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Honolulu, Hawaii

SEP 1 6 2019

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi President of the Senate Thirtieth State Legislature First Special Session of 2019 State of Hawaii

Sir:

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

## JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT

G.M. No. 2 KEVIN A. K. SOUZA, for a term to expire in 10 years,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by Kevin A. K. Souza for service as a Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the appointment of Kevin A. K. Souza from thirty-two individuals. Your Committee received comments on the appointment of Kevin A. K. Souza from the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

The Hawaii State Bar Association Board of Directors (HSBA Board) uses a rating system that considers several criteria to assist the HSBA Board in making a recommendation to your Committee on whether the appointee is "qualified" or "not qualified". Specifically, the criteria the HSBA Board employs is the same criteria found in the American Bar Association's Guidelines for Reviewing Qualifications of Candidates for State Judicial Office. Those guidelines include the following criteria, which are not

exclusive: integrity, diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and ability to fulfill the responsibilities and duties required of the position for which the applicant has been appointed. Upon review of the established criteria, the HSBA Board found the appointee to be qualified for the position of Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

Judge Kevin A. K. Souza received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Brigham Young University and later obtained his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. He currently serves as a District Family Court Judge of the First Circuit. He has decided cases involving a diverse range of family law issues, including divorce, custody, child support, marital property division, paternity, TRO/order of protection, legal guardianship, adoption, involuntary hospitalization, juvenile law, child welfare services, and adult criminal trials.

Prior to his appointment to the District Family Court of the First Circuit, Judge Souza served as a Per Diem District Family Court Judge and was Grand Jury Counsel of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. He also served as Chief of Staff to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Deputy Chief of Staff and General Counsel to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. Judge Souza also has private practice experience in criminal law and began his legal career as a Deputy Public Defender in the Office of the Public Defender.

Judge Souza has been active in the legal community throughout his career. His memberships and affiliations include the Hawaii State Bar Association, American Bar Association, National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, and University of Hawaii Law School Alumni Association. He also volunteers his time with various non-profits, including the Honolulu Community Action Program.

Testimony submitted in support of Judge Souza's appointment commends his impeccable character, kindness, competence, diligence, and unwavering dedication to justice. Additionally, he has a reputation for excellent judicial temperament, legal expertise, and dedication to the fair and just application of the

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law. Testifiers stressed Judge Souza's compassion and respect for all those who come before him in his courtroom.

Your Committee finds that, based on the testimony submitted on his behalf, Kevin A. K. Souza has the experience, temperament, judiciousness, and requisite competencies to be a Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary 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,

KARL RHOADS, Chair

## The Senate Thirtieth Legislature State of Hawai'i

## Record of Votes Committee on Judiciary JDC Consent

Gov. Msg./Jud. Com. No.:*	Committee Referral:			Date:			
GM2	JDC			9/16/2019			
The Committee is reconsidering its decision							
The Recommendation is:							
Consent 2347	Not Consent 2349						
Members		Aye	Aye (	(WR)	Nay	Excused	
RHOADS, Karl (C)		/					
WAKAI, Glenn (VC)							
GABBARD, Mike							
KIM, Donna Mercado							
FEVELLA, Kurt		/					
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TOTAL		3	C	)	0	2	
Recommendation:  Adopted  Not Adopted							
Chair's or Designee's Signature:							
<b>Distribution:</b> Original File with Committee Re	Yellow ort Clerk's Office Drafti			gency	Goldenrod cy Committee File Copy		

<sup>\*</sup>Only one Message/Communication per Record of Votes