

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 975

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 11 2021

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 503

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2021  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 503, submitting for study and consideration the nomination of:

DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

G.M. No. 503      CATHERINE BETTS,  
for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-  
2022,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by Catherine Betts for service as the Director of the Department of Human Resources.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination from the Office of the Governor; Department of Budget and Finance; Department of Human Resources Development; Department of Health; Department of Transportation; Department of Agriculture; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Department of Taxation; Department of Defense; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Department of Accounting and General Services; Hawaii Public Housing Authority; Department of Public Safety; Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Workforce Development Council; Department of Human Services, Benefit, Employee, and Support Services Division; Hawaii State Energy Office; Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women; Hawai'i State Youth Commission; Department of Human Services, Workforce Development Council; Domestic Violence Action

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Center; Hawaii Medical Service Association; Hawaii Family Caregiver Association; Hina Mauka; Hawaii Children's Action Network, Harm Reduction Hawaii; Healthcare Association of Hawaii; East Hawaii Region of Hawaii Systems Corporation; Hawai'i Primary Care Association; PHOCUSED; Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii; Parents and Children Together; Hawai'i Women Lawyers; AlohaCare; YWCA Oahu; One Shared Future, Child and Family Service; and forty individuals.

Your Committee finds that Ms. Betts, who has served as Acting Director of Human Services since September 2020, has demonstrated a deep understanding of the leadership needed to guide the Department of Human Services through the unique challenges presented by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. It is notable that, as Deputy Director from October 2017 until September 2020, Ms. Betts worked alongside former Director Pankaj Bhanot on all substantive matters, including budget preparation, legislative reviews, meetings with community stakeholders, review of litigation, ongoing re-organizations of the Department's staff, offices, and divisions, and development of the Department's first strategic plan. Therefore, she has acquired valuable and practical experience especially relevant to the position for which she is nominated. Your Committee finds that in her testimony, Ms. Betts shared her deeply held belief that "economic justice, gender justice, and racial justice are intricately interwoven, and that no oppression can be undone without taking a hard look at the myriad ways individuals, families, and communities are undervalued and marginalized, thereby affecting their social determinants of health, wellbeing, and their ability to thrive."

Your Committee further finds that after litigating complex child abuse and neglect cases for the attorney general and practicing family law, in December 2011, Ms. Betts was named Executive Director of the Hawaii Commission on the Status of Women, where she served until September 2017. During her tenure, Ms. Betts spearheaded progressive legislation for women, including requiring emergency rooms to provide emergency contraception to sexual assault victims, providing for a bill of rights for domestic workers (including minimum wage and overtime protections), and strengthening Hawaii's equal pay law. Demonstrating her ability to engage with public and private partners, your Committee also finds that Ms. Betts chaired multiple task forces and working groups, and she convened county and state agencies and community stakeholders on issues such as domestic violence response, sexual assault evidence collection kit

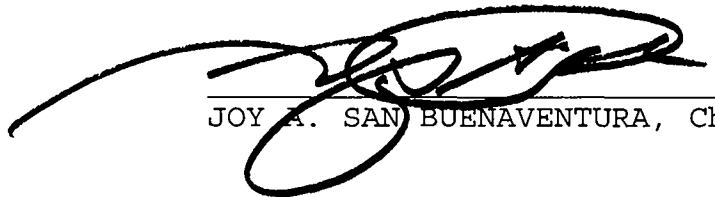


backlog, pregnancy discrimination, and breastfeeding in the work place laws and regulations.

Your Committee notes the testimony received in support of Ms. Betts' nomination, which indicates that she has earned the trust and respect of colleagues with whom she has engaged over many years. Therefore, your Committee concludes that Ms. Betts' extensive background and experience in law, policy, management, and leadership, as well as her passion for serving the public, especially children and vulnerable adults, qualify her for the position of Director of the Department of Human Services.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominee, has found the nominee to be qualified for the position to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Human Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



The Senate  
Thirty-First Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Human Services**  
**HMS**  
**Advise and Consent**

Governor's Message No.:* <b>GM 503</b>	Committee Referral: <b>HMS</b>	Date: <b>02/18/2021</b>		
<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"/> Advise and Consent 2340         </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Advise and Consent 2345         </div> </div>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A. (C)	✓			
IHARA, Jr., Les (VC)	✓			
ACASIO, Laura	✓			
MISALUCHA, Bennette E.	✓			
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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:				
Distribution: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Original File with Committee Report</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Yellow Clerk's Office</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Pink Drafting Agency</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Goldenrod Committee File Copy</div> </div>				

\*Only one Governor's Message per Record of Votes