



# The Senate Ka 'Aha Kenekoa

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Aloha Eden Watabayashi:

Congratulations on your nomination to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. To assist the Hawaii State Senate with its confirmation process, we request that you submit the following information to our office no later than February 21st, 2025, to ensure that we proceed in a timely manner:

1. Why do you wish to be a member of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

I have had the privilege to work as a Human Services Professional/Social Worker within the Hawai'i State, Department of Health (DOH), for over twenty years; first with the Developmental Disabilities Division (DDD) for approximately 18 years and now in my current position with the Family Health Services Division (FHSD).

I have dedicated my career to working in social services and welcome the opportunity to expand my role. I hope to continue to work to help individuals with disabilities or special needs to have a voice; and to work toward developing and improving the service and support systems that are available for them and their families.

2. What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

The main role and responsibilities of members of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) include supporting and embodying the vision and mission of the SCDD and working together and with other stakeholders to implement the goals, objectives, and activities of the SCDD's State Plan.

3. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities as a member of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the board.

I had the opportunity to work as a case manager for the Department of Health, Developmental Disabilities Division (DOH-DDD), which was an invaluable experience. It allowed me the opportunity to get to know, work with and learn from individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities (I/DD), their families, service providers, and other members of their circle of support. I strived to work collaboratively together, to help ensure individuals (with I/DD) had the services and supports to reach their vision for a good life.

I strongly believe in the work of the SCDD and having over 15 years of experience as a case manager (for the DOH-DDD) provided me the opportunity to gain knowledge directly from individuals with I/DD and their families; and helped me to develop active listening and effective communication skills, as well as analytical and problem-solving abilities, which would aid me in my role as a member of the board.

4. What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

I hope to continue to learn and work to improve service systems and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. I also hope to continue to strengthen partnerships and help to try to build bridges between the different providers and organizations to improve and expand access to services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

5. Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

I practice mindfulness and always try to maintain integrity, compassion, and accountability in all areas of my life, especially in any work that I do. I hold myself as well as those I work with to these values, which I hope will help contribute to the work of the SCDD.

6. Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a member.

It's difficult to single out a specific experience because my overall experience working for the DOH-DDD was so impactful. I worked a case manager as well as in the DOH-DDD-Community Resources Branch, which allowed me to experience the wide range of the service system from the individual/family perspective and experience to the service provider, program operations, compliance and policy side. Having that range of experience and being able to have an understanding of both ends will be beneficial as a member of the SCDD.

7. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

I do not foresee any possible conflicts of interest. However, if there was ever potential for one to arise, I would work to identify it as soon as possible and speak with all appropriate persons to review and discuss possible solutions and what I may be able to do to either prevent it from occurring or help address and resolve it.

Please be aware that testimony submitted to committees – including your responses to the above questions - is posted on the Legislature's website; you may wish to remind individuals who intend to submit testimony on your behalf of the public nature of the testimony.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Here is the link to your nomination on the State Capitol website:

[Measure Status Details for GM 611](#)

Mahalo,

Amelia Dudley  
Office Manager  
Office of Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventura  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 213  
Honolulu, HI 96813



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
March 24, 2025

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
The Thirty-Third Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator San Buenaventura, and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: GM 611 - State Council on Developmental Disabilities Gubernatorial Nominee  
Eden Watabayashi

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **STRONGLY SUPPORTS GM 611** to confirm the nomination of Eden Watabayashi for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

The Council's Federal mandate (P.L.106-402) is clear in determining the composition of this body to ensure that all the players involved in the development, implementation, and use of DD supports are represented. The law specifically requires each Council shall include representatives of relevant State entities, including State entities that administer funds provided under Federal laws related to individuals with disabilities.

The Governor's nominee meets all the Federal requirements for Council membership. Ms. Watanabe's appointment to the Council would fulfill the Federal requirement for a representative of Title V – Maternal Child Health (MCH) of the Social Security Act. Title V is the MCH (MCH) Branch of the Department of Health Family Health Services Division. Ms. Watanabe work at the Department of Health, Family Health Services Division, Children with Special Health Needs Branch, Children and Youth with Special Health Needs Section will assist the Council in carrying out our 2022-2026 State Plan activities that address our Health and Children and Youth goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support for GM 611 Eden Watabayashi to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator

**GM-611**

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 4:13:58 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/24/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hawaii Self Advocacy Advisory Council	Testifying for Hawaii Self-Advocacy Advisory Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Self-advocacy advisory council stands in support of Eden Watabayashi on GM611.

**LATE**

**GM-611**

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 8:33:49 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/24/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eden Watabayashi	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Dear Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair, and Committee Members,

I have been serving as an interim member of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities for the past year and would like to continue in my role. I currently work as a Human Services Professional in the Department of Health, Family Health Services Division, Children with Special Health Needs Branch, and would continue to represent Title V. Thank you so much for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Eden Watabayashi