



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM0562 and GM0563
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the
Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board,
Gubernatorial Nominee, STEVEN BRITTAI, N,
for terms to expire 6-30-20 and 6-30-24 respectively.**

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date and Time: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. Room: 229

1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports the nomination and confirmation
2 of Steven Brittain to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board (HSAB).
3 Mr. Brittain fills the community member or non-provider of mental health services segment of the
4 board, pursuant to Chapter 334-11 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.

5 Mr. Brittain is currently a practicing attorney and a certified substance abuse counselor on
6 Hawaii Island. Through his own substance use recovery since 2007 and experiences working in
7 substance use treatment programs, homeless shelters, and pain management clinics in Hilo,
8 Kona, and Maui, he has become a strong advocate for individuals struggling with addiction.

9 Mr. Brittain has first-hand knowledge of the need for accessible, comprehensive care for
10 persons with addiction through his counseling of individuals, families, and groups in drug aftercare
11 programs. With this knowledge, Mr. Brittain is interested in working with behavioral health
12 community partners to create a residential substance abuse treatment facility and a detox center
13 on Hawaii Island.

14 We believe that Mr. Brittain's background, both personally and professionally, as well as
15 his knowledge and extensive experiences in life and substance use issues, will be an asset to the
16 HSAB's deliberations.

1 We respectfully request your favorable consideration in confirming the appointment of
2 Mr. Brittain to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on his behalf.



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March 17, 2020

**TO: Senator Rosalyn Baker
State Capitol, Room 230
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

**FROM: Les Estrella, CEO
Going Home Hawaii
80 Pauahi St. Suite 203
Hilo, Hawaii 96720**

**RE: Testimony in support of Mr. Steven Brittain
Hawai'i State Council on Mental Health, Hawai'i Service Area Board**

Dear Senator Baker,

I have known Ms. Steven Brittain for over fifteen years in a variety of personal and professional settings. During that time, Mr. Brittain has always demonstrated a willingness to help wherever needed and is committed to the overall well-being of our community.

Mr. Brittain is always professional, ethical, knowledgeable, and has an excellent connection with people of all ages and backgrounds. He is a recognized and respected leader in our community and is especially empathetic for persons in recovery from mental health and substance use disorders. I also consider him a respected colleague and friend.

In summary, please consider Mr. Steven Brittain as my recommendation to serve on the Hawai'i State Council on Mental Health, Hawai'i Service Area Board.

If you have any questions regarding Mr. Brittain, do not hesitate to contact me either by email at: goinghomehawaii@gmail.com or by phone: 808-937-6257.

Respectfully submitted,


Les Estrella

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting the following testimony on behalf of Mr. Steven T. Brittain, Attorney at Law:

I met Mr. Brittain over ten years ago when he came to my office for a job interview. I was puzzled as to why he would be applying for a job at a homeless outreach program when his resume showed that he had been an attorney in Hawai`i for 20 plus years.

During the interview, Mr. Brittain openly shared his story of addiction which led to the loss of his license to practice law. At that time, he had been clean and sober for three years. He had also spent time working in substance abuse treatment programs and was speaking about and sharing his story with others, including peers who were struggling with substance use.

Over the years, we have worked together on various projects and Steve has always demonstrated a passion and commitment to helping those in need, especially those in recovery from addiction. Steve's fervent desire is to see a residential treatment and detox center here on the Big Island where it is greatly needed.

Mr. Brittain is a highly competent and dedicated individual with outstanding communication skills. Early last year, his request to be restored to active status as a Hawaii-licensed attorney was unanimously approved and, in August of 2019, he opened his own law office in Hilo.

I believe that Mr. Brittain's experience, qualifications, and skills make him an exceptional candidate for the Hawai`i Service Area Board on Mental Health and Substance Abuse and I highly recommend his confirmation at your nomination hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol K Matayoshi

**Carol K. Matayoshi, Chair
Hawai`i Service Area Board, Mental Health & Substance Abuse**

Aloha,

My name is Ryan Kajikawa and I work for the State of Hawaii Judiciary - Division of Driver Education. The State of Hawaii's Division of Driver Education administers a court-ordered 14-hour Alcohol Abuse Rehabilitation Program to individuals who were arrested for impaired driving. Students are instructed in the PRIME For Life Curriculum, which was developed by the Prevention Research Institute. The curriculum aims to help participants reflect on their alcohol and drug related problems.

Since August 17, 2017, Steven T. Brittain has voluntarily spoken to our students as a representative of Alcoholics Anonymous. Steven is a registered Volunteer in Public Service to the Courts for the Division of Driver Education. Steven spends about thirty to forty-five minutes, two to three times a month, sharing his personal experience with substance abuse and how Alcoholics Anonymous has helped him live a sober life for the past eleven plus years. Steven's personal story, combined with the PRIME For Life curriculum impacts students who participate in this program to prevent recidivism. Students are able to relate to Steven's downfall due to substance abuse, but more importantly he is a model for how a negative can be transformed into a positive. He gives students hope, that although they may struggle with substance abuse, support is available, and lives can be changed.

What sets Steven apart from previous speakers is his ability to relate to our students without labeling them as alcoholics or drug addicts. He speaks from the heart and shares information that most people would not reveal to strangers. Through his honesty and sincerity, students leave understanding how Alcoholics Anonymous could provide them with much needed support, but more importantly there is a way to live a fulfilling life without mind altering substances. I have seen students with this look of, "If Steven is able to change his life for the better, then maybe I can too..."

I believe Steven to be an asset to not only to the Division of Driver Education but our community in general. He has been dedicated to helping others prevent substance abuse problems by being active in Alcoholics Anonymous, mentoring, and counseling people. Steven also has experienced receiving and providing formal substance abuse education/counseling, which gives him a unique perspective that many do not have. Lastly, Steven lives a life of compassion and empathy, two qualities essential to understand how our community can fight the battle of substance abuse.

Mahalo,

Ryan H. Kajikawa
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Division of Driver Education
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GM-562

Submitted on: 5/11/2020 12:56:25 PM

Testimony for CPH on 5/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
CRAIG KUGISAKI	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in SUPPORT of the confirmation of STEVEN BRITAIN, the nominee in GM562 and GM563.

I always found Mr. Brittain to be candid and straightforward in my dealings with him. He was also well respected as an attorney in private practice.

Craig Kugisaki, Attorney (retired)

Steven T. Brittain

Attorney at Law

Steven T. Brittain, Esq.
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688 Kinoole Street
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February 12, 2020

Alisha Leisek, Legislative Assistant
Office of Senator Rosalyn Baker
415 South Beretania St., 230
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Ms. Leisek:

Please find my information/answers as requested:

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board?

I have suffered through, and recovered from, my own addictions. From 2008 to 2016 I worked in a variety of substance abuse treatment facilities and witnessed the destruction that drugs and alcohol cause on individuals and families. I am practicing law in Hilo, working in the Child Welfare System, and see the toll that drugs, alcohol and mental health issues, wreak on individuals, families, society and the court system.

I can help address what I believe to be the biggest, most damaging problem in society today by being on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board.

(2) What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board?

To attend board meetings, to bring awareness of the need for treatment services to the community and to bring the community's mental health and treatment needs to the attention of the board.

- (3) Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the Board.**

From 2008 to 2016 I worked in a variety of substance abuse treatment facilities, a homeless shelter, pain management clinics and was counseling individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues. Now, as an attorney in Hilo, I am working in the CWS system with mental health and substance issues. I have a clear understanding of the need for services and a clear understanding of the public perception of individuals with substance and mental health issues. I have the ability to raise awareness from both a personal, professional and academic perspective. I believe my skills will help the board.

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

Bring a substance abuse detox center and treatment facility to the Big Island.

- (5) Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will benefit the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board.**

Educated, caring and experienced. I have an abundance of personal and academic experience with empathy for those suffering with substance and mental health issues.

- (6) Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board member.**

In 2015 and 2016 I served as a substance abuse counselor for Care Hawaii, running their outpatient treatment program in downtown Hilo. We were located across the street from a faith-based community outreach program and as a result had a lot of homeless people in the area. I occasionally had walk-in people looking for help for both substance abuse issues and mental health issues. On one occasion a gentleman came in with his girlfriend and would sit through some of our sessions. I was not sure of his ability to receive or grasp information. I encouraged him to seek additional treatment for both mental

health and substance issues, and today he is a healthy member of society, regaining his health, his hope and his family. I have seen the changes that occur through receiving the help needed.

- (7) **Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Hawaii Service Area Board? How would you overcome conflicts of interest?**

I don't foresee any conflict of interest arising in my current situation but if I were aware of one, I would bring it to the attention of the board. I believe in full disclosure.

If there is anything further you need from me, please do not hesitate to contact my office. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Steven T. Brittain
Attorney at Law, A Law Corporation

STB:kra