Apr 02 07 09:44p

Dennis Arekaki

841-4191

p.1

April 2, 2007

MEMORANDUM: When

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland

Chair, Human Services and Public Housing Committee

FROM:

Dennis Arakaki, Retired Legislator

SUBJECT:

Testimony for GM 275 supporting reconfirmation of DHS Director Lillian

Koller

Madam Chair and members of the committee, aloha and thank you for allowing me to provide my personal testimony before your committee. I find it a great honor and privilege to support the reconfirmation for State Department of Human Services Director, Lillian Koller. I come to you with a background of close to forty years of public service in state and county government and have had the opportunity and privilege to work with five outstanding directors of Human Services and, as it was known back then, department of Social Services and Housing. While they each had their individual leadership styles, each had or has as a core value, a passion and compassion for the less fortunate in our society.

To be frank, when Lillian Koller was appointed director of DHS by Governor Lingle, 1 thought we were in for a legalistic, "by the books" type of leadership and someone who would look for ways to deny benefits to the needy in Hawaii. I was pleasantly surprised by Director Koller. Having served as chair and vice chair of Human Services, Housing, Health and Hawaiian Affairs, I have had more than my share of disappointments in the policies of DHS directors appointed by democratic governors. Legislators like us Madam Chair, proposed policy changes to improve Child Protective Services, welfare benefits and programs for the elderly in Long Term Care. Too often, we were not given the consideration as partners in policy making we should have had. I'm sure you remember, madam chair, the bartles we had with the previous administration over our desire to protect children after listening to the leading professionals and child advocates. For me and I believe for you Madam chair, there was no clearer demonstration of this than the case of "Peter Boy" Kema. It took years of introducing resolutions to obtain more information about the case and more importantly, to change policies that make the sharing of information regarding missing children a priority over confidentiality.

In light of those challenges, Madam chair, I firmly believe that Director Koller has been fair in considering our legislative proposals to improve the quality of life for Hawaii's children, families, the poor and disabled. No doubt her assertive style and the fact she can out talk any mynah bird, rubs people the wrong way. But, if it will benefit the least amongst us, she is willing to listen.

*Apr 02 07 09:44p

841-4191

Dennis Arakaki

p.2

Thanks to her outstanding leadership, assistance for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations has improved dramatically over the past four years. These efforts include: significantly expanding medical coverage for needy adults and especially for children, reforming the troubled child welfare services, increasing programs for at-risk youth, and helping adults – including many single mothers – make the often difficult transition from government assistance to gainful employment.

Madam chair, in recognition of her accomplishment and just as important, for the sake of continuity, Director Koller should maintain her important work at DHS for another term. I would like to continue working with you and Director Koller for the next four years on issues important to Hawaii's children, families, the elderly and disabled. Mahalo!

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM:

Katie Keim

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,

Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 1:15 p.m.

Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Katie Keim 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 02, 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] 3/28/07



State Rehabilitation Council

Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division 601 Kamokila Boulevard, Room 515 Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

Voice: (808) 692-7715 TTY: (808) 692-7715

FAX: (808) 692-7727

DATE:

January 2, 2007

TO:

The Honorable State Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland Chair Human Services and Public Housing Committee

State Capital room 226 Honolulu HI 96813

SUBJECT:

Confirmation of Lillian Koller Director, Department of Human Services

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Lillian Koller's confirmation as the Director of the State Department of Human Services.

The Hawaii State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a federally mandated council that works in partnership with the Division of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind (DVR), a division of the Department of Human Services of Hawai`i (DHS).

As vice Chair of the State Rehabilitation council (SRC) I and the other members work in close coordination with Lillian Koller and her directors and administrators of DVR.

The SRC being comprised of a majority of people with disabilities who have received services from DVR; now employed; leading quality lives and giving back through community involvement. I believe that we can clearly express the empowering affects Lillian Koller and her staff have made within DVR's services since her appointment 4 years ago.

During my term on the SRC, I have had the opportunity to work with more than Ms. Koller as Director. her philosophy, inspiring ideas and actions has enabled this council to be more actively involved. We have grown into a group full of action, experience, individual strengths and wisdom, Plus a willingness to work. It is accurately a reflection of Lillian's leadership as Director of DHS.

I strongly recommend the reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

Sincerely,

Katie Keim

Vice Chair, Hawaii State Rehabilitation Council

808-722-4242

kati.did@hawaiiantel.net

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM:

Filo Tu

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 Filo Tu 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.

MAR 2 8 2007

[Sign your name and date

BLIND VENDORS OHANA, INC.

300 Rodgers Blvd. #56 Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

Phone (808) 861-1300 Fax (808) 861-1308

January 4, 2007

Honorable Suzanne Chun-Oakland Chair Senate Committee on Human Services Hawaii State Capitol, Room 226 415 South Beretania Street Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairman Chun-Oakland:

I am President and Chief Executive Officer of Blind Vendors Ohana, Inc., the group of blind vendors operating stores at Honolulu International Airport. As you know, our company provides funding for many worthy causes, including donations to the Hawaii Foundation for the Blind. We are also very interested in hiring people with disabilities, and have taken a number of steps over recent years to increase employment of disabled people.

The reason for my writing to you is this. I know the name of Lillian Koller is before your Committee as the Governor's nominee to continue her position as Director of the Department of Human Services. With my partners and employees at Blind Vendors Ohana, I want to express full support for Ms. Koller's nomination. We have worked closely with her in our program to hire disabled employees, and we know how committed she is to improving the lives of blind people and others with disabilities. Her hiring of Mr. Joseph Cordova to be Administrator of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for the Blind has resulted in substantial improvements in our programs for the blind, including the Ho'opono business enterprise program, which I have been very involved with.

Please let the Senate Committee on Human Services know that we warmly and fully support Lillian Koller to be Director of the Department. Please let me know if I can provide further help or information.

Sincerely,

President

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM: Brook Sexton

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 Brook Sexton 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 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]

· 2000 soluming

From: Brook Sexton 234 Ohua Ave. #116 Honolulu, HI 96815

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

Re: Lillian Koller confirmation

Ho'opono Services for the blind has been serving the blind of Hawaii for over 40 years. In the past four years I have watched the services provided to Hawaii's blind make unprecedented changes. These kinds of changes take dedication and support from all levels of management—ho'opono's administrative team, Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator of Hawaii, and the Director of Human Services.

Lillian Koller has supported and worked with Ho'opono to provide extraordinary services to working age blind individuals. During Lillian Koller's time as Director an employment based training program was implemented for newly blinded adults, Older Americans who are blind have received in home training that enables them to stay at home longer, and blind individuals who became employed are receiving the highest average earnings of all disability groups in Hawaii.

I know that as we move forward the hopes and dreams of the blind of Hawaii will truly be recognized.

As an active member of the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii, a consumer organization of 50 thousand people across the country, I urge the Senate to confirm Lillian Koller as director of Human Services.

Sincerely,

Brook Sexton

MITTSGADARS

Vice-President, Honolulu Chapter National Federation of the blind of Hawaii

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM: Alainne Hieda

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 Alainne Hieda 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 11, 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 Jour name and date]



Women In Need Family Resource Center 85-979 Farrington Hwy Unit D Waianae, HI 96792 Tel: (808) 696-1996 Fax: (808) 696-1919

December 11, 2006

Dear Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Department of Human Services Director, Lillian Koller.

My name is Alainne Hieda and I am currently an employee of Women In Need (W.I.N). We are a small non-profit organization whose mission is to provide a variety of supportive and educational courses to women, men and children of all ages. The goal is to help Hawaii's families develop the basic tools and skills of personal development and self sufficiency to become independent and productive members of our community.

Without the support of Lillian we would not be in existence. It's always difficult to be a small non-profit organization trying to hang on in a big competitive world, with well known names circulating our islands. And yet, Lillian continues to have faith in our group that we will continue being successful in our mission. She not only helped in giving us support, but actually took the time to actively walk through in person to meet each one of us as well as some of our client that's successfully transitioned back into society and became productive citizens. She gave us a chance to prove that with just a little faith and confidence miracles can happen. Everyday that's what we see, miracles. To have touched another persons life in such a positive way that they will never, ever be the same. Without Lillians continued support what will become of W.I.N? She has compassion, drive and motivation in helping the people of her island. Where others in great position as herself seem to lose there views and empathy, or abuse there power and fail there community.

I am an outcome of how W.I.N has been successful in there mission. I was once lost, and forgotten left behind prison walls, with just a face and number. While being incarcerated I took the opportunity to take the classes provided by W.I.N. Women In Need has helped me gain back my pride, self-esteem, confidence to realize that I can succeed. I was given that chance to prove that I can make a change, to make a difference in my life as well as others. Please give that same chance and support to Lillian, because of her constant support with W.I.N I am able to be the women I am today.

If you would like to contact me, please do not hesitate to call. You can reach me at work Ph: 696-1996 or Cell: 457-5808.

Sincerely,

Alainne Hieda

Administrative Assistant Women In Need (W.I.N)

March 28, 2007

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing

FROM:

Christina Cox

Childcare Business Coalition

SUBJECT:

GM 275, CONFIRMATION OF LILLIAN KOLLER

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 Christina Cox and on behalf of the Childcare Business Coalition, we 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 our previous letter dated January 16, 2007 that we sent to you. We are now submitting our letter to you again as our official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our letter of support.

Christina Cox



CHILDCARE BUSINESS COALITION

Committed to Quality Education

January 16, 2007

Calvary Episcopal Church Preschool Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland Human Services and Public Housing Chair State Capitol Room 226

The Cole Academy

Honolulu, HI 96813

Hanalani Schools

Dear Senator Chun Oakland:

KCAA Preschools of Hawaii

RE: Letter of Support for Director Koller

Kama'aina Kids

Rainbow Schools

Seagull Schools

St. Timothy's Children's Center

Waianae Coast Early Childhood Services

Waikiki Community Center

Liaison: Christina Cox (808) 941-9414 Under Ms. Koller's direction, the Department of Human Services has instituted a number of positive changes in the area of preschool licensing. Director Koller has been responsive to the growing difficulty in finding teacher-qualified staff and has initiated a program to support efforts of individual providers to obtain teacher qualifications with the creation of a special licensing waiver. This creative approach has worked to ensure that these new teachers are enrolled in on-going educational, credit-bearing programs.

In addition, in an effort to enable private, non-profit programs to continue to pursue quality, Ms. Koller instituted an innovative program to support quality incentives for preschools that serve children receiving state tuition subsidies. This program enables our preschools to begin to work to improve the quality of the education we deliver to the young children that we serve. It has also enabled us to serve a number of additional children who otherwise might not have had the opportunity to attend one of our preschools.

We are hopeful that Ms. Koller will be re-appointed to enable her to continue to provide leadership for the Department of Human Services with more new and innovative solutions to address issues of workforce development and program quality in early education for the next four years. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christina Cox

Liaison

cc: Lucille Caba

TO:

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

FROM:

Arlynna Howell Livingston

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 Arlynna Howell Livingston 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]

808 838 1653

EPIC Ohana Conferencin



MICHAEL TONGG President

MERVINA CASH-KAEO Vice President

EARL CHAPMAN
Treasurer

LAURIE ARIAL TOCHIKI Secretary

BETTY CHING

PETER LEWIS

SUSAN CHANDLER

PATRICK K.S.L YIM

ARLYNNA HOWELL LIVINGSTON Executive Director EPIC, Inc.
OHANA CONFERENCING

3049 UALENA STREET, SUITE 412 ● HONOLULU, HAWAI*1 96819–1946 PHONE: (908) 838–7752 ● TOLL FREE: (866) 636–1644 ● FAX: (808) 838–1653

Monday, January 29, 2007

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

Dear Senator Chun-Oakland,

On behalf of EPIC, Inc. `Ohana Conferencing, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how appreciative we are of Director Lillian B. Koller's tireless work in the interest of Hawai`i's at risk children. Director Koller has guided Hawai`i's Child Welfare Program successfully through the Federal Child and Family Services Review. She and her staff have developed and implemented a successful Program Improvement Plan that is a major paradigm shift in Child Welfare.

Director Lillian Koller is a passionate advocate for responsible, transparent, evidence-based practice that supports and respects Hawai'i's families. It is our hope that Lillian Koller will be reappointed as Director of the Department of Human Services.

The Department of Human Services is a complex agency with vast responsibilities. It manages over a billion dollars in state and federal funds, has over 2,000 employees; is responsible for providing welfare and food stamps to needy families; oversees Medicaid and QUEST, vocational rehabilitation services to disabled and blind persons, child care licenses and Child and Adult Protective Services. It serves Hawaii's most vulnerable people. I have been impressed with Ms. Koller's ability to implement many aspects of reform in the area of child welfare services across the state of Hawai'i.

For example, DHS has successfully navigated federal child welfare scrutiny and the Child and Family Audit and cleared up many long-standing deficiencies. Ms. Koller has worked diligently to redress the over-representation of native Hawaiian children in the foster care system by increasing kinship placements and adoptions; increasing the number of special foster care licenses for relatives and recruiting more native Hawaiian foster families.

808 838 1653

EPIC Ohana Conferencin



EPIC, Inc.
OHANA CONFERENCING

3049 UALENA STREET, SUITE 412 ● HONOLULU, HAWAI`1 96819-1946 PHONE: (808) 838-7752 ● TOLL FREE: (866) 636-1644 ● FAX: (808) 838-1653

The Department has increased its use of federal money and spent significantly more money on private sector contracts and has collaborated extensively with social service agencies, faith-based organizations and with the University of Hawaii.

Of particular importance to me, Ms. Koller has become a strong supporter of `Ohana Conferencing and has continued to focus on community partnerships and family involvement in decision-making processes involving children. She has expanded the services to youth over 16 leaving the system and now all such children are eligible for a youth circle to help them access the services and networks they need to thrive.

DHS has spent a significant amount of federal "IV-E" money on training and consultation to the middle management at Child Welfare services. There are now several new training and research projects funded through the U.H. School of Social Work and a new U.H. Law School program to support newly graduated attorneys in Family Court.

I understand that leading a huge bureaucracy is not easy. The agency must deal with difficult problems every day. Having only one deputy director for such a large organization makes communication with the employees, the community and legislators challenging. Ms. Koller is already working over 60 hours a week and on the weekends!

I would like to commend the administration for its continuous and constant support of abused and neglected children and their families; the support for the many private sector agencies that partner with DHS to further their goals and missions; and hope that you will support Ms. Koller for another four years.

Respectfully yours,

Arlynna Howell Livingston

Executive Director.

EPIC, Inc. 'Ohana Conferencing

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM: Ronald K. Yamakawa

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 Ronald K. Yamakawa 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.

for Ronald K. Yamakawa

[Sign your name and date]

THE
STATE
FOUNDATION
ON
CULTURE
AND
THE ARTS



LINDA LINGLE Governor

RUSS K. SAITO Comptroller

GAE BERGQUIST TROMMALD Chairperson

Commissioners:
SANDRA ALBANO
MARY BEGIER
BINA CHUN
MARIA JO FARINA
DAVID E. HELDER
PETER ROSEGG
GEORJA SKINNER
LORI VOGEL THOMAS

RONALD K. YAMAKAWA Executive Director

No. 1 Capitol District Building 250 South Hotel Street, 2nd Floor Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Administration: (808) 586-0300 Art in Public Places: (808) 586-0304 Contracts: (808) 586-0302 FAX: (808) 586-0308 TT: (808) 586-0740

E-mail: sfca@sfca.state.hi.us Web Page: www.hawaii.gov/sfca January 12, 2006

The Honorable Suzanne Chun-Oakland State Senator and Chair, Human Services and Public Housing Committee State Capitol Building, Room 226 Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Chun-Oakland

For the past three years, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) has had the opportunity to partner with the Department of Human Services (DHS) in support of assisting needy families and atrisk youth through statewide arts and cultural programming. During each of these three years, DHS has provided funding in the amount of \$625,000 from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families federal grant to the SFCA Biennium Grants Program.

Last year, we reached more than 250,000 young people with TANF funds through activities in communities that included Ka'u, Honaunau, Makawao, Kalihi-Palama, Kahalu'u, and Hilo. Most of the funds supported arts education activities in a variety of community settings that helped to prevent teen pregnancies and build the infrastructure of two-parent families. This year, TANF funds are making possible programs of 31 nonprofit organizations statewide.

It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with Lillian Koller during this period on behalf of our respective agencies and the constituents we serve. She has been fully supportive of our programs and has shown a keen interest in the role of arts and culture in complimenting human services goals and objectives. We look forward to continuing to work with her in strengthening our communities, encouraging individual creativity and self-esteem, and enriching the quality of life of Hawaii's people through culture and the arts.

Sincerely,

Ronald K. Yamakawa Executive Director

c: Russ K. Saito

Gae Bergquist Trommald

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland Chair, Human Services Committee

From: Patty Johnson, Administrator of the Adult and Community Care Services Branch (ACCSB), Social Services Division, Department of Human Services- testifying as

a private citizen

Date: April 3, 2007

RE: GM275 Confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Lillian B. Koller, for a term to expire 12-6-2010

I strongly encourage the Committee on Human Services and Public Housing to support the reconfirmation of Lillian Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS). For three years I have worked closely with Director Koller. I find her to be a woman of vision and of action. She is tenacious in her efforts to improve both the quality and quantity of services for the poor and the disadvantaged. She is open to ideas from staff to improve services for our clients and improve efficiency in our operations. It is an honor to work with her in these important endeavors.

Lillian has clearly recognized the imminent crisis that we face with our system of care for the elderly for which State government is not yet fully prepared. We must have vibrant and multi-faceted approaches to deal with the coming retirement of the baby boom generation. To achieve these ends, Lillian has insisted that I, as a manager pursue a strategy that is collaborative with other departments of State government and the Legislature and yet challenges us to really prepare for the future. With my 4 years of experience in State Government, first with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division of the Department of Health and now at DHS, I can tell you that this level of collaboration is not the norm in State government. It would be easy enough to give up or say it cannot be achieved, except that this is not an answer that Lillian would readily support. Therefore, I and my staff continue to pursue that true collaboration and partnership which will lead to genuine and effective change.

Lillian insists that we not only partner within the Department and with other Departments, but also with the community. I have spent countless hours working with our community partners preparing for managed care. Currently the ACCSB is engaged in a process to bring the community partners together to carry out the directive of the SCR 67. I am meeting regularly with the Case Management Council, the Adult Foster Home Association, and the health plans interested in providing managed care for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled. This process allows these significant stakeholders the opportunity to be heard and negotiate to come up with solutions that will meet the needs of all parties on important issues that affect our most vulnerable clients. I believe the amount of consultation we have engaged in with the community is unprecedented in the Department of Human Services.

I find that Lillian is open to hearing suggestions that I have regarding future planning. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, which changed the way people thought about civil defense, I met with both Lillian and Henry Oliva, Deputy Director of DHS, about my concerns that we were not adequately prepared to assist our frail elderly and clients with disabilities in a civil defense emergency. They encouraged me to develop a proposal to address the needs of our clients, which I did.

After Hurricane Katrina, the State as a whole gave higher priority to the role of State Government in planning for and providing relief to citizens with disabling conditions. Two trends emerged which I found very troubling. One was the lack of energy in planning and preparing Special Needs Shelters. The other was that the Department of Health and the County governments had stopped keeping lists of people who may need help in a disaster due to liability concerns and the lack of staff to keep lists current. These Departments and Counties were concerned that if people expected government to help and we did not, that we may be sued. They proposed a strategy that placed emphasis on helping the community recognize their individual responsibility to prepare. Although there may be merit to this strategy for a county-wide or state-wide approach, I strongly disagreed that this was appropriate for clients who we knew were vulnerable and were without support to survive a disaster. I prepared what I hope was an objective presentation that laid out both the pros and the cons of us developing a specific program for our Adult and Community Care Services Branch Clients. I strongly recommended that we develop an intervention strategy that did rely on our staff and volunteers to meet the needs of specific clients who would have difficulty coping in a civil defense emergency. Both Lillian and Henry supported this plan as the right thing to do. I repeatedly find that "the right thing to do" is the standard that Lillian uses, not what is politically expedient or most acceptable to the most people.

My staff was very resistant to identifying clients who would be most in need. They did not feel they had the time to devote to this task that might never be needed and they did not want the liability of failing to identify someone who may need help. However, when the dam in Kauai broke and we were able to use our planning to contact our most vulnerable clients and deal with the breakdown in some of our provider systems effectively, many staff more fully embraced our preparations. On the morning of our recent earthquake, Big Island ACCSB staff had already been to the office and contacted all of our most vulnerable clients and made arrangements so their services would continue before I could get through to anyone by phone. Once again, our emergency planning and partnership with our staff and providers lead to effective interventions for our clients in a disaster.

We now have an impressive database and 10 civil defense laptops spread through out the State, so that in a disaster, in each county we have at least 3 people prepared to take the leadership and direct the staff to intervene with our most vulnerable clients. The data that we have gathered on our frail clients is the most extensive in the State and can be used to make projections to help the re-energized interagency efforts of the Department of Health, State Civil Defense, and the Red Cross in setting up its special need shelters, a

key component of helping the most vulnerable. I want to point out that if Lillian Koller had taken the safe, expedient, easy approach, my staff would not have been prepared for the two civil defense disasters that we have faced, and we would not be well on the way to having a more sophisticated intervention strategy capable of providing aide in a more extensive disaster.

I know there are people who disagree with Lillian Koller and do not like her approach to issues. To them I would say, we face very challenging times where the comfortable way we have done things in the past will not work for the future. Across the country, Medicaid spending for long term care is crippling state budgets; child welfare agencies are being told that they are failing the children in their care and that things must be done differently; the United States Congress has declared that the work of welfare agencies must be transformed to be programs to assist people in getting jobs to get our of poverty, not to be maintained on inadequate stipends that keep them poor and without hope; and people with disabilities want to play a major role in defining the programs through which they receive services. Lillian has proposed projects and works tirelessly to address all these areas.

The move of the Aged, Blind, and Disabled into managed care is the most effective strategy to manage Medicaid spending while improving, not cutting back on the quality and quantity of services. Lillian continues to lead the effort to knock down barriers to implement this plan. Lillian knows there must be a rebalancing of care from institutions to home and community-based solutions. She reviews every recommendation I present to her in the light of, "is this going to increase capacity and quality of home and community based services." This summer when I felt that SCR 144 had done all that was expected of them, she challenged me to try to address the concerns of providers more quickly. It is because of Lillian's persistence that we have already chosen two private contractors to push the work of SCR 144 forward more quickly.

The Program Improvement Plan of the Child Welfare Branch has received acclaim from the Federal Government for the measurable positive impact that it has had on the lives of children in the child welfare system. These significant changes met considerable resistance at every step of the way from some staff, but many staff and much of the community have embraced this needed change and seen the favorable results. I was a private sector provider for child welfare services for over five years in Hawai'i and I can tell you, these changes were long overdue.

The Department, under Lillian's leadership, has been recognized several times for its forward thinking work in welfare reform. The time is ripe while our economy is healthy to continue these efforts of helping people learn the skills to get and maintain jobs that will move them out of poverty.

The wait for Joe Cordova to join the Department Staff as the Division Administrator of Vocational Rehabilitation was long, but worthwhile. I have already learned much from him that has assisted me in better understanding the importance of consumer input on all processes that my Branch undertakes. Lillian Koller recruited Joe and both she and

Henry Oliva have supported him in transforming the vision of who Vocational Rehabilitation should be serving and how.

I love my job working for the Department of Human Services. However, as a Catholic Sister of St. Joseph, I do not need the money or the security that comes with a civil service position. I am only interested in working for the Department because of my commitment to its mission. I believe in the leadership that Lillian provides. I value how she challenges me to do more with the resources available, to address the critical issues of our times, and to really make a difference. I believe that we need the continuity of leadership that Lillian will provide for the next four years.

On January 14th when the Honolulu Advertiser reported that Lillian might not be confirmed, I wrote an editorial that stated, "The momentum for positive improvement is dramatic across all divisions of DHS. However, this momentum could easily stop without Lillian's dynamic leadership. It will take a full decade to rekindle this kind of momentum, dedication, and enthusiasm among the middle management and line staff who have taken risks and invested their talent to bring about system transformation. Many will not be willing to take the risk again if they believe that anyone who challenges the status quo and strives for dramatic quality improvement will be put aside." Please do not put Lillian Koller aside. I strongly urge you to reconfirm her and allow her to continue the important work that she has started.

Although I work for the Department of Human Services as the Administrator for the Adult and Community Care Services Branch of the Social Services Division, I composed this testimony on my own time and in my own words and have taken time off to come here and testify.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Submitted by:

Patty Johnson

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
Mach C. 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

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM:

Carol Petith-Zbiciak MS APRN, BC

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 Carol Petith-Zbiciak 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 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]

P.O. Box 150 Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland Hawaii State Captiol, Room 226 415 S. Beretania Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

January 16, 2007 The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland

Dear Senator Oakland,

Please confirm Lillian Koller for reappointment as Director of the Department of Human Services. Her excellent work in support of the wellness of the people of Hawaii justifies her reappointment.

Thank you,

Carol Petith-Zbiciak MS APRN,BC

Maui Community College Nursing Faculty

Carol Petity-Thicras

March 29, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM: Angie Payne, Previous Med-QUEST Acting

Administrator

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 Angie Payne 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 24, 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.

Honorable Suzanne Chun-Oakland Hawaii State Capitol, Room 226 415 South Beretania Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Chun-Oakland:

I am writing this letter regarding the upcoming confirmation of Lillian Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services.

As you know, I was the Acting Med-QUEST Division Administrator until July of 2006 when I relocated with my family to the mainland. Prior to being the Acting Administrator I worked at the Med-QUEST Division as the Health Coverage Management Branch Administrator since February 2000. Much of my time at Med-QUEST was under the direction of Lillian Koller.

When Lillian came to the Department of Human Services she brought a unique energy and extreme will to implement programs that would benefit low-income individuals in Hawaii. She was also determined not to let bureaucracy sway her from her ultimate goals of increased access to services and enriched benefits for Medicaid.

We all know what a complex program Medicaid is, and there are many different ways to design the program while still ensuring access and benefits for the recipients. Hawaii has been blessed with a good economy for the past few years which has allowed for more expansion and flexibility in our programs. Lillian's singular focus and determination can sometimes make it difficult to deal with her. It can also make her appear to be stubborn and closed-minded. But she always listens to everyone's opinions and I have witnessed on several occasions that she will change her position when given new information. Through all of this, Lillian has been successful in bringing in additional federal funding and, with the cooperation of the Legislature, enhancing the benefits for Medicaid recipients.

If I did not firmly believe that Lillian had the best interests of the Medicaid recipients at heart, I could not in good conscience support approval of her confirmation. However, after working with Lillian for several years, I can confidently say that she will continue to work in support of Hawaii's low-income residents. I ask that you consider approving the confirmation of Lillian Koller as Director of Human Services for another term.

I also want to take a moment and let you know how much I appreciated working with you and your dedication to doing what you believe is right for all of Hawaii's citizens. I wish you continued success.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 753-4492 (I still have a Hawaii cell phone number).

Sincerely,

Angie Payne

cc: Lillian Koller

March 27, 2007

MEMORANDUM:

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland

Chair, Human Services and Public Housing Committee

FROM:

Lenore Knobel

Maui Community College Allied Health/Nursing/Maui Oral Health Center

Secretary

SUBJECT:

Testimony for GM 275 supporting reconfirmation of DHS Director Lillian

Koller

I am greatly interested in the Senate reconfirmation process for State Department of Human Services Director Lillian Koller, and am counting on you to support her so she can continue her important work at DHS for another term.

Thanks to her outstanding leadership, assistance for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations has improved dramatically over the past four years. These efforts include: significantly expanding medical coverage for needy adults and children, reforming the troubled child welfare services, increasing programs for at-risk youth, and helping adults — including many single mothers — make the often difficult transition from government assistance to gainful employment.

Director Koller has also done a wonderful job of bringing in new sources of Federal funding, thus enabling DHS to expand a wide range of programs and launch new ones, while easing the burden on our State budget.

Please do all you can to ensure that Director Koller will continue helping Hawai`i's neediest individuals over the next four years. Your support is very much appreciated.

March 30, 2007

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM: Jolaine Lima Hao

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 Jolaine Lima Hao and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term.

I began working with the Department of Human Services in 2004 because I believed then, and believe now, that serving the most vulnerable population in this great state of Hawaii is an awesome privilege. I am proud to be a Civil Servant dedicated to improving the lives of Hawaii's indigent citizens.

I have seen the prevailing outcomes Director Koller has been able to bring forth with her intense enthusiasm and unconditional dedication to the vulnerable people of Hawaii. I write this testimony neither out of obligation nor commitment to Director Koller, because I do not know

her on a personal level, but rather because I believe she has improved the lives of the clients throughout the Department of Human Services.

Director Koller is a visionary who works tirelessly to improve the services we provide to our clients. I humbly ask that you confirm Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Jelaine Suma Otar 3/30/07

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, Ingich. Stemett

Virgil Stinnett

2943 Kalakaua Ave. #304

Honolulu, HI 96815

(808) 722-4243

one.fisherman@hawaiiantel.net

TO:

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services and Public

Housing

FROM:

Richard Carlson

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 Richard Carlson 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 March 25, 2007 that I am now submitting my letter to you as my official testimony in strong support of Lillian B. Koller's reconfirmation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Richard W. Carlsm 3/29/07

COPY

March 25, 2007

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing State Capitol, Room 226 415 S. Beretania Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Chun Oakland:

I have been a civil service employee of the Department of Human Services for over 20 years and I am writing in support of Lillian Koller's reconfirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services.

Lillian Koller has worked hard for changes that will help the Department improve services and benefits to our clients and she has been recognized for improvements in our child welfare services program, increased medical coverage for the needy and aggressively pursuing and obtaining additional Federal funds for the Department's programs.

I would like to see Lillian Koller continue her work at the Department of Human Services for another four years and I ask for your support to help make that happen.

Sincerely,

Ruc

Richard W. Carlson

+9565964

T-805 P.002/003 F-524

TESTIMONY

March 30, 2007

TO:

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

FROM:

Pam Arnsberger

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 _Pam Arnsberger and I strongly support the confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as Director of the Department of Human Services for a second term. Her leadership and creativity in maximizing available resources to improve child welfare outcomes has been impressive. During her tenure, we have developed the training academy at the school of social work to improve training options for social workers already in the field. This ongoing effort is being well received. Additionally she has spearheaded a process by which we are more closely examining our own data for the State of Hawaii. We are now becoming better able to predict those criteria that keep children in the system for a minimal time or at least in a

stable environment. All of the efforts taken together should result in a better, more cohesive approach for families and children in need of assistance in Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

[Sign your name and date]

3/29/07

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.

Tombyn E. James March 30, 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 DHS Director Lillian B. Koller Senator Norman Sakamoto

Senator Fred Hemming Senator Les Ihara

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.

Granklin O Jauzo 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

Mankles Freize

92-848 Palailai Street

Kapolei, Hi 96707 phone: 255-8297

Cc: Lillian B. Koller

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA

Center on Disability Studies
MCH Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Related Disorders Program

DATE: March 29, 2007

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair

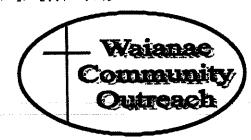
FR: Louise K. Iwaishi, MD, Director of the Hawai MCH LEND Program

RE: GM 275 confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services,

Gubernatorial Nominee, LILLIAN B. KOLLER - Support

I am Dr. Louise Iwaishi, and I support Lillian Koller as the Director for the Department of Human Services for the State of Hawai'i. I am the Director and Principal Investigator of the Maternal Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Related Disorders Program.

Lillian has provided support to our program by providing access to her key administrators to help instruct and mentor the health care professionals who we train in our leadership program. No other MCH LEND program has the degree of access to state personnel as our Hawai'i program. Having an actual "administrator" as part of our faculty adds to the richness of the learning experiences for our trainees. We are humbled by the Department's in-kind contribution and commitment to the development of the "next generation" of health and human service leaders.



P.O. Box 1912, Waianae, Hl 96792 87-217 St. John's Rd., Waianae, Hi 96792

Ph: (808) 696-5667 * Fax: (808) 696-1869 wco-admin@hawali.rr.com



Partnerships in Building Community

Hope for a New Beginning Shelter

Barber's Pt. Bldg 50, Belleau Woods, Kapolei 96707 Ph: (808) 682-HOPE (4673) * Fax: (808) 682-4670

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Hearing Date:

April 3, 2007

Time:

1:15pm

Place:

Conference Room 016

State Capitol

Chair: Suzanne Chun-Oakland Vice Chair: Senator Lee Jr. Ihara

Written Testimony for Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as the Director of DHS

Aloha Committee Members,

My, name is Antoinette Siufanua. I am the Housing Manager for Waianae Community Outreach. I am in full support for the confirmation of Ms. Lillian B. Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am in full support of this confirmation because I strongly believe that Ms. Koller makes a positive impact for our families as well as our community.

Through the years of working with the houseless population we have been faced with many barriers and challenges that have kept our families from sustaining and obtaining adequate housing. Ms. Koller has accomplished a number of things that have proven beneficial to the state, more importantly to the people, you and me.

In closing Ms. Koller continues to care and be compassionate in dealing with the social issues that affect the poor and disadvantage, and most of all, for the children.

Wane, HM

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Antoinette Siuranua,

Waianae Community Outreact

Housing Manager



P.O. Box 1912, Walanae, Hi 96792 87-217 St. John's Rd., Waianae, Hi 96792

Ph: (808) 696-5667 * Fax: (808) 696-1869 wco-admin@hawaii.rr.com



Partnerships in Building Community

Hope for a New Beginning Shelter Barber's Pt. Bldg 50, Belleau Woods, Kapolei 96707 Ph: (808) 682-HOPE (4673) * Fax: (808) 682-4670

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Hearing Date:

April 3, 2007

Time:

1:15pm

Place:

Conference Room 018

State Capitol

Chair: Suzanne Chun-Oakland Vice Chair: Senator Lee Jr. Ihara

Written Testimony for Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as the Director of DHS

Aloha Committee Members,

My, name is <u>Edi Stallworth</u>. I am the Housing Manager for Waianae Community Outreach. I am in full support for the confirmation of Ms. Lillian B. Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am in full support of this confirmation because I strongly believe that Ms. Koller makes a positive impact for our families as well as our community.

Through the years of working with the houseless population we have been faced with many barriers and challenges that have kept our families from sustaining and obtaining adequate housing. Ms. Koller has accomplished a number of things that have proven beneficial to the state, more importantly to the people, you and me.

In closing Ms. Koller continues to care and be compassionate in dealing with the social issues that affect the poor and disadvantage, and most of all, for the children.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Edi Stallworth,

Waianae Community Outreach

Edi Stullwith

Housing Manager



P.O. Box 1912, Waianae, Hi 96792 87-217 St. John's Rd., Waianae, Hi 96792

Ph: (808) 696-5667 * Fax: (808) 696-1869 wco-admin@hawaii.rr.com



Partnerships in Building Community

Hope for a New Beginning Shelter Barber's Pt. Bldg 50, Belleau Woods, Kapolei 96707 Ph: (808) 682-HOPE (4673) * Fax: (808) 682-4670

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Hearing Date:

April 3, 2007

Time:

1:15pm

Place:

Conference Room 016

State Capitol

Chair: Suzanne Chun-Oakland Vice Chair: Senator Lee Jr. Ihara

Written Testimony for Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as the Director of DHS

Aloha Committee Members,

My, name is <u>Tulutulu Toa</u>, I am the Outreach Specialist for Waianae Community Outreach. I am in full support for the confirmation of Ms. Lillian B. Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services.

I am in full support of this confirmation because I strongly believe that Ms. Koller makes a positive impact for our families as well as our community.

Through the years of working with the houseless population we have been faced with many barriers and challenges that have kept our families from sustaining and obtaining adequate housing. Ms. Koller has accomplished a number of things that have proven beneficial to the state, more importantly to the people, you and me.

In closing Ms. Koller continues to care and be compassionate in dealing with the social issues that affect the poor and disadvantage, and most of all, for the children.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Waianae Community Outreach

Outreach Specialist.

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Hearing Date:

April 3, 2007

1:15pm

Place:

Time:

Conference Room 016

State Capitol

Senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Chair Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Verbal Testimony for Confirmation of Lillian B. Koller as the Director of DHS

Aloha Committee Chair Chun-Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara Jr., & members:

I would like to offer verbal testimony in full support for the confirmation of Ms. Koller as the Director of the Department of Human Services. My name is Kanani Kaajawahja Bulawan and I am a resident of this state.

Points to consider when evaluating the competency of Lillian as the current director:

- 1. Openness and Boldness to create changes in a system/department that is systematically and programmatically failing the people it is set up to serve, that's you and me! This openness and boldness allowed concerned individuals and community members to take an active role in discussions and a decision-making process.
- 2. Empathy for issues and conditions that keep the providers challenged to deliver the best possible services. She seeks federal and local dollars to leverage the need for creative programs that addresses social and economical conditions of the poor, such programs include:
- a. Housing Placement: making \$\$ available to assist eligible families and individuals in securing housing on a long-term basis. In addition to assuring social services, education and skills building are offered.
- b. Early Learning: making \$\$ available to provide mobile pre-schools on wheels to homeless children and parents. Building skills that both parents and child will gain from.

- c. Family Preservation: making not only \$\$ available but opening doors of welcome to individuals, families, groups and providers in discussing, developing and implementing agreements that keep children safe and families together. Whether it's biological or familiar connections. Cultural base practices are more used today then ever before, allowing the issue of responsibility rather than entitlement as the focus on building a healthier family. As well as respecting the diversity of cultures now in this state.
- d. Medical Services: making \$\$ available to increase services that would be limited because parents cannot afford the premiums for family coverage while working. Many of our working poor have uninsured children because of the high cost of coverage. These parents can now have coverage for their children in addition to added services such as dental benefits.

I can go on and go. And on the other hand I can understand why there may be lots of opposition and disagreements to her confirmation within her department based primarily on her style of management. It is difficult, uncomfortable and fearful for any type of change. Especially when it's your "boss" that requires you to try other styles rather than settling for the "Same old, Same old", challenging you to step out of the box. Stepping out of the box doesn't necessarily mean you're not doing a good job, it might mean, get more creative and depend on your best experience to create change for the best. Some things need to change. We aren't going to know if it works unless we try. It's obvious that the old ways haven't worked well, look at where we've been and are. This new management attitude challenges us that are dinosaurs to step out of the box and use our best experience to see what works, what doesn't and how we can make it better and ultimately easier. There is always a harder effort to start change, over a period of time this gets better and easier.

In closing, Lillian has accomplished a number of things that have proven beneficial to the state, more importantly to the people, you and me. She continues to care and be compassionate in dealing with the social issues that affect the poor and disadvantaged, and most of all, she requires the best from her employees in what they do as public servants. She isn't looking to be popular; she seeks to do what's right. The popular thing is to stay with the "status quo", the right thing is to roll up your sleeves, prepare to get dirty even to step out of the box and create changes so that the outcomes are "WIN-WIN", for the state, communities and people. Her recent award as the 2007 Administration on Children, Youth and Families Commissioner's Award for Hawaii speaks loudly for her commitment to serve and her dedication to this state.

Mahalo for letting me provide this testimony, I will be available for questions.

Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan P.O. Box 1169, Waianae, Hi 96792 Chairwoman Suzanne Chun Oakland Human Services and Public Housing Committee 415 South Beretania Street State Capitol Room 226 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 2, 2007

Dear Chairwoman Chun Oakland,



I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Lillian Koller, Director of Human Services. Under her leadership, the Department of Human Services (DHS) has secured over \$160,000,000 in federal funds with the help of the Lingle-Aiona Administration to help uninsured adults and children pay for their medical care and also to help both public and private hospitals cover the cost of uninsured patients. Additionally, DHS received an additional \$5,000,000 from the Lingle-Aiona Administration to expand early childhood education, which has added 600 extra preschool slots statewide. Furthermore, DHS has started a pilot project - Discovery Flealth Connection Web, a joint venture between DHS and Lt. Gov. Aiona, which seeks to increase young people's awareness about such topics as: alcohol and drug abuse, violence prevention, and physical health and personal safety.

But what places DHS in the limelight most often is Child Welfare Services, also known as Child Protective Services. Under her direction Child Welfare Services has implemented a Differential Response system that offers families that are considered a low to moderate risk assistance through services providers statewide. These service providers focus on strengthening the family unit and providing the various skills to help parents and children deal with everyday issues. DHS has also increased its efforts in the recruiting and training of foster parents. In November 2004, DHS helped Partner-In-Development Foundation obtain a \$715,000 grant to recruit more Hawaiians to be foster parents for Hawaiian children, who make up more than 50% of our state's foster children.

Although these are just some of the accomplishments that DHS has made during Ms. Koller's 4 years as Director of the Department of Human Services, it is telling of her commitment of the social and economic needs of the people of Hawaii. I, therefore, believe that Lillian Koller should be confirmed for a second term as Director of the Department of Human Services.

IEI9-989-808 69:60 /007/60/b0

Me Ke Aloha Pumehana,

Jonathan Tungpalan Human Services Professional IJ

KURT KAWAFUCHI 830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 221 HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

April 3, 2007

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland Chair, Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing State Capitol, Room 226 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: GM 275

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, LILLIAN B. KOLLER

Dear Chair Chun Oakland and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Public Housing:

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Lillian Koller as the Director of Human Resources.

For four years, I have observed and worked with Director Lillian Koller. While I did not fully appreciate Lillian at the beginning, I have come to know and appreciate that Lillian is a very "Big-Hearted" person who has brought tremendous value and benefits to those that most need help: the needy, the keiki, the elderly, and the other disadvantaged people of Hawaii.

As a mom of a challenged but bright daughter and as a daughter of a Holocaust survivor, Lillian is strong but has a "Big Heart" for and is compassionate to the disadvantaged and less fortunate people of Hawaii.

Because she is very tenacious, articulate, and aggressive, Lillian has been extremely effective at the federal level and has helped attract over a \$100,000,000 in federal funds for the less fortunate people of Hawaii. The beneficiaries of this more than \$100,000,000 in federal funds include the elderly, the children, and the uninsured or underinsured people of Hawaii.

Additionally, I would like to point out that Lillian is an opened-minded person when it comes to taking advice on how to improve. Lillian carefully listens to advice and sincerely would very much like to improve her working relationships with the legislature. Among other things, she is working hard and has made strides at becoming a better listener, and being more humble and gracious.

Based upon my observations and working with Lillian for more than 4 years, Lillian has her "heart" in right place and would very much like to continue to do her best to help the poor and/or disadvantaged, for example, uninsured children and adults. With Senator Chun Oakland GM 275, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation as Director of the Department of Human Services, Gubernatorial Nominee, Lillian B. Koller April 3, 2007 Page 2 of 2

her tenacity and energy, Lillian has helped attract over a \$100,000,000 in federal funds to Hawaii to benefit the following:

- * Securing more than \$100 million in new federal funds to help needy adults obtain Medicaid health insurance through the new QUESTACE (Adult Coverage Expansion) program, effective March 1, 2007.
- * Helping up to 95,000 people of Hawaii, including those in Fee-For-Service and QUEST health insurance, receive appropriate levels of dental care for their teeth.
- * Obtaining nearly \$50 million in federal funds for (a) contributions to the State's Children's Health Insurance Program; (b) aid to help public and private hospitals cover a portion of the costs of treating uninsured and needy patients; and (c) assistance to adults with diabetes to help them maintain better health.

Finally, I have personally worked with Lillian in helping welfare recipients in their transition to the workforce, and in helping low-income families in developing plans for asset-building. Lillian has been a champion for social service organizations including the Aloha United Way and other asset-building organizations in Hawaii

Based upon the above, Lillian Koller has brought tremendous benefits to the segments of Hawaii's population that most need help: the needy, the disadvantaged, the keiki, and the elderly. Lillian is strong but has a "Big-Heart." She is also doing her best to improve her working relationship with the Legislature. Accordingly, I strongly support Lillian Koller's confirmation as Director of Human Services.

KVRT KAWAFUCHI