

**PUBLIC
INDIVIDUAL
TESTIMONY**

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Esther Sherrard

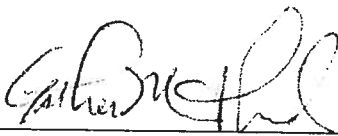
SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Esther Sherrard and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 03, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

 3-21-07
[Sign your name and date]

January 3, 2007

Esther Sherrard
94-1042 Ohilau Pl.
Waipahu, HI 96797

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
Chair of Human Services and Public Health Committee
State Capitol Building Room 226
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Reconfirmation of Director Lillian Koller

Dear Senator Oakland and members of the Committee:

She has **passion**. She has **drive**. She is **committed**. She is **empowering**. She is **innovative**. She is **responsible**. She is **honest**. She has **proven results**. She **gets the job done, and does it right**. She is **Director Lillian B. Koller**.

I have had the honor of serving as an employee of the Department of Human Services under the leadership of Director Koller for the last four years. I consider this an honor because I recognize the value of working under **true leadership**. Substantial improvements have been made in each Branch and Division of the Department due to her leadership. I have not known any previous DHS Director who has had both **the courage and skill to successfully transform a Department** the way Director Koller has. The organizational effectiveness obtained through her leadership has resulted in **significant gains to the quality and quantity of services provided** to the individuals and families served by the Department. It is for these reasons that I am writing in **strong support of the reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services**.

As the Child Welfare Services Branch Quality Assurance Coordinator, I know firsthand what the quality of services has been for the children and families served by our system and I can attest to the fact that **service quality has drastically improved** as the result of Director Koller's leadership. Director Koller is **committed to ensuring positive outcomes for the families** served by DHS. She has supported the creation of a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) System that supports this goal and has **secured stable funding and resources** to ensure that this quality improvement system will continue. The CQI System includes exhaustive case reviews conducted by community partners, supervisory reviews that monitor worker performance, monitoring of statewide

data to support outcomes-based management, and oversight by a CQI Council made up of various community stakeholders.

Director Koller has supported the Child Welfare Services Branch in successfully completing an exhaustive federally mandated Program Improvement Plan (PIP) by appropriately allocating existing resources and creatively identifying new resources to ensure that the initiatives spawned by the PIP will be sustained. **Best practice outcomes will continue to be realized for Hawaii's children as a result of this work.** The following are a few of the initiatives which have produced improved outcomes for our children:

-Child Welfare Training: Child Welfare staff received an unprecedented amount of training in best practice over the last two years and a training plan is in place to ensure ongoing training occurs. These trainings highlight evidence-based practice methodologies that support the Department's family-centered, strengths-based approach to assessment and case management in child welfare cases.

-Differential Response System: Hawaii has implemented an effective Differential Response System which results in improved outcomes for child safety, permanency and well-being. Caseloads for state workers have begun to decrease as community partners share the responsibility in strengthening and preserving families. Lower caseloads have enabled workers to increase the amount of face to face contact they have with the children and families in their caseloads. This face to face contact has been identified as the key indicator for ensuring positive outcomes in child welfare cases. The Differential Response System has also increased access to community services that work to prevent child abuse and neglect.

-Heart Gallery Hawaii: Children waiting for permanent homes now have improved opportunities to meet potential adoptive families through the work of Heart Gallery Hawaii, recently founded through the support of Director Koller. This initiative has tangibly impacted the permanency outcomes for many of Hawaii's children.

In addition to PIP initiatives, Director Koller worked on many other projects that have resulted in improved service delivery. She **has consistently championed a message of transparency** when it comes to sharing information with the public that will support accountability and promote improvements within the system. This is evidenced by the new confidentiality rules she crafted which resulted in the release of the "Peter Boy" Kema documents. She also established a DHS website where DHS information is posted for public viewing, including information on children who are missing from the current foster care system. This transparency has breed scrutiny and negative attacks by some, but Director Koller has maintained her **commitment to building trust with the larger community through accountability.**

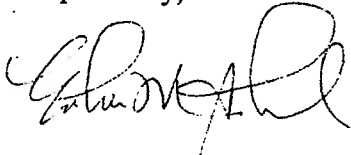
Renowned leadership expert John C. Maxwell has said that leaders earn respect because they make sound decisions, admit when they make mistakes, and put what's best for their followers and the organization ahead of their personal agenda. Lillian Koller has consistently done these things, which is why she has **rightfully earned the respect of many** in our State.

As our political leaders, I hope you too can earn the respect of your constituents, by making the right decision to **reconfirm Lillian Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services.**

As a social worker and advocate for many of Hawaii's families, I know that I speak on behalf of the families served by the Department when I say that reconfirming Director Koller is critical to ensuring that the good work which has begun in the Department will continue. She is committed to providing effective service to the vulnerable families served by the Department of Human Services. **Please allow her to continue this essential service by reconfirming her.**

"Blessed is the leader who seeks the best for those he serves." Author Unknown

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Esther Sherrard', written in a cursive style.

Esther Sherrard

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Sandra Shim


SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Sandra Shim and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 29, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



[Sign your name and date]

January 29, 2007

Honorable Chairperson Chun Oakland ,

I am Sandra Shim, I operate a 16 bed Care Home in the Manoa Area. I have been in operation 14 years.

I strongly support the Reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as Director of DHS.

I have watched her these past few years and find her ideas and work an asset to the Department. It would be a great loss to all of us if she were not able to continue her work with the Children and Elderly in Hawaii.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sandra Shim".

Sandra Shim
Manoa Cottage Care Home

2035 Kamehameha Ave.
Honolulu, Hi. 96822

TESTIMONY

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Cynthia A. Shimabukuro
[Print your name]

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010.

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Cynthia Shimabukuro and I strongly support the
[print your name]

confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated

January 11, 2007
[write date of your previous letter] that I sent to you.

I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official
testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's
reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Cynthia A. Shimabukuro
[Sign your name and date]

January 11, 2007

To: Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland
Chair, Human Service and Public Housing Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 226
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony for GM 275 supporting reconfirmation of DHS Director Lillian Koller

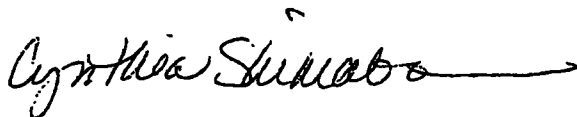
Dear Senator Chun-Oakland,

I would like to take this opportunity to ask for your support in the reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as Director for the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services.

I have been a professional social worker in the field of child welfare for 20 years in Hawaii. I left the field for three years and just reentered working in child welfare several months ago. Ms. Koller's initiatives, especially in the area of child welfare are impressive and all encompassing. She came to the department during a particularly difficult time with a Federal review and controversial issues in the media. Ms. Koller took responsibility for the issues and did not point fingers. I was surprised by her candid interviews in the newspaper and her ability to turn tragedy into opportunity, while still recognizing the gravity of situations. She seemed to quickly move the department into a more problem solving and preventative direction. I feel very fortunate to be involved in this part of social work again at such an exciting time. Ms. Koller has begun many initiatives that are crucial in meeting the ever changing and expanding needs of children and families in Hawaii. Her continued leadership is necessary for our State to see the fruition of her initiatives and the positive results of her vision for children and families many of whom are struggling against seemingly insurmountable odds.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share my thoughts. In closing, I urge your support for the confirmation of Lillian Koller.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Shimabukuro, LSW, ACSW
Honolulu, Hawaii

586-6659

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Karen Shishido

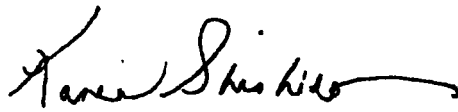
SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Karen Shishido and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 10, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

 3-16-07

KAREN L. SHISHIDO

31 COELHO WAY

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

January 10, 2007

The Honorable Senator Chun-Oakland, Chair
Human Service and Public Housing Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 226
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Chun-Oakland:

Thank you for representing "our district" as an effective public servant and for your commitment to the betterment of our community.

As Chair of the Human Service Committee, I understand that the reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as the Director of the Hawai'i State Department of Human Services will appear before your committee. I humbly ask for your support, as well as that of your Committee, to approve her reconfirmation.

My support of Ms. Koller is based on several community involvements:

1. In December of 2006, I administered the NULIFE Drug Wellness Program and I know that Ms. Koller is a strong advocate of a substance-free environment.
2. I have been a Foster Parent and Ms. Koller has personally assisted me in dealing with the challenges of this foster parent role.
3. Through my job, I am also involved with family education, recruitment and support of foster parents, and Ms. Koller has supported these issues throughout her short tenure.
4. I am deeply involved with the Okinawan community and have done yearly fundraisers in support of educational scholarships for high school students. (in fact, you were a guest of Ann Kobayashi at our last fundraiser—the Hui Makaala Scholarship Fashion Show.)
5. I was a member of the Liliha-Puunui Neighborhood Board a couple years ago.

Ms. Koller has brought on many positive changes to foster parenting and resource family programs within her department, as well as the acquisition of innovative funding to benefit Hawai'i's ohana and keikis. I look forward to this continued commitment of excellence upon your support of Ms. Koller's reconfirmation.

Respectfully,



KAREN L. SHISHIDO

c: Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President
Senators Les Ihara, Norman Sakamoto, Fred Hemmings

TESTIMONY

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

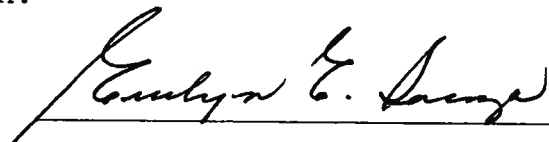
FROM: Evelyn E. Souza

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Evelyn E. Souza and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 20, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

 March 30, 2007

January 20, 2007

Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland
Hawaii State Capitol Room 226
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Re: LILLIAN B. KOLLER– Nomination to the Directorship of the
Department of Human Services

Dear Senator Chun-Oakland and Members of the Human Services & Public Housing Committee:

As a foster parent for the last 17 years, persistent *Hanai* advocate for foster children/families, Kokua Ohana, Hawaii Foster Parent Association member and DHS/CFS/PID PRIDE trainer, I confidently and enthusiastically ask you to support the nomination of Ms. Lillian B. Koller to the Directorship of the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a second term. Under her directorship I, as well as other foster parents, have seen the vast improvement of openness and support of the Agency we directly deal with. Where there was apathy on the part of social workers concerning the members of the proverbial “team” there now is the genuine “professional team” effort and the careful consideration of a foster parent opinions and contributions to the case management of each foster child in our care. Those of us on the 24/7 “crew” are now recognized as being an important part of the team to be considered when planning for a child’s permanency. Too often the observation and opinions of foster parents were not encouraged nor considered when dealing with the fate of the child placed in our homes. Things are now different because of Ms. Koller’s personal input and genuine interest in the treatment and care of foster homes and the people in them. Her, unprecedented, personal contact with foster parents and her expressed gratitude for their services has been appreciated and is a valuable “tool” in the maintenance of the foster families and their recruitment.

Under the previous directorship, many of us (foster parents) were subjected to blatant disrespect and sometimes, the relegation to nothing but the “three hots and a cot” mentality by the case management teams; the very team we are supposed to be a part of. A total disregard for our input and our observations were commonplace EXCEPT when court hearings were in the offing and “reports” needed to be made. It was NOT unheard of for a social worker NEVER to have paid a personal visit to the foster child(ren) in our care. But the onset of questioning (usually by telephone) asking us to provide the latest in the status of the child(ren) was indicative of a FAMILY Court hearing in the immediate future. This scenario was also true with the guardian et lidem (GAL) assigned to the foster child(ren). The last four years have made a marked difference in policy, mandates and the overall treatment of foster parents. The once commonplace history of “languishing in the system” by the children in foster care is now the exception and not the familiar rule. Phone calls are supposed to be monthly now; but they are not always possible (because of caseloads that are very heavy for social workers) but at least there has been marked improvement in communications.

Ms. Koller’s insistence of the inclusion of foster parents and the recent adaptation of looking into “KINSHIP” care as a avenue to permanency for the children, has ruffled the feathers of a few vocal foster parents who believe that the immediate family members (of foster children) are not “qualified” to care for their own. And more, incredibly, think THEY have the right to the foster child because that child has been in their home for an extended period of time. They think the adoption of the child, the lavishing of love and “a better way of life” (away from the presumed dysfunctional extended family) will erase the innate desire to seek out “their biological own” that

comes with the passage of time and the coming of age. This "seeking out" will happen for many...and the revisiting of immeasurable resentment and heartache for everyone will begin once again. Surely, this "Kinship first" policy has sparked a negative fire storm for the Director but it is *pono* to insist upon this means of reunification.

It was obvious, too, that new rules set by Ms. Koller, were not immediately welcomed because of the long-term "policies" and procedures that had taken hold so many years prior to her arrival. Old habits, as a rule, I presume are hard to break. But the misguided reasoning that foster parents were "just mere foster parents and not privy to all the services being rendered to the parents and families of the children" was the ultimate insult and proof that we not part of the proverbial "team". Things have surely changed.

Since taking the directorship of DHS issues and procedures have gotten better and the foster parent is not relegated to the back seat as an observer. Changes have come to pass and not always to the liking of everyone, but Ms. Koller continues relentlessly to strengthen programs that benefit Hawaii's most vulnerable populations. Programs like health care coverage (Quest) for financially challenged families and especially for the children was a very important step in ensuring the health and well-being of our disadvantaged ohanas. The welfare-to-work program was the first step to enable our Hawaii families to enter the workforce rather than depend on the welfare rolls, now provides job training to welfare recipients and work force incentives. Early education opportunities for children insure the children of our state a head start on education, a very important first step in the success or failure of their educational future. I see the fruits of this endeavor each day at the school where I am employed. Substance abuse, the number one cause of most of our dysfunctional families, now can be addressed and programs providing treatment and preventive opportunities are within reach for those who want it.

My list can go on and on with all the upgrades that have happen while Ms. Koller has been in charge of this vast reaching Department. She has done an exemplary job and has so much more to do to complete those things already set in motion. Another four years would be to the benefit to those of us that are in the trenches trying to keep Hawaii a safe and productive state for the youngsters we have a responsibility to. The safety of the children and of those less fortunate than you or me is of paramount importance. I ask you, Madame Chair and the Members of the Committee, to allow Ms. Koller the opportunity to keep the momentum at DHS and insure the continued well-being of those in need in this state.

Sincerely yours,

Evelyn E. Souza, President
Hanai Ika U'hane O Na Keiki (*"To Foster the Spirit of the Children"*)
92-848 Palailai Street Kapolei, Hi 96707
Phone: 808-255-8297/672-4723

Cc: Senate President Colleen Hanabusa Senator Fred Hemming
DHS Director Lillian B. Koller Senator Les Ihara
Senator Norman Sakamoto

TESTIMONY

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

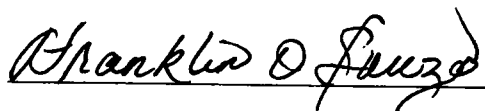
FROM: Franklin Souza

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Franklin Souza and I strongly support the
confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

I am now submitting my letter of support as my official
testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's
reconfirmation.



March 30, 2007

January 20, 2007

Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland
Hawaii State Capitol Room 226
Honolulu, Hi 96813

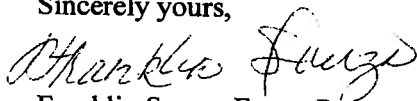
Dear Senator Chun-Oakland and Members of the Human Services Committee:

As a foster parent (along with my wife) for the last 17 years, and advocate for foster children, I ask you to SUPPORT the nomination of Ms. Lillian B. Koller to the Directorship of the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a second term. Under her directorship there has been a refreshing attitude of change towards those of us who are in the trenches with the children of a the drug epidemic gone wild throughout our state. Prior to Ms. Koller's presence at DHS, we (foster parents) the members of the proverbial DHS "team" were not that at all. Our opinions and contributions to the case management of each foster child in our care were secondary and only important before court hearing dates and other procedural dates. Things have changed for the better under the directorship of Ms. Koller. Those of us on the 24/7 "crew" are now recognized as being an important part of the team to be considered when planning for a child's permanency. Her efforts to personally connect with foster parents and demonstrate, once nonexistent, gratitude for our services has made me feel appreciated and useful in the "24/7" team of foster families.

In partnership with Partners In Development (PID) and with the Ms. Koller, the visionary program called Kokua Ohana, a Hawaiian principles-based program, was initiated. Kokua Ohana's belief that the recruitment of Hawaiian foster families to care for the Hawaiian children in foster care in our State is an absolute must and of the most benefit to these displaced keiki. Let us remember that 53% of the children in the foster care system are HAWAIIANS and it was pono to create Kokua Ohana so we would be able to keep our keiki in the state, raised with their familiar culture, in familiar surroundings and eventually returned to the rehabilitated local families that love them, too. In addition, substance abuse, the number one cause of most of our dysfunctional and fragmented families, now can be addressed and Department sponsored programs providing treatment and preventive opportunities are within reach for those who want it.

I am sure my list can go on and on listing all the positive changes that have been set into motion while Ms. Koller has been in charge of the Department of Human Services. But I can only share, first hand, my own experience. Ms. Koller has done a great job with the foster parent contingent, I for one can attest to that. Madame Chair and the Members of the Committee, I present this testimony for your consideration and hope you will allow Ms. Koller the nomination for her position as Director to pass.

Sincerely yours,



Franklin Souza, Foster Parent
92-848 Palailai Street
Kapolei, Hi 96707 phone: 255-8297

Cc: Lillian B. Koller

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Donna K. Spegar

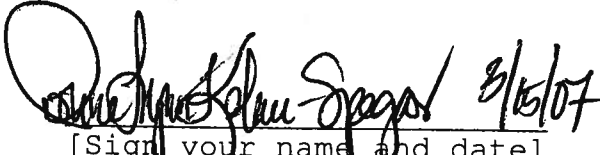
SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Donna K. Spegar and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated December 20, 2006 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.


[Sign your name and date]

DONNA K. SPEGAR

17-370 IPU'AIWAHA ST
KEAAU, HAWAII 96749
(808) 966-9207

December 20, 2006

Dear Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland

This letter is on recommendation for LILLIAN KOLLER who is the Director of the Department of Human Services. I would like the legislation to consider her to remain in her current position. She has done an exceptional job for the children of the State of Hawaii. I have seen this first hand and know she is the right person, removing her will only jeopardize the children whom she has dedicated her life to. We talk about the 'BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILDREN' well she is thinking of our children of this state, so please let her continue to do her best. She has helped in so many ways to better the system and create a positive and safe place for our children. My family and I have gone out to the community on the Big Island and got signatures to support Lillian, because we all have seen what she has done for this state... We, the people and the children humbly ask that you please do not remove her from her position. I have attached a letter with signatures from concerned people who are in support for LILLIAN KOLLER to remain as DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES....PLEASE.....FOR THE CHILDREN.....

*Sincerely,
DONNA K. SPEGAR*

Signature

Donna K. Spigar

DONNA SPEGAR

17-370 IPUAIWAHA ST
KEAAU, HAWAII 96749
(808) 966-9207

December 14, 2006

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED SUPPORT LILLIAN KOLLER, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO REMAIN AS HEAD OF THIS DEPARTMENT. SHE HAS DONE AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB SINCE SHE WAS APPOINTED TO THIS JOB. SHE HAS DONE AND SHOWN SHE IS THE RIGHT PERSON TO PROTECT ALL THE CHILDREN OF THIS STATE, SHE HAS CLEANED UP THE SYSTEM AND MADE IT RIGHT TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN IN THE SYSTEM. REMOVING HER WILL ONLY JEPORDIZE ALL THAT WE BELIEVE IN, WHICH IS THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILDREN OF THE STATE OF HAWAII. WE BELIEVE SHE IS THE BEST ASSET TO THE SYSTEM AND HAS ACCOMPLISHED A LOT SINCE SHE WAS APPOINTED TO THIS POSITION. WE THE UNDERSIGNED SUPPORT HER TO REMAIN AS HEAD OF DHS...

Denise Lehand

Cheryl K. K.

John H. H.

Marie D. D.

John K.

Cheryl K.

B. C.

William Kamimura

Cheryl K.

Linda Higgins Garcia

Barbara Van D.

Mona K. Marti

Donna Spegar

Kelso K.

Robert J.

John M.

John K.

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Mar-14-07 02:14pm From-HI YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

8082669506

T-552 P.03/04 F-082

December 20, 2006

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
State Senate
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 226
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Chun Oakland:

Aloha Senator, I am writing to you for one thing and one thing only and that is to tell you that I truly believe that Lillian Koller is the perfect person for the job as Director of the Department of Human Services. Let me tell you a little about myself and why I think that Lillian should be reconfirmed as the Director.

My name is Lois Kuuleilani Stevenson, I am a 35 year old, single mother of two boys, ages 8 and 17. I have been the sole provider for myself and my two sons, Joseph and Journey, since their father was sent to prison in 2000 for terroristic threatening and drug abuse. When my oldest son was diagnosed with Acute Lymphatic Leukemia in 1996, I had to quit my job to take care of him; he relapsed in the spring of 1998, one month before my second child was born. I also had to move in with my parents and am still living with them to this day.

I started to receive welfare benefits in May of 2003, just after my oldest stopped receiving chemotherapy. I started as a volunteer clerk in October of that same year through the Department of Human Service's First-To-Work Program. One year later I was hired as an exempt employee in that same office full time, 40 hours a week, and was able to get off welfare and feel as if I have accomplished something and to feel proud that I am really providing for my sons on my own, without government assistance. I finally am able to put some money into savings, as little as that is, so I will be able to move out of my parent's home and get a place of my own for myself and my sons. My parent's provide us shelter for free but that is it, I provide for everything else for myself and my sons.

Lillian did that for me, she saw something in me and gave me the chance to prove it to myself. I worked with Lillian for the past three years and let me tell you that lady has a very big heart and she truly cares for the people in this State. She fights hard for what she believes will help our keiki and she won't stop until she gets it. That is exactly what we need the Director of Human Services to be like. We need a Director that cares deeply about what she is doing and one that wants to make Hawaii a better place.

Although I am no longer a clerk in the Director's Office, I am still with the Department of Human Services. I am now a Project Assistant with the Office of Youth Services at the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility. Lillian gave me the opportunity to grow and learn she gave me the courage to go after this new job and to be able to say, "I can do this". I was sad and scared to be leaving the safety of the Director's office but, I knew that I had to try. Until I started volunteering in the Director's office I did not have any office experience at all. My sons have told me that since I started this job my whole persona has changed. They tell me I

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Mar-14-07 02:14pm From-HI YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

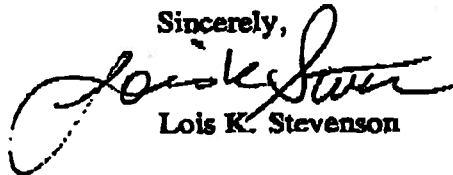
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stand up a little straighter and hold my head a little higher, and I smile so much more. They tell me that if I can do it so can they. I truly believe that Lillian is a part of my ever changing personality. Lillian has given me a very special gift, and I would love for her to have the opportunity to give someone else that same gift. Please read this letter and consider every word carefully before you make a decision on whether Lillian should or shouldn't be reconfirmed.

I want to thank you for this opportunity to praise Lillian B. Koller, for she is a remarkable woman and deserves to continue her great work.

Sincerely,



Lois K. Stevenson

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Virgil Stinnett

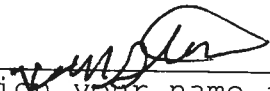
SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Virgil Stinnett and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated December 27, 2006 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.


[Sign your name and date]

TO: The Honorable State Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland
Chair Human Services and Public Housing Committee
State Capital room 226
Honolulu HI 96813

December 27, 2006

I am writing to you in support of having our current Director of Human Services, Lillian B. Koller, be reappointed. She has done a lot to help improve the lives of folks who receive services under her direction. Mine included.

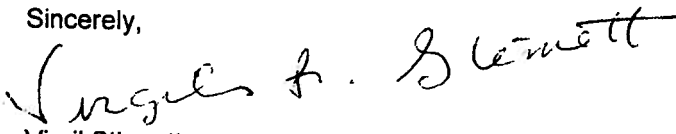
Our State has needed someone like her who lives a "Can Do" attitude, making every one around her believe that they can too. In DHS where people come to be served that are in need, I think that it is important to have the "Can Do" attitude whether it is the individual being served, or the staff serving.

I think it starts at the top, director believing in her staff, staff believing in their consumer, consumer then believing in themselves equaling a successful program. More importantly, an individual's life filled with promise and hope.

I had originally gone through the VR program at Ho`opono before Lillian came on board. I was not encouraged or believed in. I had to find my way on my own. As I watched the changes supported under Lillian's administration, I chose to become a consumer again to advance my employment through VR's post employment services. I will say what a difference. Her leadership, supporting a program that believes in me, encourages me to reach for the sky.

I like what I see. If you look at Ho`opono today, you will see that many more blind people are getting out, getting jobs, furthering their education and improving their lives. I have learned that it is respectable to be blind and that blindness need not be a barrier to my success through the services I am receiving in VR under Lillian's guidance.

Sincerely,



Virgil Stinnett
2943 Kalakaua Ave. #304
Honolulu, HI 96815
(808) 722-4243
one.fisherman@hawaiiantel.net

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Mack A Storrs
Consultant to the Department of Human Services

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department
of Human Services for a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Mack Storrs and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) for a second term.

While I am not a resident of Hawaii, I have had the opportunity over the past six months to see the operation of DHS and the effectiveness of Director Koller first hand as a consultant to the Department. I believe that Director Koller has developed and implemented a host of improvements to programs and policies that improve the lives of Hawaii's neediest families. Her initiatives have dramatically increased employment and work supports to the recipients of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program—efforts that put these parents and their children on the path to self-sufficiency. With the help of your Committee, child care is available for all working TANF families and after-school programs have been dramatically increased. These are critical steps to ensure that children are nurtured and cared for in an environment that promotes education and breaking the cycle of poverty. Ms. Koller has also taken critical steps to engage and work with communities and community partners in setting goals and funding priorities for the Department. If given the opportunity, I am convinced that much more will be accomplished in a second term under Director Koller's stewardship and the Legislature's guidance.

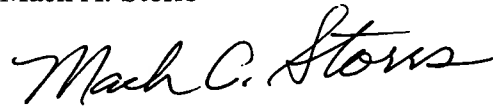
My perspective is shared by many Federal officials in the Administration for Children and Families. Until I retired in January of last year, I served as the Director of Policy in the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services. (My primary consulting is still with this federal agency.) In that position, I was responsible for the development of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) regulations and policies that govern the welfare program for many of the nation's most vulnerable population. During my 40 year career, I had the opportunity to visit and review the operations of every State in the nation. In that context, Lillian Koller stands out as an innovator, developing creative solutions to

the flexibility offered by welfare reform. Director Koller has also taken the “best practices” and principles of other states, adapted them to the unique needs of Hawaii’s communities and families and then implemented them efficiently and effectively.

As a result of significant improvements in safety and protection of children in the protective services and child welfare system, Director Koller will receive the Commissioner’s Award for 2007 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, ACF, HHS.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Mack A. Storrs



Mack A. Storrs
115 Emmen Road
New Bern, NC 28562
Phone: (252) 633-0677
Cell: (252) 626-7800
Fax: (252) 633-0677
E-mail: mstorrs100@suddenlink.net

April 3, 2007

Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Human Services

Re: GM 275 – Consideration and confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, LILLIAN B. KOLLER, for a term to expire 12-6-2010.

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee:

I am the Early Childhood Director for Hanalani Schools in Mililani, a private independent school for preschool through grade 12. We have 112 preschoolers enrolled in our Early Childhood program.

I support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term. As the director of an early childhood program, I have been grateful for the positive steps Lillian Koller has taken to tackle some of the obstacles to providing quality care and education to preschool children.

I have most appreciated the innovative institution of a special licensing waiver. This waiver was in response to the severe lack of qualified early childhood teachers in our state and has allowed programs to hire individuals working toward meeting licensing requirements. Often these applicants are highly qualified, but lacking in a few areas required by licensing. It was a great relief for our school as I was able to hire an excellent teacher who has almost completed the requirements to qualify as a teacher under regular DHS licensing regulations. At the time, I had no qualified teacher applicants and a class full of registered students eager to begin the school year. I have heard similar stories from other program directors.

I strongly urge the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller for another term. I believe she will continue to provide strong, responsive leadership that is needed to provide the diversity of quality early childhood programs for Hawaii's children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Wendy Stone
Early Childhood Director
Hanalani Schools
94-294 Anania Drive
Mililani, HI 96789
808-625-0737 x. 150

TESTIMONY

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Kathy Swink
[Print your name]

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

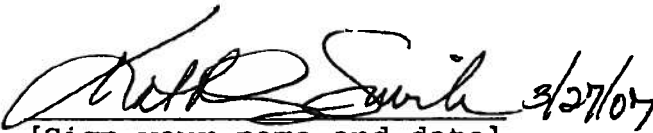
Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Kathy Swink and I strongly support the
[print your name]

confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated
January 16, 2007
[write date of your previous letter] that I sent to you.
I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official
testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's
reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.


[Sign your name and date]

January 16, 2007

Senator Suzann Chun Oakland
Chair of Human Services and Public Health Committee
State Capitol Building Room 226
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Recommendation of Director Lillian Koller for Department of Human Services

Dear Senator Oakland and members of the Committee:

I am a staff member of the Child Welfare Services Branch (CWS). I have been working for the department for over 20 years, as a CPS social worker, a supervisor for 12 years and now in CWS Program Development. In my time with the department, I have never seen more changes come to life that has enhanced good social work practice by national standards, and improved, increased and made assessable resources for our families than under the direction of Director Koller. She is a visionary leader with strong convictions and just makes positive changes happen.

Since the Child and Family Services Review by the federal government in 2006, Director Koller set priority areas for CWS for best practice. These were timely investigations, monthly contacts with children, parents and foster parents, family involvement in the case planning and ongoing assessments. Since then, the CWS social workers have been working diligently to meet the monthly visits and assess the needs of the family on an ongoing process. Monthly visits are crucial in keeping families safe, engaging parents into services and reunifying families faster. The Differential Response System has decreased the number of intakes coming into the CWS system so that the more serious reports of abuse or neglect are accepted for investigation and these reports can be investigated timely. The families being referred to voluntary case management or family strengthening services are being serviced more quickly by the provider and receive consistent on-going services. There are many more programs, policies and practice changes that have come about under Director Koller and her administration. She really has the families and children's best interest at heart and spares nothing if it means providing quality and equality of life among them.

I urge you to please support Director Koller by reconfirming her. She has the good of the people in her heart, especially the most vulnerable. She has the courage to do what's best for Hawaii's children and families.

Sincerely,



Kathy Swink Child Welfare
Assistant Program Administrator (586-5699)

c. Senator Sam Slom

TESTIMONY

March 24, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Sarah B. Talite, CSI
[Print your name]

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Sarah B. Talite and I strongly support the
[print your name]
confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

Lillian Koller is a woman of vision and passion, whose mission is to improve the situations of the poor. I am truly impressed with the major initiatives that have occurred through her leadership. She has dramatically improved the child protection system, strengthened vulnerable families, increased work opportunities for the indigent, and generally improved the effectiveness of her department.

Social justice is important to me. Lillian Koller has instituted long over-due reforms. I urge you to reconfirm Lillian Koller for a second term so that she can solidify the good work that has begun.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sarah B. Talite, CSI 3/27/07
[Sign your name and date]

1046 6th Ave. Hon. HI 96816
[Address]

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Warren M. Toyama

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Warren M. Toyama and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 09, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Warren Toyama 3/15/07

[Sign your name and date]

Warren Toyama
1255 Nuuanu Ave., #E1102
Honolulu, Hi. 96817

Honorable Suzanne Chun-Oakland
Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
Room 226
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

January 9, 2007

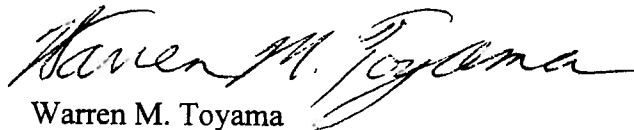
Dear Madam Chair:

As you know, the Hawai'i Association of the Blind is the major organization of and for people who are blind in the State. We have a great and continuing interest in government programs that benefit our population. It is for that reason that we enthusiastically support the nomination of Lillian Koller to be Director of the Department of Human Services.

Ms. Koller has brought experience, knowledge, skill, and judgment to the Director's office over the past several years, and we believe she more than deserves to continue in that position. As an example of her acumen, Director Koller was instrumental in bringing a highly experienced administrator of programs for the blind to serve in Hawai'i government. Mr. Joseph Cordova served in an important capacity in the New Mexico Commission for the Blind. He then became the director of the Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired in the U. S. Education Department's Rehabilitation Services Administration. Following that assignment, Mr. Cordova was RSA Regional Commissioner for the mid-west region, which oversaw vocational rehabilitation, independent living programs, rehabilitation training, and Randolph-Sheppard vending facility programs. We are fortunate to have Mr. Cordova's wealth of experience in Hawai'i, and Director Koller brought him here.

We endorse Lillian Koller without reservation. Thank you for your consideration and for all your kokua throughout the years.

Respectfully,



Warren M. Toyama
President

TESTIMONY

OF

ANNE TRYGSTAD, R.N.

**DIRECTOR, HEALTH SERVICES
ROSELANI PLACE ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY**

AND

**CO-CHAIR, POLICY AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE
MAUI LONG TERM CARE PARTNERSHIP**

BEFORE

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING
HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE**

**Subject: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human
Services for a term to expire 12-06-2010**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 3RD, 2007, 1:15PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 016, STATE CAPITOL**

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
AND PUBLIC HOUSING

BY ANNE TRYGSTAD, R.N.

Tuesday, April 3rd, 2007, 1:15PM
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Subject: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a term to expire 12-06-2010

Aloha Chairman Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and members of the Committee:

My name is Anne Trygstad. I am a registered nurse. I am the Director of Health Services for Roselani Place, an assisted living facility on the island of Maui. I am also the Co-Chair of the Policy and Advocacy Committee of the Maui Long Term Care Partnership, a Robert Wood Johnson grantee. The Partnership is a coalition that is working to improve the long-term care infrastructure on Maui. The Maui Long Term Care Partnership supports reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as Director of Hawaii's Department of Human Services.

We salute Director Koller for her efforts in improving Hawaii's health care system. Under her leadership, more than \$100 million federal dollars has been allocated for impoverished families' health care. These funds will cover the majority of health care costs for low-income families for the next six years, and reach an additional 29,000 needy adults and children in our State.

Another health care challenge facing the State is the "tsunami of aging" as more "Baby Boomers" reach retirement. Hawaii has the fastest growing, longest living, elder population, and the fewest number of long term care beds, in the United States. The shortage of long-term care beds is impacting Hawaii's entire

health care delivery system. Every acute hospital in the State has "waitlisted" elderly.

To address this problem, Director Koller, in collaboration with the Maui Long Term Care Partnership, initiated the "Going-Home-Program" in 2003. Since its inception, the "Going-Home Program" has allowed more than 700 "waitlisted" Medicaid patients to transfer from acute hospitals to foster family homes, with funding "following the client". This voluntary program has increased care choices for elderly, reduced "waitlists" in Hawaii's hospitals, and saved more than \$70,000 in Medicaid funds, per patient per year.

Director Koller is also working with the Partnership, Hawaii Association of County Building Officials (HACBO), State Fire Council, and the SCR 144 Taskforce on revision of Hawaii's building and fire codes for long-term care in alternative settings. Updating Hawaii's building & fire codes will support "aging in place" and prolong independence for Hawaii's Kupuna in alternative, home-like settings, such as assisted living facilities, foster families and care homes. This reflects consumer preference and decreases long-term care costs.

Forty-six other states have already adopted building & fire codes, which support "aging in place" for elderly. Senator Baker has introduced legislation this session, which addresses this important issue. Director Koller has designed a Request for Proposal to study all fifty States to determine optimal building & fire codes for "aging in place" and "retrofit" needs for some of Hawaii's existing facilities. These strategies will help increase long-term care infrastructure and reduce health care costs. Innovative leadership and collaboration such as this,

between the legislature and the Directors of Health and Human Services, will help meet the numerous health care challenges faced by our State.

In conclusion, as the Co-chair of the Maui Long Term Care Partnership's Policy and Advocacy Committee, I again wish to applaud Director Koller on her efforts and numerous accomplishments. She has helped to improve health care for two of our most vulnerable populations, the impoverished and elderly. It is my honor, as a representative of the Maui Long Term Care Partnership, to express our strong support for her confirmation, as Director of Hawaii's Department of Human Services. Thank-you for your time and consideration. I am available for questions.

Mahalo,

Anne Trygstad, RN, Director of Health Services
Roselani Place Assisted Living Facility
88 South Papa Avenue
Kahului, Maui, Hawaii 96732

Amy C. L. C. Tsark
520 Lunalilo Home Road, #7117
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

March 29, 2007

Honorable Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
Chair of Human Services and Public Housing Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 226
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM 275 -- Testimony supporting confirmation for Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services

Hearing Date: Tuesday, April 3, 2007
Time: 1:15 PM
Place: Capitol, Conference Room 016

Dear Senator Chun Oakland and Committee members,

I am writing in strong support to reconfirm Lillian B. Koller as the Director of the
Department of Human Services (DHS).

This is my 27th year with DHS. My current position with DHS is the Child Welfare
Services Branch (CWSB) Administrator – a position I held since 1999. I began my career in
DHS as a foster care social worker on January 2, 1980 and later worked as an adoption social
worker, a Child Protective Services (CPS) supervisor, staff development administrator and
support services administrator. I have worked under five DHS Directors. In my current position,
I have the privilege and the honor to work very closely with Lillian Koller for the past four years
in reforming CWS and integrating services within DHS to improve outcomes for Hawaii's
families and children.

The results and improved outcomes under Lillian Koller's inspired leadership have been
unprecedented and astounding, nothing short of a miracle. With CWS, DHS has successfully
completed our Program Improvement Plan (PIP), while instituting numerous best practices that
have significantly enhanced outcomes for families and children, improved the skills and
qualifications of staff and resource families, drastically reduced the number of children removed
from their homes, built community capacity, fostered collaboration among child advocates and
child/family serving agencies rather than competition throughout the network, and created
numerous partnerships with the University of Hawaii's School of Medicine, School of Social
Work, Law School and School of Nursing.

In that short time, through the creative use of Federal TANF, IV-E and Medicaid dollars,
previously untapped by the State, Director Koller has more than doubled the dollars allocated to
community-based services to strengthen and support vulnerable families and their children,
while instituting a differential response system with community partners in December 2005 that
encourages families to voluntarily engage in services to resolve their issues without formal
involvement of CWS or the Court. This has resulted in a 30% reduction in the number of
children removed from their homes. Hawaii families and children now have increased access to

community-based services -- ranging from referral linkage, parenting, home visiting and counseling to legal assistance -- to strengthen, stabilize and promote well-being of children and families and to protect children from harm and help families and children in crisis.

Amy C. L. C. Tsark

March 29, 2007

Page 2

As a result of our PIP and reform changes, we met our goal to reduce the risk of harm to children. CWS cases have decreased by nearly 13%. At the end of State Fiscal Year 2006, there were 5,686 active CWS cases, compared to 6,538 active CWS cases at the end of SFY 2005. The decrease was due to the successful implementation of the Department's differential response system, an increased availability of family support, family strengthening and case management services for families, and an increased participation in voluntary services by families with children at risk of abuse or neglect.

In the child welfare field, we have known for quite some time that children can be maintained safely in their family homes with community services and support in lieu of unnecessary removal, but DHS has not been able to garner the resources and **courage** that were needed to build a community network and services to keeping children safely in the community until Lillian Koller became the DHS director in 2002. With the help of the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services and the Rural Development Project and National Supercomputing Center at Maui Community College, CWS revised its Risk Assessment protocols to state-of-the-art methodology and made them available over the Internet as a web-based application so that both CWS staff and community-based differential response agencies use the same assessment tools.

Given the disproportional representation of Native Hawaiian families in the agency's caseload, Director Koller has led an aggressive outreach effort to the Native Hawaiian community to identify, nurture and support Native Hawaiian resource families (commonly known as foster families). She has particularly emphasized early identification of suitable kin who may serve as resource or adoptive families and the development of neighborhood-based support networks to sustain these families. Through her leadership, DHS has engaged in an active dialogue with the Na Kupuna Tribunal to invite the kupunas to join the Department in improving CWS, helping CWS to locate family members via genealogy and identifying strategies to keeping children safely within their ohana.

In addition, Hui Hoomalu (a group *to protect and shelter*), a statewide integrated and collaborative with Kokua Ohana, and native Hawaiian and faith-based communities for the identification, recruitment, screening, training, ongoing support and retention of resource families for our foster children was implemented in 2006. For years, the Department had a two-track foster home licensing approach -- one for general-licensed resource parents and another one for kin parents. Hui Hoomalu is a first for the Department in providing a seamless way for resource families to access services and training. This service is provided by a partnership formed by Partners In Development Foundation, Catholic Charities of Hawaii, Foster Families Program of Hawaii and Kokua Ohana, with a strong focus to recruit Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian resource families as over 50% of our foster children are Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian.

Since assuming the helm of DHS, Director Koller has aggressively championed the adoption of evidence-based best practices, a comprehensive quality assurance program for CWS -- a **first** in the history of DHS (where we engage community stakeholders along with CWS staff to conduct review of CWS cases and interviews with clients), ongoing training for

staff and community-based agencies, upgraded data collection systems to monitor the implementation of these initiatives, reinforced management accountability for results and reformed the agency's culture to focus on improved outcomes for children and families. Her unwavering dedication to collaboration and community capacity-building make her a role model for effectively enact system reform.

Amy C. L. C. Tsark
March 29, 2007
Page 3

In September 2006, the Department was awarded adoption incentive payments bonus of \$498,000 by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services in Federal Fiscal year 2005 for completing 431 adoptions, which was a 21.8% increase to the previous highest baseline of 354 adoptions in FFY 2004. The adoption incentive payments bonus was authorized by Congress in the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 as an incentive to states to promote adoption. This is the fourth bonus the Department received in the last six years, but it is the **first** time that the Department was able to reinvest the bonus to increase adoption services instead of putting the monies to cover deficits in our foster board payments.

DHS plans to use the bonus to promote adoptions for older foster children and youth through the partnerships established/strengthened under Director Koller's leadership with the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition (a youth led foster youth advocacy organization), Heart Gallery Hawaii (created by a former foster youth to promote public awareness of adoption for older foster children and youth), the Family Court, HOPE INC (a faith-based child placing organization to recruit adoptive families for difficult to place children), EPIC Ohana Conferencing, and the foster youth themselves. Director Koller believes that it is simply not enough just to give foster youth a package of benefits -- no matter how great these benefits are -- as our youth "age out" from foster care, she is committed to increasing the number of older foster youth exiting care with enduring family relationships because our foster children need families who will love and care about them for life.

In January 2007, Director Koller authorized a change in CWSB's procedure to define all foster children with confirmed abuse and/or neglect as "high risk," thus making the children eligible for adoption assistance payments when they are adopted. The Director has submitted a proposed administrative bill this year to allow all foster children (even after adoption) to apply for higher education allowance and to expand the time frame of the benefit period so that more youth could qualify to provide more opportunities for our young people exiting from foster care to achieve self-sufficiency. This proposed bill also addresses a financial "disincentive" to adoption. For years, loving foster parents chose legal guardianship over adoption of their foster children due to the higher education allowance benefits.

Through aggressive Federal revenue maximization efforts, Title IV-E Federal reimbursement in the Department's foster care payments program has almost doubled since Director Koller took office in 2002. In State fiscal year 2002, DHS earned 9.5 millions in IV-E reimbursement; and in State fiscal year 2006, the earning was \$18.2 millions! The Federal reimbursement enables the Department to maintain and expand essential services. Under Director Koller's leadership and tenacity, CWS has **doubled** the funding of Purchase of Services' contracts from \$16M in State Fiscal Year 2002 to \$ 36M today. This translates to more services for our children and their families.

Changes are difficult for everyone, especially for some CWS staff who were used to the status quo and had difficulties with moving forward at an accelerated pace -- a heightened sense of urgency to respond to our clients -- despite enhanced training and technical assistance provided by the Department. There has been criticism about Director Koller's "management style and her treatment of staff" from staff who oppose Director Koller's vision for CWSB (i.e., multidisciplinary approach, outcome driven creativity, transparency, non-adversarial stance, tenacity and responsibility vs. control) and her philosophy ("level the playing field") in serving our clients. However, it should be noted that Director Koller's commitment to improving work conditions for staff has been equally steadfast. In 2005, 53 new positions were created in CWSB to ease workload for staff and to meet the PIP requirements. She was successful in

Amy C. L. C. Tsark
March 29, 2007
Page 4

reclassifying CWS social workers and supervisors into a new class that resulted in a higher Salary Range (SR) level and an increase in pay rate. Reclassification had been discussed for decades (back when I was a CWS supervisor in 1985) as a strategy to attract and retain CWS workers, but it didn't get done until 2005 when Lillian Koller took it on! In 2006, Director Koller was successful in her second attempt to obtain higher SR level and pay increase for CWS section administrators who were left out in the new classification of CWS workers and supervisors in 2005.

For years, CWS staff have complained about our old antiquated information system, CPSS (Child Protective Services System), which was developed in 1980. CPSS was an old mainframe system which is not able to capture or produce data that are necessary for case management, costs projections and program analysis in the 21st century! When CWS implemented the differential response system in 2005, Director Koller had the foresight not to perpetuate an obsolete information system. Instead we collaborated with Maui Community College (MCC) to design and implement a web-based child abuse and neglect intake system as a beginning to replace CPSS. Director Koller has submitted a biennium budget request to replace the rest of CPSS in partnership with MCC.

With the zest for continuous improvement, Director Koller was able to garner resources and expertise for CWSB through the strategic use of consultants. It would not have been possible to achieve the PIP and our accomplishments above listed in a short time frame without outside help, as the knowledge base just was not available in-house. What is so great about working for Director Koller is her follow through. She is not one to "pay lip service." She will look for help or resource that we need help to implement a new policy or program.

I want to end my letter with one of the profound and poignant changes in CWS that Director Koller has made, in my view, since she took office in 2002 and in my 26 years with DHS. In December 2004, DHS adopted new confidentiality rule in CWS that enables the Department to disclose information without third parties' consent or court order for legitimate State purpose. DHS was finally able to release information sought by Hawaii Legislators and the media for years and years since Peter Boy Kema's disappearance in 1997. In July 2005, DHS established a missing children website to enlist public's assistance to locate foster children who are missing. More importantly, the new rule allows the Department to provide information to family members of children who are under DHS custody. Imagine if you were a grandparent calling about your grandchild, under our old Rule, DHS would not be able to give you information or to explore placement option with you without the consent by your grandchild's

parents or by a court order. With the new Rule, DHS is able to proactively search for and reach out to family members to keep children connected and safe within their families. We no longer have to cut off children from their loving grandparents and/or ohana. We know that children can be protected and maintained safely with their families, especially when we are able to engage the children's ohana and community in an open, honest and embracing way.

For decades, professionals and child advocates have been expounding that child abuse is a community problem, not just DHS, and that it takes a village to raise a child, but how could we accomplish that if DHS remains a close system? How could we protect children if we are not able to share information that are necessary to ensure their safety and well being with people who love and care about them? Director Koller has done what no other director was able to do by having the wisdom to understand that confidentiality is intended to shield children and families from unwarranted public intrusion but at the same time that exceptions should be

Amy C. L. C. Tsark

March 29, 2007

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made to seek aid outside of CWS to help children and families.

In recognizing Director Koller with the "Torch of Light" award for 2006, the Big Island Press Club acknowledged that her actions inspired "trust" and "enhanced the public's understanding of the challenges government agencies face in dealing with sensitive family issues and foster a climate in which steps can be taken to strengthen the government's hand in dealing with those who would abuse the most helpless among us." I strongly believe the transparency and openness that Director Koller brings forth in CWS help to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children.

Reforming CWS was and continues to be a very daunting challenge, and Director Koller has done it with steadfast determination and tenacity! What I have described above is only a fraction of Director Koller's accomplishments to improve the lives of Hawaii's children and families on behalf of DHS and our State. Let Director Koller's abilities and proven results merit her reconfirmation as the Director of DHS. The transformation and the many positive changes that have taken place speak to the "heart" of Lillian Koller's leadership to ensure the best outcomes for our children and families.

After 26 years, I am energized and inspired by Lillian Koller and fill with hope for the future on behalf of Hawaii's children and families. What is so great about working for Director Koller is her follow through. She is not one to "pay lip service." She will look for help or resource that we need help to implement a new policy or program. Director Koller should be reconfirmed for a second term. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of Lillian Koller's reconfirmation.

Aloha,

Amy C. L. C. Tsark

TESTIMONY

March 24, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Marian Tung
[Print your name]

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is MARIAN TUNG and I strongly support the
[print your name]
confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

Lillian Koller is a woman of vision and passion, whose mission is to improve the situations of the poor. I am truly impressed with the major initiatives that have occurred through her leadership. She has dramatically improved the child protection system, strengthened vulnerable families, increased work opportunities for the indigent, and generally improved the effectiveness of her department.

Social justice is important to me. Lillian Koller has instituted long over-due reforms. I urge you to reconfirm Lillian Koller for a second term so that she can solidify the good work that has begun.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sister Marian Tung 3/24/07
[Sign your name and date]

5311 Apo Drive
[Address]

Hnl. 96821-1829

March 23, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Pete Velasco

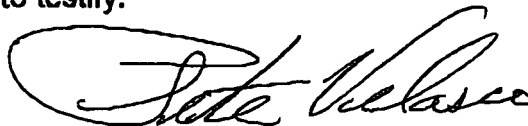
SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for a
Term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Pete Velasco and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 12, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



PETE VELASCO
Recruitor, Tech Together Program
Partners in Development Foundation

Attachment

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate House and Human Services Committee
State Capitol, Room 226
Honolulu, HI 96813

JAN 12 2007

Dear Senator Chun Oakland:

I am writing this letter in support of Ms. Lillian Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services. I feel that she has done much to increase the number of educational programs available to Hawaiian students.

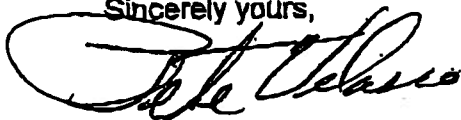
As the recruiter for the "Tech Together Program," a program that introduces basic electronic knowledge to sixth grade students, I have been witness to many Hawaiian students becoming excited about the field of electronics. I feel that this program allows these students the opportunity to pursue an interest that they may have not even imagined for themselves. This interest is the spark needed to help and encourage them towards a better educational life direction.

This program is a stepping stone for them to further pursue electronics, not only at the middle and high school level through the "Invention Factory," but beyond. These programs provide a continuum of services to these students because if they decide to pursue electronics as an educational career, they will be provided assistance to achieve their college goals, as these programs are a part of a collaboration effort with the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Engineering.

I applaud the efforts of Ms. Koller and her subordinates in wanting to make a difference with our present system by increasing the number of programs available to our students.

Mahalo for giving me this opportunity to share my words of support for Ms. Koller.

Sincerely yours,



Pete Velasco, Recruiter
Tech Together Program
Partners in Development Foundation

TESTIMONY

March 15, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: John Walters, MSW

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director
of the Department of Human Services for a term to
expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

I am testifying to strongly encourage your reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am the Program Development Administrator for the Child Welfare Services (CWS) Branch. Today I am not testifying in my official capacity or on work time. I have been working in Child Welfare for almost 20 years. I have also worked as a Social Service Assistant, providing visitation for children in out-of-home care and their families, a case management social worker, an Assistant Program Development Administrator and the Federal Child and Family Service Review, Program Improvement Plan Coordinator.

Under Director Koller's administration, I have seen more positive changes in Child Welfare than in the previous 19 years. We have been supported by the Director to develop and implement solutions to recurring issues that have been noted time and time again in audits and reviews of the Child Welfare System since the 1970's, including ever increasing caseloads, high turnover of staff, increasing numbers of children in foster care, a chronic lack of resources and a lack of standards and quality assurance to ensure best practice. Despite knowing what the issues and possible solutions were we were not able to make significant headway in resolving those problems until we were provided with sufficient resources and support. Now, for the first

time in at least 13 years, the CWS caseload has decreased; the number of children in out-of-home care has decreased; the number of families voluntarily participating in services is increasing; there is ongoing, and effective collaboration and integration between Departments, Divisions, and with staff, communities, providers, and stakeholders. Now, for the first time since I started working in CWS, I can believe that "its getting better, not worse" and I can believe it will get even better, if we can keep our momentum.

There has been a cost to our progress. It has not been easy. There has been and will continue to be resistance to making changes that are necessary. The progress we have made, and must continue to make, is not supported by some of our Departmental staff or community stakeholders. I am sure you will receive testimony and anonymous letters from people that claim to be afraid to openly oppose the Director's confirmation and take issue with the Director's "style" or "manner", and use that as a rationale not to approve her reconfirmation.

What you won't hear about are the people who would like to support the Director but who fear retribution from those who are not supporting the Director's reconfirmation.

There are some who will disagree with new Departmental initiatives, such as conducting quality assurance reviews and taking action to ensure that families are visited, that families participate in their casework planning, and that families and kin should be able to care for their children. You will hear that some are not happy with "Policy Announcements" that clarify and require best practices that are already contained in statute, rule and Departmental procedures. You may hear that some are not happy about being ordered by the Director to provide funding for initiatives that increase the types of and access to services and treatment for children and families. You will hear that staff have been deployed into other positions.

What you won't hear about are the efforts by the Director to first enlist and to get cooperation from staff, the training and resources that have been provided to make quality service by our staff

possible, you won't hear that we would have passed our Child and Family Services Review if we had adhered our own procedures. What you won't hear about are the people who refuse to follow policies and procedures. What you won't be told is the efforts by the Director to gain cooperation from key staff who have refused time and time again to support each other's programs to the detriment of the children and families who are depending on us for help. What you won't hear is that Policy Announcements and deployment of staff are the last resort, not the first solution to long-standing and chronic coordination and practice issues and denial that we are all in the same Department and must support each other's efforts to provide quality services to our community.

These are tough times. The issues faced by the Department need resolution. What we already have is a Director who has amply demonstrated that she is willing and able to take on the job and do it to the best of her ability, a Director who is willing to make tough decisions and stand by them, a Director who puts the Department's customers first, and a Director who will lead and coordinate our efforts, and a Director who has helped us succeed when we have fallen short so many times before.

What the Department doesn't need is a Director who is unwilling to make unpopular decisions, a Director who is unable to take direct and necessary action when it will upset people, or a Director who is not able to ensure that we all work together toward a common goal to maintain the significant and successful progress we have all worked so hard to accomplish.

Please reconfirm Lillian Koller as the Department of Human Services director.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

John Walters

TESTIMONY

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Cynthia White

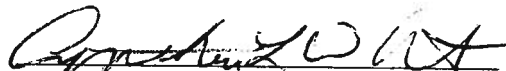
SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

**Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol**

My name is Cynthia White and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

Attached is a copy of my previous letter dated January 04, 2007 that I sent to you. I am now submitting my letter to you again as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.


[Sign your name and date]

GM 275 CONFIRMATION OF LILLIAN KOLLER

Good morning Senate Chair Chun Oakland and members of Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing. My name is Elaine Wilson and I am a licensed social worker and a retired alcohol and drug abuse administrator.

I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS).

I first met Ms. Koller on the telephone when she was involved with establishing the first Drug Court on Maui. I was struck by her eagerness to learn as much as she could and by her commitment to have the Drug Court opened. There was no doubt in my mind after that first phone call that she would succeed.

The Department of Human Services requires a Director who is intelligent, hard working, committed to excellence and willing to make hard decisions, some of which may not always be popular. The children and families served by DHS need a strong advocate who will work untirelessly to obtain the resources needed to serve the families. Ms. Koller has proven herself more than up to the challenge.

Under Ms. Koller's direction, DHS has succeeded in lowering the caseloads in the child welfare and foster care systems, and has expanded the QUEST Medicaid waiver to provide medical coverage for an additional 20,000 adults and 9,000 children. She has streamlined the process for pregnant women and children to access public assistance, medical and employment services and also secured \$24 million in Federal aid to support hospital services for the uninsured and other needy patients.

She will be receiving the federal 2007 Administration on Children and Families Commissioner's Award for Hawaii which recognizes her exceptional contribution in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. The award recognizes that Ms. Koller has reduced by 30% the number of children removed from the home; has increased access to community-based services for families and children; and has improved the skills and qualifications for child welfare staff and foster families.

As a social worker with over 33 years of service in Hawaii, I have been most impressed with the Program Improvements Protocols that will bring Hawaii in compliance with national standards and best practices of care. Providing services is not enough. The services must be effective and of high quality.

As a retired administrator myself, I know that making the kind of changes and progress that Ms. Koller has accomplished for DHS does not always have the support of all. Change is never an easy process. Moving to accountability and implementing quality standards is not for the weak of heart to undertake. In fact, it is often easier for staff to complain, criticize and resist rather than embrace and support change.

Ms. Koller's enthusiastic, direct, task-oriented, confident, no-nonsense style of management has not always been appreciated. She does produce results and makes life better for children and families. Ms. Koller has demonstrated her commitment and dedication to do what is best for Hawaii's most vulnerable populations.

Ms. Koller has my full support and I humbly request that you give her yours also.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland
Chair, Human Services and Public Housing Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 226
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony for GM 275 supporting reconfirmation of DHS Director Lillian Koller

Dear Senator Chun Oakland,

Please accept the following testimony supporting the Senate reconfirmation of State Department of Human Services Director Lillian Koller.

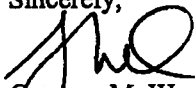
Director Koller's reconfirmation is priority for my family as we are in the process of committing significant time and financial resources toward programs for assist at-risk youth in transition. This opportunity for our family to participate in a timely fashion and make an immediate impact towards the betterment of transitional youth services has been greatly enhanced by Director Koller's unwavering guidance and support. We are grateful for her outstanding leadership.

Notably, Director Koller's efforts during these past four years have dramatically improved Hawai'i's assistance programs by bringing in new sources of Federal and private funding, thus enabling DHS to expand a wide range of existing programs and launch new ones (such as our family's youth services project), all the while being fiscally mindful of the burden on our State budget.

Beyond her efforts to increase programs for at-risk youth, in which our family has observed first hand, she is significantly expanding medical coverage for needy families and continues reforming child welfare services.

We would appreciate your support to ensure Director Koller will continue to expand her leadership role over Hawai'i's human service programs.

Sincerely,



Gregory M. Wood
94-1122 Kukula Street
Waipahu, HI 96797

TESTIMONY

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM: Joseph A. Woodard
1511 Nuuanu #175
Honolulu, HI 96817

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Joseph A. Woodard and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

For over the past two years I have had the privilege of serving with Ms. Koller while on an intergovernmental personnel assignment. During my 35 year human services program and fiscal management career and in years of volunteer advocacy I have been associated with the work of many state human service agency directors in a number of States+ nationally.

Ms. Koller's leadership, foresight, program and fiscal management capabilities are unique in the nation. As you and the Committee are aware, her efforts on behalf of the children and families of Hawaii have been recently recognized at the national level.

Further evidence of the systemic change that Ms. Koller has accomplished is the commendable progress in In Federal Child and Families Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (P.I.P.) process. To have led the State to such progress, given the unique cultural and geographic characteristics of Hawaii, evidenced true and urgent development and implementation of systemic changes that many employees and community stakeholders do not fully appreciate absent multi-state experience. Some individuals have been overtly or covertly critical of such necessary mandated changes despite the many internal and external opportunities for input into, and participation in, the CFSR P.I.P. process.

Ms. Koller fully recognizes that she did not accomplish the progress above alone and has publicly thanked staff and community partners. She did, however, provide personal leadership, commitment and support to her staff in various divisions and branches to muster financial resources (including expanded use of previously un-tapped Federal revenue mechanisms) and availed state staff and the community at large of national expertise and Federally recognized technical assistance.

I again urge that Ms. Koller be reconfirmed in order that the progress to date not be lost and so that even greater strides can be made to improve the lives of Hawaii's keiki and families.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

TESTIMONY

March 24, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: ALBERT YUEN
[Print your name]

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is ALBERT YUEN and I strongly support the
[print your name]
confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

Lillian Koller is a woman of vision and passion, whose mission is to improve the situations of the poor. I am truly impressed with the major initiatives that have occurred through her leadership. She has dramatically improved the child protection system, strengthened vulnerable families, increased work opportunities for the indigent, and generally improved the effectiveness of her department.

Social justice is important to me. Lillian Koller has instituted long over-due reforms. I urge you to reconfirm Lillian Koller for a second term so that she can solidify the good work that has begun.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Albert B. Yuen 3-24-07
[Sign your name and date]

405 HONOLULU, HI
[Address]

405 LANIPUAO ST.
HONOLULU, HI 96825

TESTIMONY

March 24, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Public
Housing

FROM: Audrey Yuen
[Print your name]

SUBJECT: GM 275, Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as
Director of the Department of Human Services for
a term to expire 12-6-2010

Hearing: Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Audrey Yuen and I strongly support the
[print your name]
confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the
Department of Human Services for a second term.

Lillian Koller is a woman of vision and passion, whose mission is to improve the situations of the poor. I am truly impressed with the major initiatives that have occurred through her leadership. She has dramatically improved the child protection system, strengthened vulnerable families, increased work opportunities for the indigent, and generally improved the effectiveness of her department.

Social justice is important to me. Lillian Koller has instituted long over-due reforms. I urge you to reconfirm Lillian Koller for a second term so that she can solidify the good work that has begun.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Audrey Yuen
[Sign your name and date]

3/24/07
[Address]