

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2

Honolulu, Hawaii

NOV 18 2020

RE: JUD. COM. NO. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirtieth State Legislature
Second Special Session of 2020
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Judiciary Communication No. 1, submitting for study and consideration the appointment of:

DISTRICT FAMILY COURT OF THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

J.C. No. 1 STEPHANIE R.S. CHAR,
for a term to expire in 6 years,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by Stephanie R.S. Char for nomination to the District Family Court of the Fifth Circuit, State of Hawaii.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the appointment of Stephanie R.S. Char from the State Public Defender, the Honorable Clifford Nakea-retired, and twenty-one individuals. Your Committee received comments on the appointment of Stephanie R.S. Char from the Hawaii State Bar Association.

The Hawaii State Bar Association Board of Directors found the appointee to be qualified for the position of District Family Court Judge of the Fifth Circuit based on established criteria for determining the qualifications of judicial 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 appointed. The Board's rating system includes the categories of "qualified" and "not qualified".

Ms. Char received her Bachelor of Arts degrees in Philosophy and Communication from the University of Denver, both received with honors. She subsequently received her Master of Arts degree in Philosophy from the same university. She received her Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of San Diego School of Law, where she was a member of the USD National Mock Trial Team and a national finalist in the 2001 Texas Young Lawyers Association National Competition.

Ms. Char has served as a supervising deputy public defender in the Kauai Office of the Public Defender since 2017. Prior to that, she served as a deputy public defender in the Oahu and Kauai Offices of the Public Defender beginning in 2003. In her capacity as a deputy public defender, she primarily represents indigent persons. She has handled cases involving a wide range of criminal charges, including assault, theft, operating a vehicle under the influence of an intoxicant, property, and drug offenses. Throughout her career, she has worked to preserve the constitutional rights of her clients and ensure the integrity of the criminal justice process.

Ms. Char is actively involved in the community. She is a member of the Kauai Criminal Defense Bar and serves on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Board of Continuing Legal Education. She has served as a High School Mock Trial Volunteer Judge on multiple occasions and participated in the Courts in the Community Program. She has also served as a member of the Kauai Economic Opportunity Advisory Board for Mediation Program. Additionally, she has been a coach for the American Youth Soccer Organization.

Testimony submitted in support of Ms. Char's appointment recognizes her integrity and commitment to ensuring justice. Throughout her career, she has earned a reputation for sound judgement, broad legal expertise, strong communication skills, and the ability to effectively work with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and personal histories. Several testifiers remarked on her commitment to vigorously representing those in need and ensuring access to justice and due process for each person she represents.



Your Committee finds that, based on the testimony submitted on her behalf, responses to questions asked by the members of your Committee, and your Committee's review of information about her and her qualifications, Stephanie R.S. Char has the experience, temperament, and other competencies required to be a District Family Court Judge of the Fifth Circuit, and she has the legal expertise, integrity, and demeanor to fully and faithfully discharge the duties associated with that judicial office.

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.:* <i>JC 1</i>	Committee Referral: JDC	Date: <i>11/18/2020</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent 2347 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Consent 2349				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RHOADS, Karl (C)	/			
KEOHOKALOLE, Jarrett (VC)	/			
GABBARD, Mike	/			
KAHELE, Kaiali'i	/			
KIM, Donna Mercado	/			
LEE, Chris	/			
FEVELLA, Kurt	/			
TOTAL	<i>7</i>			
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>Karl Rhoads</i>				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy				

*Only one Message/Communication per Record of Votes