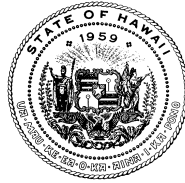


GM 646



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL
235 S BERETANIA ST., SUITE 702
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 646
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Environmental Council,
Gubernatorial Nominee, ROBERT PARSONS, for a term to expire 6-20-2018.**

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: April 16, 2015, 2:45 p.m.

Room Number: 225

1 **Office Testimony:** The Office of Environmental Quality Control strongly supports the
2 nomination of Robert Parsons to the Environmental Council.

3 Mr. Parsons' willingness to volunteer for the Environmental Council, is a testament to his
4 civic-minded commitment to support sustainable initiatives, natural resources conservation, and
5 restoration efforts.

6 Robert has over 40 years of experience in public service and has dedicated his life to
7 optimizing economical advocacy and networking to achieve collective public good.

8 The Environmental Council will benefit from Mr. Parsons' experience and input and I
9 urge your committee to approve this nomination to the Environmental Council.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting GM 646 Gubernatorial Nominee Rob Parsons
for Confirmation to the Environmental Council
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Thursday, April 16, 2015, 2:45PM, Room 225**

For more than 35 years, The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i has been working closely with government agencies, local businesses, private landowners, non-profit partners, and interested communities across the state to preserve the lands and waters upon which all life in these islands depends. The Conservancy is a private non-profit conservation organization that has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 35,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i, and support 19 coastal communities seeking to co-manage marine resources in partnership with the State of Hawai'i.

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i supports the appointment of Robert Parsons for confirmation to the Environmental Council.

We have appreciated working with Rob over the last five years to support and implement important watershed conservation and invasive species management policy, programs and funding in Maui county, across the state, and in the Pacific. Rob is committed, knowledgeable and experienced in the policy, process and resources associated with caring for Hawai'i's globally unique environment. We believe he will be a thoughtful and hard-working member of the Environmental Council.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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Mission : To advocate, educate, and promote the benefits of zero waste to our community and leaders to achieve an Island-wide zero waste management system which conserves and diverts waste from the landfill.

Testimony in SUPPORT of GM646
The Confirmation of Robert Parsons for the Environmental Council
Before the Senate Energy and Environment Committee
April 16, 2015 at 2:45 PM, Conference Room 225

The Honorable Senator Gabbard, Senator Green and Committee Members,

Zero Waste Kauai Strongly SUPPORTS the confirmation of Mr. Robert Parsons for a seat on the Environmental Council. Mr. Parsons will advocate for the Environment with a sense of duty and realistic pragmatism necessary at this time. Various members of Zero Waste Kauai have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Parsons on a variety of projects relating to Solid Waste Management / Materials Recovery along with Energy issues our Islands are facing. In all cases Mr. Parsons has shown a strong level of knowledge regarding the issues and solutions and has also exhibited personal humility to ask questions regarding clarifications or items he needed to have a better and more complete understanding of. He knows his strengths and embraces the opportunity to learn more and have a complete understanding of the issues he deals with.

Mr. Parsons is a person who practices what he advocates. We need more people like Mr. Parsons who strive to leave the earth and our local Hawaiian Islands in a sustainable state going forward for future generations. Mr. Parsons has been a strong “backstage” force in keeping the Aloha + Challenge and the Hawaii Green Growth Dashboard moving in the most useful and beneficial manner for the State. Without his influence and hard work at all of the statewide meetings for Hawaii Green Growth we would not have as good a product as we do.

We will all benefit with the confirmation of Mr. Robert Parsons. The Island of Maui has benefitted for many years because of his work and influence – let the entire state enjoy the benefits and knowledge Mr. Parsons will bring to the State Environmental Council.

Zero Waste Kauai strongly urges you to SUPPORT the Confirmation of Mr. Robert Parsons.

Thank You for this opportunity to share our respect and admiration for Mr. Robert Parsons.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pat Gegen, Chair

April 16, 2015

Re: GM646 - Support for Robert Parsons Appointment to Environmental Council

Aloha Chair Gabbard and Committee Members:

I strongly support the appointment of Robert Parsons to the Hawaii Environmental Council. Robert Parsons has provided outstanding leadership, strategic guidance and initiative to advance conservation and sustainability across Maui County and statewide.

I have had the pleasure of working with Rob in his position as Maui's Environmental Coordinator and Sustainability liaison for almost four years. In that role, he partnered with Hawaii Green Growth to ensure that Maui County was an early and effective leader in developing the *Aloha+ Challenge* and the measures we will all use to track our progress. He is a Core Team member for the project that developed and launched the Aloha+ Challenge Dashboard in the Capitol on April 1st. He continues to help the Mayor and Maui County officials actively engage in this shared statewide commitment to sustainability. As a member of the Environmental Council, he can help the Council identify their strategic role in building a more sustainable and resilient future for our islands

Rob would bring a unique and invaluable set of skills and talents to the Environmental Council. He is highly respected by an extensive network of environmental and sustainability professionals across Maui County and the state. As a former environmental journalist, he is knowledgeable about many issues and brings strong analytical skills to new challenges. He is an articulate advocate for sound environmental policy and sensible progress. He is an outstanding representative for the neighbor island perspective and an active leader among the Counties.

I urge you to appoint Robert Parsons as a member of the Environmental Council. The Council will benefit from his collaborative leadership style and his understanding of the connections between environmental and sustainability issues. We all need to work together and learn from one another to achieve our shared sustainability goals.

Mahalo nui again to you and the Committee for your early and continuing leadership on the *Aloha+ Challenge* and the recent successful Dashboard launch.

Malama pono,
Audrey Newman

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: dkkproperties@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM646 on Apr 16, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Monday, April 13, 2015 8:34:05 AM

GM646

Submitted on: 4/13/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 16, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Doug McLeod	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Chair Gabbard: I write in strong support of the nomination of Rob Parsons for appointment to the Environmental Council. Having worked with Rob for several years in the Mayor's Office I can state unequivocally that Rob has a deep, sincere, and longstanding interest in environmental issues. Rob is well known and widely respected here on Maui. He would be an excellent addition to the Environmental Council. Mahalo for your consideration. Doug McLeod

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Testimony of **Erik Kvam**
before the
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Thursday, April 16, 2015
2:45 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

IN SUPPORT OF
Governor's Message 646
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the
State of Hawaii Environmental Council,
Gubernatorial Nominee, **Robert Parsons**, for a term to expire 6-30-2018

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Green, and Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment:

I appreciate the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of the confirmation of **Robert Parsons** to the State of Hawaii Environmental Council.

Robert Parsons is highly qualified to serve on the Environmental Council. Rob has been a passionate advocate for the Hawaiian environment. Through his service as Environmental Coordinator for Maui County, Rob has gained outstanding knowledge and experience in Hawaii environmental policy. Through his service with Maui Tomorrow, Rob has demonstrated his commitment to preserving Hawaii's natural environment. Through his work on the Aloha Plus Challenge, Rob has been instrumental in developing means of assessing Hawaii's environmental health. Through his work as a journalist, Rob has generously shared his environmental knowledge and experience with the greater public.

Rob Parson's experience and record of service would make him a valuable addition to the Environmental Council. I strongly urge you to confirm Governor Ige's appointment of Robert Parsons to the State of Hawaii Environmental Council.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in this matter.

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Subject: Testimony in Support of the Appointment of Rob Parsons to the Hawai'i Environmental Council

Aloha Senator Gabbard and Members of the Committee

My name is John Harder, and I've been a resident of Hawai'i since 1969 and have worked for various government agencies, in the private sector, and as a volunteer on Environmental issues during most of that time.

I've known Rob for nearly 15 years, since my work as Solid Waste Division Chief for Maui County. Since returning to Kaua'i in 2006 we've kept in contact and have continued to collaborate on a number of environmental issues and programs.

From the time we first met I've been impressed with his commitment to protecting our island environment while reviewing all of the relevant issues. He readily considers to the opinions of others, yet makes his own decisions based on what he feels is best for the 'Aina.

He does his research, and looks for well thought out, straight-forward, pragmatic approaches, avoiding simplistic responses to complex problems.

I would strongly recommend Rob as a member on the Environmental Council and know he will represent the best interest of the people of Hawai'i.

Mahalo

John Harder, Anahola, Kauai

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: rtb808@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for GM646 on Apr 16, 2015 14:45PM*
Date: Thursday, April 09, 2015 2:32:22 PM

GM646

Submitted on: 4/9/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 16, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randal Bartlett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [ENETestimony](#)
Cc: bking@biodiesel.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for GM646 on Apr 16, 2015 14:45PM
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2015 5:23:44 AM

GM646

Submitted on: 4/16/2015

Testimony for ENE on Apr 16, 2015 14:45PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert King	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Rob will be an asset to the Environmental Council, I strongly support his appointment.

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April 14, 2015

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair, and members
Energy and Environment Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: GM 646, RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO SERVING AS A MEMBER
OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

Aloha Senator Gabbard;

Thanks for your consideration of my nomination to serve as a member of the Environmental Council. My responses to the questions you posed are as follows:

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the Environmental Council?

I am in my ninth year of public service in the role as Maui County Environmental Coordinator. This experience has greatly increased my appreciation for the complexity of natural resource issues and environmental challenges statewide. I believe that elected decision makers and the greater community benefit from the advisory capacity of boards, commissions and councils, which can dig deeper into specific issues and topics in order to share appropriate information. I believe the Environmental Council is the best fit for the broad range of matters I am accustomed to reviewing, and that my experience in working with dozens of partners will assist in my ability to share pertinent knowledge and insights.

(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Environmental Council?

My observation is that the role of the Environmental Council (EC) has fluctuated over the years, based upon differences in administrations, OEQC directorship, and council membership. While the core function of the EC continues to be as an adjunct to OEQC in reviewing and updating Chapter 343, HAR 200 and other pertinent statutes and rules, there is a clearly evolving role of supporting the foundational ways that Hawaii addresses sustainability and the related goals adopted state wide with the Aloha + Challenge. The 2014 Annual Report clearly illustrates this emerging focus, with sections devoted to Sustainability Vision, Climate Change, Invasive Species efforts, and the upcoming World Conservation Congress.

(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Environmental Council, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Environmental Council.

The focus of my role as Maui County Environmental Coordinator has been in strengthening and creating partnerships with County, State and Federal agencies and with community and

conservation NGOs. Often I have been asked to review Environmental Assessments, Impact Statements, Special Management Area Permits, Conservation District Use Applications and other documents pertaining to ecosystem management or overall environmental health. I believe my familiarity with these sections of state statutes and rules will be an asset I can bring to the EC overall. I have done extensive research and reporting on environmental, ecological and sustainability issues, with over 175 published articles on a variety of topics (see archive: legacyprojectshawaii.com). I believe these writing and reporting skills may benefit the council in preparing its annual legislative report. Additionally, I have been involved with the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Planning process and the more recent initiatives of Hawaii Green Growth in linking on-the-ground efforts to achieving the lofty goals of the 2050 Plan.

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

Provided the Senate sees fit to confirm my appointment to the Environmental Council, I would hope to forge ahead and solidify the goals set forth in the Aloha + Challenge and the Hawaii Sustainability 2050 Master Plan. To paraphrase former Governor Ariyoshi, it is vital that these plans and goals do not become just another good idea that gathers dust on a shelf. I intend to assess strategies for supplementing the good work conducted by Hawaii Green Growth, reviewing what laws, policies and rules may need to be amended in order for our state to reach these worthy targets as soon as possible.

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Environmental Council?

I believe those who work with me would describe me as being a passionate advocate for our natural resources, a skillful listener and researcher, and a strong team player/leader. I believe there is great value in finding and sharing accurate information about any issue, so that those involved may better make an informed decision. I have chaired advisory groups (UHMC Sustainable Science Management Advisory Group; Maui Conservation Alliance), but am equally comfortable in a supportive role. I value the process, effectiveness and outcomes of any specific group over personal agendas. Above all, I have learned to tailor any message to the appropriate audience, which may be another way of stating that I believe I have learned diplomacy skills over the years.

(6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the Environmental Council?

In 2003 I stepped into a new position as Environmental Coordinator that did not previously exist, and in fact does not have an equivalent position in any of the other three counties in Hawaii. Over Mayor Arakawa's first term and through his subsequent re-election, I have built the role into one valued greatly by dozens of partners of this office. Natural resource managers and conservation professionals know they have a well-versed, enthusiastic liaison for any questions or concerns that may arise. The general public feels comfortable that they have an ally who has risen from the ranks of community activism to a vital role in County government. Just as my professional focus has grown to embrace an ad hoc Sustainability Coordinator role, so has the

Environmental Council's interest expanded to include this vision. I truly believe that my broad experience working with so many varied groups and organizations will benefit the EC, and that my work with the EC in turn will provide a valuable perspective for Maui County and the greater Hawaii community.

(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Environmental Council? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

In my personal observation and participation in public process over the past several years, I believe that recusal over conflict of interest is generally underused and misunderstood. I subscribe to the philosophy that one should recuse themselves when there is even the *appearance* of conflict of interest, not just direct fiduciary or ethical conflict. Yet time and again I have witnessed individuals participating not only in discussions, but also in voting on matters that may represent conflict of interest. As a Maui County employee, I would need to be exercise discretion with regard to administration projects, policies, and efforts which may impact or benefit our conservation partners or grantees. I do not foresee any particular conflicts, but assure you that I personally take this issue quite seriously. Conflicts of interest may only be overcome by fully recognizing and acknowledging them, and recusing oneself as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

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