

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
OCTOBER 29, 2013
8:35 A.M.
ROOM 225**

**TESTIMONY
GM-9**



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

October 29, 2013

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Governor's Message 9

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Disability and Communication
Access Board

Gubernatorial Nominee Bryant K.M. Yabui

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the nomination of Bryant Yabui to the Board, appointment to June 30, 2017.

Mr. Yabui is being nominated in the capacity of a consumer (person with a disability). However, DCAB staff has known of and interacted with Mr. Yabui in his professional capacity as an intake advocate at the Hawaii Disability Rights Center. In that capacity, he provides a partnership to DCAB when we refer individuals who believe that their rights may have been violated.

Mr. Yabui will also bring his experience from his legal training as an attorney with skills in contract management, communications, and analysis.

Mr. Yabui has already attended a meeting of the Board and has indicated strong interest in our Standing Committee on Parking as a user of the disabled persons parking program.

We welcome his participation and input, and recommend your confirmation of his nomination.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

**TESTIMONY
OF
BRYANT K. M. YABUI
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
ON
OCTOBER 29, 2013**

G.M. 9

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, BRYANT K. M. YABUI, for a term to expire on June 30, 2017.

I would like to thank Chair Josh Green, Vice Chair Rosalyn Baker, and members of the Health Committee for taking time out of their busy schedule to hear my testimony today. I would also like to thank Governor Neil Abercrombie for nominating me. It is truly an honor and a privilege to be considered to serve on the Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB).

I have been living with a physical disability my entire life. However, I've never felt limited by my neuromuscular disease until recently when I became dependent on a cane to walk and a wheelchair to travel long distances. Almost instantly, my eyes were opened to a whole new world – one where

steps are now obstacles and doors become barriers. It was then I realized that I needed to do more with my life.

In 2008, I went to a job interview at Hawaii Disability Rights Center. At the time, I knew very little about disability rights. At the interview were former Executive Director, Gary Smith, and current Executive Director, Lou Erteschik. After a series of questions, I was fortunate to be offered a job. Mr. Smith then asked me whether I wanted to work as an Attorney or as an Intake Advocate. I asked Mr. Smith, “What position will I have the greatest impact on helping people?” Without hesitation, he said, “as an Intake Advocate.” Today, I am still working as an Intake Advocate. I enjoy helping others and providing guidance to those who need help.

Therefore, I want to continue my service to the disabled community by serving as a member of the DCAB Board. I feel that working as an intake advocate has given me insight to the disabled community and its problems from a different perspective, which allows me to see problems from the “inside-out” rather than from the outside looking in. Again, I would be honored to serve on the DCAB Board and hopefully be a great asset to its members.

In closing, I would like to thank again Governor Abercrombie, Chair Green, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Health Committee for your time and consideration on my nomination. Mahalo.