 - State Capitol
Number of copies for submittal: 10

Testimony of Rose Y. Bautista
in Support of *Lito Asuncion*,
Gubernatorial nominee to the Language Access Advisory Council

To the Honorable Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Honorable Senator Clayton Hee
and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

Good Morning,

My name is Rose Bautista, J.D., Immigration Information Specialist for the County of Hawaii. I am honored to submit this email testimony in support of Mr. Lito Asuncion's confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council.

I have known Mr. Asuncion, both personally and professionally, for over 15 years. Mr. Asuncion is admired throughout the Big Island and the state of Hawaii for his leadership, dedication and commitment to improving the lives of our ethnic communities, especially amongst Filipinos, and the elderly population.

Mr. Asuncion is very active in the Filipino community and has work tirelessly and passionately to perpetuate the Filipino culture in our state. He has served on countless community organizations and has been honored for his leadership. As my predecessor as President to the Filipino Chamber of Commerce – Big Island, Mr. Asuncion has been instrumental in continuing the Chamber's scholarship program which has benefited many deserving college-bound students of Filipino ancestry.

He has also served as President to the Big Island Filipino Community Council (BIFCC) for several years, promoting unity and cohesiveness between the many different Filipino organizations on the Big Island. Under Mr. Asuncion's leadership, the BIFCC has held scholarship pageants for ambitious Filipina young women to assist with their college education.

During the Filipino centennial celebration in 2006, Mr. Asuncion played a major role in ensuring the Big Island honored and recognized our Filipino "Sakadas". These are just a few of the numerous amount of Mr. Asuncion's accomplishments.

Mr. Asuncion's leadership, passion, and vision for our community is invaluable. and will undoubtedly be an asset to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Please confirm Mr. Asuncion's gubernatorial nomination as member of the Language Access Advisory Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Y. Bautista, J.D.
Immigration Information Specialist
County of Hawaii

CHARMAINE TAVARES
Mayor

VANESSA A. MEDEIROS
Director
Housing & Human Concerns

LORI TSUHAKO
Deputy Director
Housing & Human Concerns



JOHN A. H. TOMOSO
County Executive on Aging

PHONE (808) 270-7755

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E-MAIL: aging@mauicounty.gov

COUNTY OF MAUI
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS
MAUI COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING
AN AREA AGENCY ON AGING

200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793

October 24, 2007

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
The Honorable Clayton Hee, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Rm. 220
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha mai kakou,

RE: Nomination of Lito M. Asuncion to the Language Access Advisory Council

I am writing you to support the nomination of my friend and colleague, Lito M. Asuncion. He has an enduring passion for language and culture, as realities that affect every day life, especially here in multi-cultural Hawai'i Nei. I have known him since the mid-70's, having been participatory with him in several Filipino and wider-community projects nurturing of languages and cultures expressed and live among us all.

Like me, he is currently a member of the Aging Network and practices as a Senior Program Planner and ADRC Coordinator with the Hawai'i County Office on Aging in Hilo. I have full faith and confidence in his integrity and abilities. I respectfully ask that you confirm him as a member of the Language Access Advisory Council.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John A. H. Tomoso".

John A. H. Tomoso, MSW, ACSW, LSW
Maui County Executive on Aging
808-270-7350
john.tomoso@mauicounty.gov

cc: Dr. Serafin Colmenares, Office of Language Access
Lito M. Asuncion, Nominee



Making **Choices**
for a Healthier Future

To promote and protect the well-being of the Older Americans in Maui County.



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®
MĀNOA

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee

October 26, 2007

By
Amy Agbayani
Director Student Equity, Excellence & Diversity

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council

Mr. Lito Asuncion

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Hee and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Agbayani and I am testifying in strong support of the nomination for LITO ASUNCION to the Office of Language Access Advisory Council

I am speaking on behalf of my program, the Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity Office at the UH Manoa campus but am not representing the University of Hawaii in this testimony. SEED student service programs support campus diversity and equal access to education for Native Hawaiians, immigrants, underrepresented groups such as Filipinos, Samoans, students with disabilities and other student groups. As the former chair of the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission and vice chair of the National Federation of Filipino Americans, I am very familiar with issues relating to discrimination and equal access to services facing persons who are native speakers of other languages as well as persons with disabilities.

I have known Mr. Lito Asuncion for over 35 years when he took a leadership position in the Ethnic Studies program and the Operation Manong program at Manoa where he advocated for curriculum and services to benefit Hawaii-born and immigrant students. He is also well-respected for his many community service activities with the elderly, the Filipino community and in particular with the Filipino Youth organization, Sariling Gawa. Mr. Asuncion is a native speaker of Ilokano and Filipino and has personal and professional knowledge of the importance of bilingual services. Mr. Asuncion also has educational qualifications, governmental administrative experience and policy development expertise that will be of great use to the Language Access Council.

I am certain that Mr. Asuncion will be a responsible and effective member of the Language Access Advisory Council. I respectfully request your support of his nomination.

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CONGRESS OF VISAYAN ORGANIZATIONS (COVO)
Statewide Umbrella Organization

22 October 2007

The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on
Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Room 229
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members:

The Congress of Visayan Organizations, an umbrella of all Visayan organizations in the State of Hawaii, supports Mr. Lito M. Asuncion's confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council for a term to expire 30 June 2010.

Mr. Asuncion is an active and well-known leader in the Filipino community on the Big Island. He has been president several times of the Big Island Filipino Community Council, a coalition of all Filipino organizations on the Big Island. He was also president of the Filipino Chamber of Commerce – Big Island Chapter. In addition to his interactions with the members of the Filipino community, Mr. Asuncion had served other ethnic groups on the Big Island in his past capacity as the Immigration Information Specialist of the Hawaii County Immigration Office. In that role, he provided advice, referrals and information to people of varied ethnic backgrounds. Subsequently, he took his current position as the Program Planner and Aging and Disability Resource Center Coordinator in the County of Hawaii Office of Aging. In his current job, he assists our many elderly constituents in accessing government programs and services. Due to their limited English proficiency, these people may not otherwise access these programs and services without his assistance.

Mr. Asuncion will be a great asset on the Council because of his extensive experience and expertise in dealing with people with varied languages and cultures. We urged your Committee to confirm Mr. Lito M. Asuncion to the Language Access Advisory Council. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Margarita L. Hopkins, President
746 Hele Mauna Street
Hilo, HI 96720



c/o 728 Nunu St. | Honolulu, HI 96820 · <http://www.philippinesonline.org/thecoalition/>

**IN SUPPORT OF LITO ASUNCION
TO SERVE ON THE
LANGUAGE ACCESS COUNCIL**

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & LABOR
 Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
 Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair
 Oct. 25, 2007 | 9 am | Conference Room 229
 Hawai'i State Capitol

My name is Charlene Cuaresma, president of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, which represents more than 45 Filipino community leaders whose aim is to work for social justice issues to empower our community to make socially responsible contributions to Hawai'i and our global neighbors. Since its inception in 2001, the Filipino community has reached out to the Coalition for assistance to navigate through the legal system. Language access is critical to settle legal issues and disputes. The Filipino Coalition for Solidarity supports initiatives to build the capacity for Hawai'i's government programs to be accessible to all.

Lito Asuncion is a highly regarded community leader, and I strongly support his nomination with full confidence and no reservations. I have known Mr. Asuncion for 35 years, as fellow Operation Manong volunteers. Operation Manong was a tutorial program composed of University of Hawai'i college students, who provided tutorial and outreach services to newly arrived immigrant students in public schools, in order to aid their transition into the school and community. Since then, Mr. Asuncion has contributed to fostering Filipino youth leadership development through the establishment of Sariling Gawa, a private, non-profit program, which hosts a statewide cultural and leadership skills building camp annually. My son is a Sarling Gawa alumnae. His training influenced him to later become the first Filipino to serve as student government president at UC Berkeley.

As a member of the Filipino Centennial Celebration Commission, Mr. Asuncion was also responsible for forging strategic collaborative partnerships, garnering broad based community support to promote diversity and goodwill through contributions made by the Filipino community to benefit all of Hawai'i's people.

Mr. Asuncion knows the issues of language access not only for Filipinos, but also other groups. Filipino immigrants comprised 61% of the State's immigrant group, which is larger than all immigrant groups combined. According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 10 % of Filipinos were reported to be in linguistically isolated households in the Counties of Hawai'i, Honolulu and Kaua'i. Maui County reported 16% of linguistically isolated households. Filipinos reported to be limited English proficient or speak English less than very well were 16% in Hawai'i County, 23% in Honolulu County, 20% in Kaua'i County, and 30% in Maui County.

Mr. Asuncion will serve the Office of Language Access well. His qualifications are best noted by his ability to bring people together for productive planning and implementation teams, his intellectual acumen and critical thinking skills that are based on his vast knowledge in Ethnic Studies and significant lessons learned from Hawai'i's labor history. Mr. Asuncion brings decades of experience in state government and as a successful small business entrepreneur. As an excellent facilitator, listener, and systems analyst, Mr. Asuncion can help advance initiatives to support state government to become the national flagship for providing language access for all to benefit and prosper.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment to support Mr. Asuncion's nomination to the Office of Language Access Council.

Dios ti agngina &
 Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat,

Charlene Cuaresma, President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

October 23, 2007

TO: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Clayton Hee, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

FROM: Jessanie L. Marques, President
Hawaii Island Rural Health Association

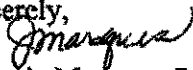
RE: Support appointment of Lito M. Asuncion to the Language Access
Advisory Council.

My name is Jessanie Marques, president of the Hawaii State and Hawaii Island Rural Health Association. It is an honor to support the appointment of Lito M. Asuncion to the Language Access Advisory Council.

Lito has been a member of Hawaii Island Rural Health Association since 2003, and then served in the leadership capacity as a Board of Director in 2004. He is honest, fair and committed to help improve the quality of life for all people. He is known for his ability to effectively communicate with many diverse communities, and advocating for improving access to health, education, public health / safety, social economic opportunities in rural communities and minority populations.

I truly believe Lito Asuncion will be an asset to the State of Hawaii and the Language Access Advisory Council. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to participate in this selection process.

Sincerely,



Jessanie Marques, President
Hawaii State / Hawaii Island Rural Health Assoc.