

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1352

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 26 2011

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 667

Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui
President of the Senate
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2011
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Labor, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 667, submitting for study and consideration the appointment of:

CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND CIRCUIT, STATE OF HAWAII

G.M. No. 667 RHONDA IWALANI LAI LOO,
for a term to expire in ten years,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the personal history, Judicial Selection Commission Application Summary, and statement submitted by the appointee and finds Rhonda Iwalani Lai Loo to possess the requisite qualifications to be appointed to the Circuit Court of the Second Circuit, State of Hawaii.

Testimony in support of the appointment of Rhonda Iwalani Lai Loo was submitted by Circuit Court Judge Boyd P. Mossman (retired); Circuit Court Judge Riki May Amano (retired); Circuit Court Judge Eden Elizabeth Hifo (retired); Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Maui; Police Department, County of Maui; Forensic Coordinator, Maui County; International Longshore & Warehouse Union; Maui Hotel & Lodging Association; Ulupalakua Ranch, Inc.; and numerous individuals. Comments were submitted by the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

The Hawaii State Bar Association Board of Directors (HSBA Board) found the appointee to be qualified for the position of Circuit Court Judge, Second Circuit Court, based on established criteria for determining the qualifications of judicial and

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executive appointments generally utilizing the American Bar Association Guidelines for Reviewing Qualifications of Candidates for State Judicial Office. Those Guidelines include the following criteria, which are not exclusive: integrity and diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and responsibilities and duties required of the position for which the applicant has been appointed. The HSBA Board ratings system includes the categories of "qualified" and "not qualified".

Judge Rhonda Iwalani Lai Loo received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Oregon and her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law. From 1997 to the present, Judge Loo has served as a District Judge with the Second Circuit Court, where she presides over civil and criminal calendars and trials; handles arraignments, pleas, change of pleas, motions, and preliminary hearings; and reviews search warrants, informational charging packets, and temporary restraining orders. She also currently serves as the Deputy Chief Judge for the Second Circuit Court and has presided in Circuit Court on many occasions, including during ten criminal jury trials and one civil non-jury trial. From 1988 to 1997, she was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the County of Maui. From 1987 to 1988, she was a law clerk for the Circuit Court Judge E. John McConnell.

Judge Loo has also been actively involved in the legal community, having served on the Executive Committee and the Charge Code Requirement Committee of the Hawaii State Trial Judges Association, the Special Committee on Judicial Performance, and the Second Circuit Court Per Diem Judge Review Committee, among others. Moreover, during her tenure on the District Court bench, she also led a group that worked on system-wide improvements relating to mentally ill defendants in criminal cases, helping to create a handbook of court forms to be used in the Second Judicial Circuit whenever a case involving a mentally ill defendant comes to the courts. She also established a specific calendar for mentally ill defendants and ensured that the calendar was covered whenever she was not available to cover it herself.

Judge Loo has a reputation within the legal community as a judge who is intelligent, impartial, responsible, caring, and patient. Colleagues and former colleagues praised Judge Loo's preparation for cases, her excellent judicial temperament, integrity, and legal knowledge. Moreover, testimony indicated that Judge Loo has a practical understanding of the law, that she

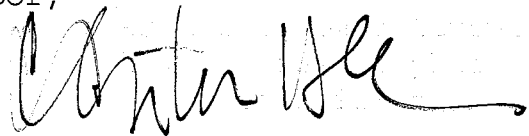


is able to make quick and accurate rulings due to her extensive understanding of statutes and case law, and that she is able to efficiently handle a large case load while still protecting the rights of the parties.

Your Committee finds that, based on the testimony submitted on her behalf, Judge Rhonda Iwalani Lai Loo has the experience, temperament, judiciousness, and other competencies to be a Circuit Court judge, and has a good sense of where the equities, rights, and responsibilities lie in a case, which is essential for a Circuit Court judge.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary and Labor that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the appointee, has found the appointee to be qualified for the position to which appointed and recommends that the Senate consent to the appointment.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary and
Labor,



CLAYTON HEE, Chair



The Senate
Twenty-Sixth Legislature
State of Hawaii

Record of Votes
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
JDL
Consent

Gov. Msg./Jud. Comm. No.:* <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">GM 667</div>	Committee Referral: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">JDL</div>	Date: <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">4/13/11</div>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent 2347 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Consent 2349 </div> </div>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
HEE, Clayton (C)	✓			
SHIMABUKURO, Maile (VC)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike				✓
IHARA, Jr., Les				✓
SLOM, Sam	✓			
TOTAL	3			2
Recommendation: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted </div>				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="font-family: cursive; font-size: 1.2em;">Maile L.</div>				
Distribution: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: 0.8em;"> <div>Original File with Committee Report</div> <div>Yellow Clerk's Office</div> <div>Pink Drafting Agency</div> <div>Goldenrod Committee File Copy</div> </div>				

*Only one Judiciary Communication per Record of Votes