

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2

Honolulu, Hawaii

OCT 22 2014

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 2

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature  
First Special Session of 2014  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Labor, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 2, submitting for study and consideration the appointment of:

CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT, STATE OF HAWAII

G.M. No. 2 CHRISTINE KURIYAMA,  
for a term to expire in ten years,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the resume and statements submitted by the appointee and finds Judge Christine Kuriyama to possess the requisite qualifications to be appointed to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the appointment of Judge Christine Kuriyama to the position of Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit from forty-three individuals. Comments were submitted by the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

The Hawaii State Bar Association Board of Directors found the appointee to be qualified for the position of Circuit Court Judge, First Circuit, based on established criteria for determining the qualifications of judicial and executive appointments generally using the American Bar Association Guidelines for Reviewing Qualifications of Candidates for State Judicial Office. Specifically, the Board uses the following criteria in its



deliberations: integrity and diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and ability to perform the responsibilities and duties required of the position for which the applicant has been nominated. The Board's rating system includes the categories of "qualified" and "not qualified".

Judge Kuriyama graduated with distinction and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She later received her Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of California Hastings College of the Law. Since May 2004, she has served as the presiding District Family Court Judge of the First Circuit where she currently serves as Lead Judge in the Domestic Division handling contested and uncontested matters involving divorce. Since her appointment to the bench, she has been assigned to the Juvenile Division where she handled cases involving juvenile law violators and status offenders as well as Child Welfare Services abuse and neglect cases, and to the Special Division where she handled domestic abuse, paternity, adoption, guardianship, and civil commitment cases.

Judge Kuriyama serves as the presiding judge of the Hawaii Zero to Three Court, which is a Family Court Specialty Court that focuses on addressing the needs of infants and toddlers who are involved in the child welfare system and achieving permanency for these young children in an expeditious manner. She is also responsible for the Oahu Child Welfare Mediation Program and co-chairs the Chapter 587A Task Force, which is responsible for reviewing the State's Child Protective Act to bring state law into compliance with federal regulations. Furthermore, she co-chairs a Juvenile Division committee that is assigned to revise the court calendar and hearing procedures in juvenile and abuse and neglect cases to expedite and streamline the Juvenile Court hearing process.

Prior to her appointment to the District Family Court bench, Judge Kuriyama was a sole practitioner concentrating in the areas of private arbitration and civil litigation. During this time, she served as a Per Diem Judge for the District Family Court of the First Circuit. She was previously a Partner in the law firms of Greeley Walker & Kowen and Fukunaga Matayoshi Hershey & Ching where she specialized in areas of product liability defense,



commercial litigation, and appellate work. She also served as a Deputy Attorney General at the Department of the Attorney General where she handled leased fee condemnation cases and was an administrator of time share plans at the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

Judge Kuriyama is licensed to practice law in Hawaii and is an inactive member of the State Bar of California. She is an active participant in the legal community by serving as President of the Hawaii State Trial Judges Association and member of the Permanent Committee on Family Court Rules and Per Diem Judge Committee. In recognition of her work and accomplishments on the Family Court bench, she received the Hawaii Women Lawyers' Outstanding Judicial Achievement Award in 2013.

Testimony in support of Judge Kuriyama's appointment indicate that with her combined nineteen years of experience as a Per Diem District Family Court Judge and full-time District Family Court Judge, she has developed all of the necessary judicial skills that will make her an experienced adjudicator on the Circuit Court bench. Your Committee notes the amount of testimony submitted by employees of the Judiciary who commend her professionalism, high level of preparation, and excellent demeanor and judicial temperament. She is also commended for her dedicated work and commitment to the Zero to Three Court where she is able to clearly communicate the legal process and consequences to parties who are involved in the child welfare system.

Accordingly, based on testimony submitted on her behalf, your Committee finds that Judge Christine Kuriyama has the experience, temperament, judiciousness, and other competencies to be a Circuit Court Judge. She has a good sense of where the equities, rights, and responsibilities lie in a case, which is essential for a Circuit Court Judge.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary and Labor that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the appointee, has found the appointee to be qualified for the position to which appointed and recommends that the Senate consent to the appointment.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Judiciary and  
Labor,



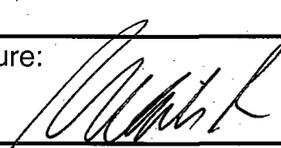
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CLAYTON HEE, Chair



The Senate  
 Twenty-Seventh Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Judiciary and Labor**  
**JDL**  
**Consent**

Gov. Msg./Jud. Comm. No.:* <b>GM 2</b>	Committee Referral: <b>JDL</b>	Date: <b>10-22-2014</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent 2347 <span style="margin-left: 200px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Not Consent 2349</span>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
HEE, Clayton (C)	✓			
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L. (VC)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike	✓			
GALUTERIA, Brickwood	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les	✓			
SOLOMON, Malama	✓			
SLOM, Sam	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	7			
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <span style="margin-left: 150px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted</span>				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b> <span style="margin-left: 50px;">Original</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Yellow</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Pink</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Goldenrod</span> <span style="margin-left: 50px;">File with Committee Report</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Clerk's Office</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Drafting Agency</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Committee File Copy</span>				

\* Only one Message/Communication per Record of Votes