

TESTIMONY OF  
ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

MARCH 3, 2021  
1:00 P.M.  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 506

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before the committee to discuss my nomination for Director of the Department of Health.

I am honored to be leading the State of Hawai'i Department of Health with our team of 2,500 strong. I am here today for three reasons: 1) I was asked to serve; 2) I believe I am making a positive difference by shaping our state's COVID-19 and public health response; and 3) I've dedicated my career to improving others' health and saving lives.

Before joining this administration on September 16, 2020, I was working as an emergency physician and providing medical direction for multiple county fire departments and EMS and volunteering a medical perspective on COVID-related issues for the City & County of Honolulu.

I am a board certified emergency physician and received my training at the University of Hawai'i, John A. Burns School of Medicine and UCLA. My entire education has been through the public school system in Hawai'i and California. While I have no formal training in public health, I have developed a great respect and appreciation for the value and comprehensive reach of public health through my years in medicine, seeing patients in busy level 1 trauma centers and in community settings. I continue to learn more every day from those who truly are experts in the field, many of whom I have the privilege of

working with at the Department of Health. These colleagues are dedicated, passionate, educated, and skilled. To say they work hard is a tremendous understatement.

As an emergency physician, we are called on to make difficult decisions with far reaching implications and effects despite there being incomplete data. Being in a pandemic also calls for decisions and action, and while there is much we do not yet understand about this virus, good decisions must be made. My experience leading the City & County of Honolulu's Emergency Services Department gave me a good introduction to government and provided me with an appreciation for navigating within a set of rules and circumstances different from the private sector. I am a firm believer that neither government nor the private sector nor non-profits can function alone. We must partner and collaborate to solve challenges like COVID-19. Similarly, the Department of Health needs support from other agencies, branches of government, the private sector, non-profits, and the community for us to truly improve the public's health.

If I am afforded an opportunity to continue as the Director of Health, I will focus on helping to lead the team of Deputy Directors and the department towards a science-based, rational approach to help Hawai'i navigate through the pandemic and mitigate morbidity and mortality in our community. We must also seek opportunities and seize them when they arise to position the department and the state to take lessons learned and create more streamlined and efficient ways of functioning. We need to use processes and programs created for COVID-19 to benefit the community beyond COVID-19, so when this pandemic is over, we have a more robust and stable department that is better positioned for the challenges of the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments to the committee. It is an honor to be considered for the position of Director of Health.

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
MARCH 3, 2021  
1:00 P.M.  
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 506**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

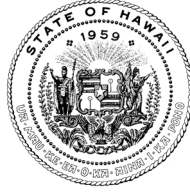
Chairperson Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on GM 506, consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Dr. Char's extensive medical background and public policy experience make her an ideal choice to lead the Department of Health through this critical period the State strives to maintain control on the coronavirus pandemic. Her prior experience as assistant clinical professor of surgery at the University of Hawaii School of Medicine, as the Director of Emergency Services Department at the City and County of Honolulu, Director of Medical Education, and as a lecturer at Kapiolani Community College also speak to her skill as a medical communicator, an essential skill to address the frequently changing public health guidelines and keep the State's residents well-informed. The breadth and depth of her knowledge and experience will serve Dr. Char well as Director, and HDOA strongly recommends ELIZABETH CHAR to serve as Director of the Department of Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310  
P.O. BOX 541  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809  
Phone Number: 586-2850  
Fax Number: 586-2856  
cca.hawaii.gov

CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI COLÓN  
DIRECTOR

JO ANN M. UCHIDA TAKEUCHI  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the Senate Committee on Health  
Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

On **Governor's Message No. 506**, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation as the **Director of the Department of Health**, Gubernatorial Nominee, **Elizabeth Char**, for a Term to Expire on December 5, 2022.

Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

My name is Catherine Awakuni Colón, Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, and I am writing in **support** of the appointment of Dr. Libby Char to serve as the Director of the Department of Health, for a term to expire on December 5, 2022.

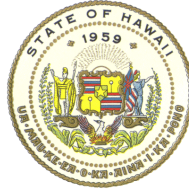
With extensive experience in medicine and administration, Dr. Char has wholeheartedly thrown herself into this health crisis, and brings the kind of intelligence, skill, and temperament needed to assist the State during such a time. Over the last few months, I have observed Dr. Char to be a collaborative, compassionate, and competent leader, and believe she is well suited to lead the Department of Health.

Dr. Char has already demonstrated herself to be a highly productive and effective member of Governor Ige's cabinet, and I respectfully request that you recommend approval of her nomination as Director of the Department of Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to support GM No. 506. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on  
HEALTH**

**Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 506  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE  
ELIZABETH CHAR  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-05-2022**

**The Department of Land and Natural Resources strongly supports Governor's Message 506 nominating Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as the Director for the Department of Health for a term to expire at noon on December 5, 2022.**

Dr. Char is a graduate of the University of Hawaii, John A. Burns School of Medicine. She completed her residency training in California and returned to Hawaii where she was employed by the Queen's Medical Center in the clinical practice of emergency medicine. She also went on to oversee the City and County of Honolulu's EMS system.

Dr. Char is currently serving in the capacity as interim director of the Department of Health. Her extensive experience in medicine and administration, along with her passion and dedication makes her an ideal fit for this position. The Department of Land and Natural Resources is confident that under Dr. Char's leadership, that the State will to continue to persevere and move forward during these difficult times.

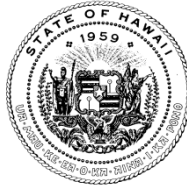
Thank you for your consideration of the Department's strong support of Governor's Message 506, nominating Dr. Libby Char as the Director of the Department of Health.

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS



**TESTIMONY BY:**

JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
LYNN A.S. ARAKI-REGAN  
DEREK J. CHOW  
ROSS M. HIGASHI  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097**

March 3, 2021  
1:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Teleconference

**G.M. 506**

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.**

Senate Committee on Health

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) **strongly supports** Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as the Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

Dr. Char earned her BA in Biology from the University of Hawaii and her MD from John A. Burns School of Medicine. She has been a practicing physician since 1997 and has been a Medical Director at various State and County departments since 2005.

Dr. Char brings extensive experience in medicine and administration to the Department during a time of great stress on the state's healthcare system. Protecting public health and bringing the coronavirus under control is crucial to reviving the economy and strengthening Hawaii's community. The pre-travel testing program is an additional layer of protection for Hawaii when combined with our Safe Travels mandatory online health questionnaire, airport temperature screening, improved contact tracing and the many other safety protocols the State has in place. The DOT is particularly impressed that she has brought unprecedented levels of collaboration between the public and private sectors, as well as State and County governments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

Testimony of  
**David Y. Ige**  
Governor, State of Hawai'i  
Before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1:00 p.m., Via Teleconference

In consideration of  
**Governor's Message 506**

Submitted for consideration and confirmation as the Director, Department of Health,  
Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth A. Char, M.D. FACEP

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and committee members:

I respectfully request your support in confirming the appointment of Elizabeth A. Char, M.D., FACEP to serve as the Director, Department of Health.

As interim director since September 2020, Dr. Char effectively oversees the department's pandemic efforts, to include testing, contact tracing, isolation and quarantine, vaccinations, disease outbreaks, and the public health programs and welfare of our state in order to ensure the health of our community. Due to the hard work of Dr. Char and the DOH team, Hawai'i has the lowest infection rate in the nation. Her leadership is critical as we continue to fight COVID-19

Dr. Char is a board certified Emergency Physician with many years of experience caring for patients in the emergency department. She is a clinical assistant professor with the University of Hawaii John A. Burns school of medicine and has a wealth of experience in the pre-hospital arena on EMS systems of care and disaster preparedness. She has provided medical direction for several fire departments and EMS services across the state and is leading the state's vaccination efforts.

My administration is committed to the health of all the citizens of Hawaii. I am confident that Dr. Char will continue to support our employees in the Department of Health in this effort. Moving forward together, we can build a better home for our keiki, kupuna, and all the residents of Hawaii.

Mahalo for your consideration.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health  
Wednesday, March 3, 2021; 1:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: GM0506 -- SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE ELIZABETH CHAR, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-05-2022.**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Hirokawa and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as the Director of Health.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The HPCA has long held that the social determinants of health -- more than any other factor -- contribute to the overall wellbeing of our people. Persons who experience homelessness, language barriers, and poverty are more likely to suffer persistent, chronic health issues and have shorter life expectancies than those who do not.

We believe that Dr. Char's impeccable credentials, steadfast dedication and tireless commitment to furthering the health and wellbeing for all of Hawaii's communities make her uniquely qualified for the position of Director of Health. As demonstrated throughout her career, Dr. Char fully understands the importance of socio-economic equity in the pursuit of optimal health outcomes for all our citizens.

**For these reasons, the HPCA urges your confirmation of the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char for the position of Director of Health.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



**February 18, 2021 at 3:00 pm**  
**Via Videoconference**

**Senate Committee on Health**

To: Chair Jarrett Keohokalole  
Vice Chair Rosalyn H. Baker

From: Hilton Raethel  
President and CEO  
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**  
**GM 506, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the**  
**Department of Health, Dr. Elizabeth Char**

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the healthcare continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities, and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 20,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to strongly **support** the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of Health. Since taking on this role last year, we have appreciated Dr. Char's willingness to support our members in pandemic response, especially in providing resources for hospitals treating patients in the summer surge and helping to ensure that we continue to promote strong testing, tracing, and reporting systems.

Most recently, we have worked closely with Dr. Char on the vaccination rollout effort. She has overseen a collaborative process that has encouraged participation from a broad stakeholder group that includes providers, employers, government agencies, and other critical participants. Hawaii as a state is performing well in the vaccine rollout and have built up enough capacity to more than double the shots in arms when more doses become available. This roll-out has been an admirable effort and we and our members look forward to continuing our work with Dr. Char and her team as we protect our residents and continue to manage the pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony for this nomination and we would urge your committee to approve Dr. Char's confirmation.

Hearing: March 3, 2021, 1:00 p.m., Via Videoconference

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health  
Hawai‘i State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai‘i, 96813

RE: In **SUPPORT** of GM 506 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022

Aloha e Senator Keohokalole,

It is with pleasure that we recommend Dr. Elizabeth (“Libby”) Char for the Director of the Department of Health. Dr. Char stepped up to the call to serve as the acting director in September, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, which is unlike any public health crisis our great state has ever faced.

Dr. Char is an Emergency Physician by training and a proud graduate of the UH Mānoa John A. Burns School of Medicine (“JABMSOM”). After completing residency training in California, she returned to Hawai‘i to the clinical practice of Emergency Medicine at the Queen’s Medical Center. Her work in Emergency Medicine has also led her to serve as the Medical Director for American Medical Response Hawaii, State of Hawai‘i EMS District for Oahu, and Honolulu and Kauai Fire Department.

Since 1998, she has been an assistant clinical professor in JABSOM’s surgery department. In 2011, Dr. Char was the chairperson of the Health and Medical Planning committee for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), involving 21 heads of economies, including US President Barack Obama, and approximately 10,000 attendees. In this capacity, she coordinated public and private hospitals, emergency medical responders, and county, state, and federal agencies, in providing health and medical support and response for this international event held on Oahu.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i supports Dr. Char’s nomination to the Director of the Department of Health because she has shown the poise and leadership qualities required for this public health position. She has helped us navigate the difficult task of vaccine allocation and distribution, amongst many other items.

Furthermore, she has been invaluable in helping navigate the extremely complex public health system during the pandemic, which has help ensure hospitals and other healthcare personnel can efficiently deliver care. This includes everything from assisting with PPE & healthcare supplies during the early months of the pandemic, to maximizing our opportunity to administer vaccines in the variety of ways that our efforts have taken us.

Accordingly, on behalf of Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, we urge the committee and the Senate to confirm the appointment of Dr. Libby Char for the Director of the Department of Health.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Balukoff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sam" being more prominent than the last name "Balukoff".

Sam Balukoff  
Hospital Administrator  
Kaiser Permanente Moanalua Medical Center

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew T. Giles". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Andrew" and the last name "Giles" being clearly legible.

Andrew Giles  
Assistant Administrator - Hospital Operations & Support Services  
Kaiser Permanente Moanalua Medical Center

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



KENNETH S. HARA  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL

STEPHEN F. LOGAN  
COLONEL  
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL**  
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 506,  
RELATING TO GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE ELIZABETH CHAR

PRESENTATION TO  
THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

BY

MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
AND HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

FEBRUARY 22, 2021

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee on Health,

I respectfully submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of Governor's Message 506, relating to the Gubernatorial Nomination of Dr. Elizabeth Char for the Director of the Department of Health.

I have worked closely with Dr. Char as a peer on the Governor's cabinet in response to COVID-19 and value her leadership and expertise. Dr. Char is a respected leader in the medical community and has extensive experience as a practicing doctor and medical director. She will bring a wholistic perspective and vision to the Department of Health that will be grounded in her knowledge and experiences at the most senior levels in both the public and private sectors.

Dr. Char is someone who is trustworthy and committed to the people of the State of Hawaii. I would be honored to continue service with her and am confident she will be a beacon to help guide and lead our state in this time of crisis.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

MG Kenneth S. Hara: kenneth.s.hara@hawaii.gov; 808-672-1211



To: Chair Jarrett Keohokalole  
Vice Chair Roz Baker  
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

Re: GM 506 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char

I am writing in **strong support** of the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char as the Director of the State of Hawai‘i Department of Health (DOH). In September 2020, she stepped in to serve Hawai‘i in this capacity, and we have all benefited in many ways.

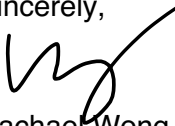
Dr. Char brings three important vital assets to DOH and our state: 1) character; 2) her training and experience; and 3) clarity. Dr. Char’s character is impeccable and the reason why she stands before you today—she responded to the call to serve amidst the most challenging public health crisis we have faced. Her work ethic, dedication, and energy bring out the best in others, and she is caring, compassionate, a great listener, humorous, and honest. The DOH team is thriving working with her.

Time and time again, we’ve seen Dr. Char put her emergency medicine training to practice. This is not to say she overlays medicine onto public health—it’s her ability to quickly listen, learn, understand, then make decisions, and act upon them in a collaborative manner. Her crisis management experience has been needed, and we should celebrate Hawai‘i’s collective pandemic efforts and results.

As many have seen, Dr. Char speaks clearly, openly, and in understandable ways. Her goals are to share what DOH is doing and to partner with the private and non-profit sectors to improve health outcomes across the state. This pandemic highlighted the fact that DOH cannot solely lead all public health initiatives. Dr. Char brings an energizing and sincere approach to working together for common goals.

One Shared Future is an organization founded for our interconnected communities: we collectively imagine a positive future for Hawai‘i and bring people together in safe spaces and from different sectors to create that future through professional development experiences. It is in this spirit that I urge to you confirm Dr. Libby Char as the DOH director so that she has the opportunity to continue working with others to lead Hawai‘i to a thriving future.

Sincerely,



Rachael Wong, DrPH  
Founder & Strategic Advisor

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



RYKER WADA  
DIRECTOR

ANDREW T. GARRETT  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**  
235 S. BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

**LATE**

March 3, 2021

**TESTIMONY TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

For Hearing on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 1 p.m.  
Via Videoconference

By

RYKER WADA  
DIRECTOR

**Governor's Message 506: Submitting for consideration and confirmation as  
the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee,  
ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D., for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.**

Dear Chair Keahokalole, Vice-Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

It is my pleasure to submit this testimony in **Strong Support** of the confirmation of Elizabeth A. Char, M.D. as Director of the Department of Health. I have had the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Char over the past year specifically on our COVID-19 response as colleagues within the Ige administration.

Dr. Char is a dedicated and knowledgeable public servant who is ideally suited to lead the Department of Health during these trying times. She has the ideal blend of medical and administrative expertise from her distinguished career that has spanned across both the public and private sectors. In short, she is the right person at the right time to guide the state get through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of Governor's Message 506 and Elizabeth A. Char, M.D. We humbly ask for your favorable consideration.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CURT T. OTAGURO  
COMPTROLLER  
  
AUDREY HIDANO  
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES**

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF  
CURT T. OTAGURO, COMPTROLLER  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES  
TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**MARCH 3, 2021, 1:00 P.M.  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL**

**G.M. 506  
SUBMITTING FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS DIRECTOR OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, ELIZABETH CHAR,  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-05-2022.**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on G.M. 506. I support the nomination of Ms. Elizabeth Char to the position of Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

Dr. Char has led the DOH as Director since September 2020. She has also served as the Medical Director for the American Medical Response, Hawaii since 2010. In addition, Dr. Char has worked as Medical Director for the Honolulu Fire Department and Kauai Fire Department.

She has a proven track record of team leadership in the medical community. Dr. Char would be leveraging her managerial and medical experience to improve the organization and properly respond to the pandemic. She stepped in quickly to get immediate results. I have been extremely impressed by her calm demeanor and assurances through her leadership, and professional expertise.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

ROBERT YU  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY  
CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
AND  
ROBERT YU  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 506

**March 3, 2021**  
**1:30 p.m.**  
**Via Videoconference**

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, ELIZABETH CHAR, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-05-2022.

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

We strongly support the appointment of Elizabeth Char to the position of director of the Department of Health.

Governor Ige's administration is committed to addressing the many issues facing our state in a direct and forthright manner. We strive to do the right thing, the right way to achieve our shared goal of a healthy, sustainable economy to support our keiki, our kupuna, and the disadvantaged.

Dr. Char is an integral part of a team that is committed to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Dr. Char has been serving as director of the Department of Health since September 2020. Prior to that, she was the medical director for American Medical Response, Hawai'i; Honolulu Fire Department; and Kaua'i Fire Department. Dr. Char was also an emergency physician and provided administrative oversight for the City and County of Honolulu EMS system. Her extensive work experience in medicine and administration will benefit the department and the State; therefore, we support her confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



## DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

MIKE MCCARTNEY  
DIRECTOR

CHUNG I. CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804  
Web site: [dbedt.hawaii.gov](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov)

Telephone: (808) 586-2355  
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of  
**MIKE MCCARTNEY**  
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Videoconference

In consideration of  
**GM506**

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the  
Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR,  
for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-22.**

Chair Keohokolole, Vice Chair Baker and members of the Committee.

I am writing in **support** of Elizabeth 'Libby' Char, to serve as the Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

Libby's entire professional career has focused on helping others and on medicine. Since September 2020, she has been the Director of the DOH after joining the department in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her professional experience with American Medical Response (AMR), as an emergency room physician; a medical director for two counties and educator, not only brings extensive skills and knowledge, but a collaborative spirit to the position. Libby brings a professional leadership style that is authentic, humble, kind, patient, understanding, smart, committed and hands on. She is a special person and unique leader, with a gentle and healing spirit that instills confidence and trust. I am proud to call her a colleague and honor to work with her in the Ige Administration. She is the right person for this time that can make the most difference.

I strongly support the confirmation of gubernatorial candidate, Elizabeth 'Libby' Char, as the Director of Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



ANNE E. PERREIRA-EUSTAQUIO  
DIRECTOR

JOANN A. VIDINHAR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.labor.hawaii.gov](http://www.labor.hawaii.gov)  
Phone: (808) 586-8844 / Fax: (808) 586-9099  
Email: [dlir.director@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.director@hawaii.gov)

March 3, 2021

To: The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair,  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

Date: Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
Time: 3:00 p.m.  
Place: Via Videoconference

From: Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: G.M. No. 506 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director  
of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee,  
ELIZABETH CHAR**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Anne E. Perreira-Eustaquio, and I am the Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. I am testifying in strong support of Governor's Message 506, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char, as the Director of the Department of Health.

Dr. Char has demonstrated that she has the leadership and experience to lead the DOH. As the Director, Dr. Char is the State's chief health and environmental official and oversees numerous programs and staff that ensure the State's health and environment are protected and improved. Dr. Char's experience as the Medical Director at the American Medical Response and Staff Physician at the Straub Clinic Emergency Department show her capacity to successfully work under pressure. In addition, her service as the Medical Director at the Honolulu Fire Department, and Kauai Fire Department show her capacity to lead large agencies and deep commitment to serving the public.

I urge you to confirm Dr. Char to serve as the Director of the DOH so that she may continue to provide leadership and service to the public.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Dr. Char.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



ANNE E. PERREIRA-EUSTAQUIO  
DIRECTOR

JOANN A. VIDINHAR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
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[www.labor.hawaii.gov](http://www.labor.hawaii.gov)  
Phone: (808) 586-8844 / Fax: (808) 586-9099  
Email: [dlir.director@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.director@hawaii.gov)

February 23, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Committee on Health  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 231  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Keohokalole:

Subject: Governor Message (GM) 506, Relating to Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

I am Manuel P. Neves, Chair of the State Fire Council (SFC). The SFC supports the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health.

Dr. Char has served in the emergency medical health profession for many years and has a proven track record of leadership, integrity, and professionalism. She has served as the Medical Director for the Honolulu Fire Department and, additionally, assisted the neighbor island fire departments, law enforcement, and emergency medical services in their medical programs. The SFC believes Dr. Char is well-qualified to serve in this capacity.

The SFC urges your committee's confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Gubernatorial Nominee for the Director of the Department of Health.

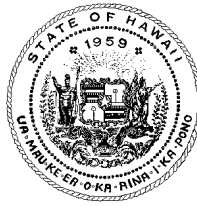
Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or [lrogers@honolulu.gov](mailto:lrogers@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

MANUEL P. NEVES  
Chair

MPN/LR:cs

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

**MAX N. OTANI**  
DIRECTOR

**Maria C. Cook**  
Deputy Director  
Administration

**Tommy Johnson**  
Deputy Director  
Corrections

**Jordan Lowe**  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

No. \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 506  
NOMINATION OF ELIZABETH CHAR,  
DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

By  
Max Otani, Director

Senate Committee on Health  
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 1:00 p.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Via Videoconference

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as Director of the Department of Health (DOH). Dr. Char has stepped up to face the unprecedented challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the brunt of which has landed squarely on the Department of Health. She has mobilized the staff and resources of the DOH to battle the coronavirus on many fronts, and she has done so with intelligence, efficiency, and grace.

The pandemic has forced departments to "think outside of the box" to deliver services to the public under oftentimes difficult conditions, and we are grateful that we can rely on the expertise and resources of the DOH under Dr. Char's leadership.

I humbly ask that you give Libby Char your favorable consideration as the nominee for the position of Director of Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN M.D.  
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION**  
P.O. BOX 259  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809  
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540  
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

ISAAC W. CHOY  
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

To: The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair;  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair;  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Health

From: Isaac W. Choy, Director  
Department of Taxation

Date: March 3, 2021

Time: 1:00 P.M.

Place: Via Videoconference, Hawaii State Capitol

**Re: G.M. 506, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation Director of the  
Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char**

I am in strong support of G.M. 506 and the confirmation of Elizabeth Char as the  
Director of the Department of Health.

Ms. Char has extensive experience in the field of health, both as a medical doctor and as  
an administrator. She has worked in the private and public health sectors, including serving as  
the Medical Director for Honolulu Fire Department, Kauai Fire Department, and American  
Medical Response. I believe that Ms. Char's character and experience make her an excellent  
candidate for the position.

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in support of the confirmation of  
Elizabeth Char as Director of the Department of Health.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
LYNN A.S. ARAKI-REGAN  
DEREK J. CHOW  
ROSS M. HIGASHI  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 28, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair Senate Committee on Health (HTH)  
The State Senate, State Capital  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Subject: GM506 Testimony in the support of Dr. Elizabeth Char for the Director of the Department of Health**

Dear Chair Keohokalole:

I am Christopher A. Fortuno, Assistant Fire Chief with the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport ARFF Unit. I am in full support of GM506, the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of the Department of Health.

During her tenure as the Honolulu Fire Department's Medical Director, Dr. Char connected mutual aid partnerships to ensure all first responders were operating on a consistent and elevated standard. This task ultimately ensured the public was receiving the highest standard of care.

I truly believe Dr. Char will bring her excellent work ethic and outstanding leadership to the Director of Health appointment. In addition, she will continue to make the necessary decisions to lead our state through this Covid Pandemic. Should you have any questions, please contact me at (808)836-6618 or [christopher.fortuno@hawaii.gov](mailto:christopher.fortuno@hawaii.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Fortuno".

Christopher A. Fortuno

# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Department of Anthropology  
College of Social Sciences  
**Pacific Emergency Management  
Preparedness and Response Information  
Network and Training Services  
Pacific EMPRINTS**

## STATE OF HAWAII SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

### TESTIMONY ON GM 506

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the  
Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee,  
**DR. ELIZABETH CHAR**

by Ann M. Sakaguchi, MPH, PhD  
University of Hawaii at Mānoa  
Director, Pacific Emergency Management, Preparedness and Response  
Information Network and Training Services (Pacific EMPRINTS)

Chair Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair Rosalyn Baker, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health,

My name is Ann Sakaguchi and I am the director/principal investigator of the University of Hawaii at Mānoa's Pacific EMPRINTS program at the College of Social Sciences. Today, I am writing to request your favorable support of GM 506 and the confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee **DR. ELIZABETH CHAR** as Director of the Department of Health.

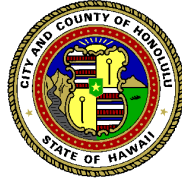
I have known Dr. Char for nearly two decades, first in her capacity as the Emergency Medical Services director for Honolulu City and County, Medical Director of Metropolitan Medical Response System, Pacific EMPRINTS/National Disaster Life Support Regional Center-Pacific, and Honolulu and Kauai Fire Departments. Throughout the years, I have observed her deep commitment to improving emergency management and public health preparedness. Without hesitation I can say Dr. Char's expertise in this field is second to none in the State of Hawaii. Furthermore, she understands that the advancement of public health in the State requires collaborative partnerships across communities and sectors. She excels in working with people and is highly respected and recognized as a leading expert by her peers at the national and state levels.

Dr. Char, as an administrator, has demonstrated leadership qualities in each of her past positions, placing the best interests of the State of Hawaii first and foremost. She sees the big picture, is effective at the policy level and visionary. I cannot imagine anyone more fit for this appointment and I kindly request your favorable support of her appointment.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on GM 506. Please contact me at [annsakag@hawaii.edu](mailto:annsakag@hawaii.edu) if I can answer any questions.

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

650 SOUTH KING STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
PHONE: (808) 723-8960 • FAX: (808) 768-1492



RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR

HIROKAZU TOIYA  
DIRECTOR

JENNIFER WALTER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Health  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee on Health:

SUBJECT: Governor's Message 506

I, Hirokazu Toiya, Director of the Department of Emergency Management am submitting for your consideration and confirmation for Elizabeth Char as the Director for the Department of Health (DOH). The Director of Health position is one of the most challenging and important jobs in our state even during best of times and exponentially so during this Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) global pandemic. I believe we need a leader with extraordinary commitment to public service, someone with the ability to assimilate complex information quickly, and someone with the humility to understand their own limitations and knows when to ask for help or seek collaboration. Dr. Char embodies these characteristics and more, and she has proven to be an effective leader during these most challenging times since taking on the role in September last year. I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** for confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as the Director of Health for the State of Hawaii.

Since the beginning of our COVID-19 response, Dr. Char has been there for us at the City and County of Honolulu (City). At the beginning of the pandemic, Dr. Char had been working as the Medical Director for the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD), and we knew that Dr. Char would be an asset based on her background and our previous work with her. When we asked, without hesitation, Dr. Char agreed to serve in a voluntary advisory capacity to the City before we even saw the first confirmed case in our state, all the way through until she began her work at DOH on September 16, 2020. This voluntary advisory capacity to the City was well beyond her scope of work as the

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Health  
March 1, 2021  
Page 2

Medical Director for HFD and Dr. Char committed substantial time and effort in supporting our response because public service is at the core of her character. Her work during the pandemic further demonstrates her commitment.

One thing that's been a constant with COVID-19 is change. The science and our collective understanding of the disease and what we need to do to protect the health of our community continues to evolve. Dr. Char has shown time after time that she not only has the ability to quickly understand complex situations but she is able to apply new information to the local context and explain them in terms that others can understand. She demonstrated this ability during her time as the voluntary advisor to the City and she continues to do so for DOH. The response priorities have been dynamic with multiple lines of efforts such as contact tracing, quarantine and isolation, testing, surveillance for variants, travel policies, and now vaccination. Through it all, Dr. Char has applied sound scientific, medical, and public health principles to make well informed decisions quickly to keep our state the safest in the nation from COVID-19.

As an emergency physician, Dr. Char has undoubtedly faced countless situations in which lives were literally in her hands. As the Director of Health, Dr. Char now has our community's health and wellbeing in her hands. One of the qualities that stands out about Dr. Char is her humility. Throughout the pandemic, Dr. Char has not only demonstrated her own competence and capabilities, but she has also been quick to seek the advice of subject matter experts as well as collaboration from partners to make critical decisions and to enable response actions. No one individual or no single agency can do it all, and Dr. Char led us to work collaboratively for the sake of our community.

The Director of Health is one of the most important and challenging positions right now, and I believe Dr. Char is the right person for the job. I know that we will continue to face challenges in this pandemic before it's over, but if I could choose anyone for the position, it would be Dr. Char. I reiterate my strong support for the confirmation of Dr. Char as the Director of Health for the State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Hirokazu Toiya  
Director

# OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

---



## Testimony of Derek S.K. Kawakami

Mayor, County of Kaua'i

Before the

### Senate Committee on Health

Wednesday, March 3, 2021; 1:00 PM

Videoconference

In consideration of

### GM 506 Relating to the Appointment of

Elizabeth Char

### As the Director of the Department of Health

Honorable Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Honorable Members:

I am honored to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Elizabeth (Libby) Char's appointment as the Director of the State of Hawai'i Department of Health. Her commitment, expertise, and collaborative skills will direct our Department of Health on a highway to recovery during this pandemic and long after.

Libby has demonstrated strong commitment to the people of Hawai'i as a physician, board member, medical director, lecturer, student advisor, and volunteer. Not only does she work in a supervisory capacity in the medical field, she works with students just starting out supporting their future and in turn, of our health systems.

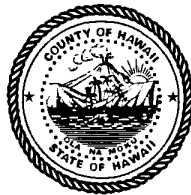
As the previous Kaua'i Fire Medical Director, Libby was responsible for the oversight of the National Registry of our Emergency Medical Technicians, Emergency Responders, First Aid, and CPR programs. During this time she jumped into the Hawai'i Emergency Management Urban Search and Rescue training with our team demonstrating her hands on approach to leadership and team building.

Early in her career Libby began supervising emergency response teams which eventually led to her directing hospital and medical center emergency departments. Her ability to supervise and lead is inherent but what is paramount in her success is her collaborative approach to leadership. Her willingness to seek the insight and include government agencies and business leaders in developing programs and policies since her recent appointment as the Director of Health has brought direction and clarity to the department.

I ask this Honorable Committee to advise and consent to Dr. Char's nomination, and forward to the full Senate for consideration. Mahalo for the opportunity to present this testimony.

**Mitchell D. Roth**  
*Mayor*

**Lee E. Lord**  
*Managing Director*



**Robert R.K. Perreira**  
*Acting Fire Chief*

**County of Hawai'i**  
**HAWAI'I FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

February 23, 2021

The Honorable Jarett Keohokalole, Chair  
Committee on Health  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 231  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Keohokalole:

RE: Governor Message (GM) 506 Relating to the Confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char

I am Robert R. K. Perreira, Acting Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department (HFD). The HFD supports the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health.

We believe that she possesses the knowledge, skills and leadership that are necessary for the position and consider her a valuable asset to the State of Hawai'i. The Hawai'i Fire Department leadership has had the distinct honor and privilege of professionally knowing Dr. Char. Dr. Char has been very instrumental in the success of the EMS program on the Big Island.

For the reasons above, we strongly urge this committee to approve the passage of GM506, the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health.

Thank for allowing the Hawai'i Fire Department to testify on this bill. Should you have any questions, please contact me [Robert.perreira@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:Robert.perreira@hawaiicounty.gov) or at (808) 932-2900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RRKP".

Robert R. K. Perreira  
Acting Fire Chief

RRKP:cf





**American Heart Association SUPPORT for the confirmation of  
Elizabeth Char, M.D. as the Director of the Department of Health**

The American Heart Association supports the confirmation of Elizabeth Char, M.D. as the Director of the Hawaii Department of Health.

**Chairman of the Board**

Glen Kaneshige

**President**

Michael Lui, MD

**Board Members**

Rick Bruno, MD, FACEP

Jackie De Luz

Brandt Farias

Jason Fujita

Mimi Harris

Zia Khan, MD

Brandon Kurisu

Arnold Martines

Michael Rembis, FACHE

Andrew S. Rosen

Timothy Slottow

Jennifer Walker

Dr. Char has a long history of public service to the health of Hawaii's people.

She has served as an American Heart Association volunteer in a number of capacities including serving as its Hawaii Division Board President, and as a national faculty member for Emergency Cardiovascular Care. She's also been an active advocate for the Association playing critical roles in helping support the passage of state legislation requiring Hawaii birthing centers to screen all newborns for congenital heart defects, and state legislation requiring all Hawaii stroke centers to collect and share stroke patient data with the State Department of Health. That data has been used in a collaborative effort by the Hawaii Stroke Coalition to help all Hawaii hospitals receiving stroke patients via EMS to significantly improve stroke patient care.

Dr. Char has also served as medical director for the Honolulu EMS and lifeguard services, and for American Medical Response-Hawaii.

Char is an assistant clinical professor of surgery, an emergency room physician and an alumna of the University of Hawaii at Manoa John A. Burns School of Medicine. She has experience in clinical and administrative experience that will lend well to her new role as Director of the Department of Health.

*Serving Hawaii since 1948*

**Our Mission:**

"To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives."

We ask that you support Dr. Char's nomination. She will be strong leader as the Director of the Health Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald B. Weisman

Government Relations/Communications Director

For more information on the AHA's educational or research programs, visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) or contact your nearest AHA office.



**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 9:21:20 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Speedy Bailey	Testifying for AMR	Support	No

Comments:

In strong support for the work Dr. Char is currently doing and going forward!



March 2, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health

Senator Rosalyn Baker  
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Health

GM506: Testimony in **SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Keohokalole and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Hawaii College of Emergency Physicians and our 150 emergency physician members, I am writing in support of Dr. Libby Char's confirmation as Director of the Department of Health.

Dr. Char has worked as a tireless advocate for Hawaii's vulnerable populations for many years. She is a fantastic physician and dedicated health care administrator. We whole heartedly support her nomination to the position of the Director of the Department of Health and recommend her without reservation.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Will Scruggs", is positioned above the printed name.

Will Scruggs, MD  
President, Hawaii College of Emergency Physicians

Mark Baker M.D., FACEP  
Past Pres., Hawaii Chapter American College of Emergency Physicians  
Emergency Physician and Medical Informatics Director, Pali Momi Medical Center  
34 Puukani Pl.  
Kailua, HI 96734  
[bakerwm@hawaii.edu](mailto:bakerwm@hawaii.edu)

February 22, 2021

**Re: Testimony in support of Dr. Libby Char as the Director of the State of Hawaii  
Department of Health**

To whom it may concern:

It is with pleasure that I support Dr. Libby Char as the Director of the Department of Health. I have known Libby for about 20 years. We both have been active members on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians. Dr. Char is motivated, conscientious, thorough, and gets along with people.

She is capable of being the director and has the support of every emergency physician I know. Please contact me should you have any more specific questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Baker", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Baker, M.D.



**HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS**

C O R P O R A T I O N

*Quality Healthcare For All*

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

March 3, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Via Videoconference

### **Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT Governor's Message 506**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Linda Rosen, M.D., M.P.H.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hawaii Health Systems Corporation

On behalf of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Corporate Board of Directors, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony **in strong support of Dr. Libby Char's nomination as Director of the Department of Health.**

Dr. Char comes to the Department of Health with a wealth of clinical and administrative experience to help stabilize the department and the state through its navigation of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In her various prominent roles such as Director of the City and County of Honolulu's Emergency Management System and as Medical Director for a number of emergency service entities, Dr. Char provides decades of clinical healthcare and hospital understanding into the department. Simultaneously, she is helping key stakeholders and the public to learn more about viral epidemiology and public health through her informed and genuine communication style. Simply stated, Dr. Char has put a credible, clinical face to the heroic work of the Department of Health throughout Covid-19. As more vaccinations are administered, we anticipate that Dr. Char will increasingly shift her focus to the other critical areas of the Department of Health, such as in behavioral health, family health, and environmental health, where again her clinical background can guide the department towards a more effective public health delivery of services.

The Director of Health is an ex-officio/voting member of the HHSC Corporate Board, overseeing the State's most expansive healthcare system. In light of the state's current economic challenges and ever-changing health care environment that all of Hawaii's hospital systems are facing today, Dr. Char's participation on the HHSC Corporate Board can assist us to continue to provide quality, accessible health care to our island communities, many of which depend on HHSC as the sole provider of health care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee **in strong support** of this nominee.

3675 KILAUEA AVENUE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816 • PHONE: (808) 733-4020 • FAX: (808) 733-4028



**HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM**  
**ASSOCIATION**

Testimony of  
Mufi Hannemann  
President & CEO  
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Senate Committee on Health  
GM 506

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health,  
Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the committee, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's largest private sector visitor industry organization.

I have known Dr. Char since her acceptance into the Pacific Century Fellows, a program that I established to nurture the next generation of leaders from around our state. After working closely with her through the PCF program, there was no question in my mind that, if I became mayor, I wanted Libby Char to be a part of my team at City Hall. I was fortunate to have Dr. Char join what was to become an outstanding cabinet of professionals who served with me during my tenure at Honolulu Hale.

When I tapped Dr. Char as Director of the Emergency Services Department, she already had a distinguished record in the private sector. Throughout her time at the City, she developed a similarly outstanding record of public service as a health professional of the highest caliber- one that she continues to this day as the State Department of Health's interim director.

Our organization has worked closely with Dr. Char in her current capacity, as well as with members of her team at DOH. Dr. Char brings the right balance of private sector and governmental experience to a position that is critical to our state's health, safety, and recovery. **For these reasons, HLTA strongly supports GM 506.**

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



March 3, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Roslyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Health

Re: GM 506 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of GM 506, the confirmation of Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health (DOH).

Dr. Char has extensive experience serving the people of Hawaii in both the public and private sectors. In addition to currently serving as the interim Director since September 2020, Dr. Char has previously served as the State's EMS District Medical Director for Oahu.

In 2011 Dr. Char also served as chairperson of the Health and Medical Planning committee for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, involving 21 heads of economies and approximately 10,000 attendees. Dr. Char was also awarded the Eagles 2020 Michael Keys Copass Award for her service, contributions, and leadership in out-of-hospital emergency care and for serving as a role model for EMS personnel and fellow 911 system medical directors across the nation.

On a related but very relevant note, I've known Libby for years, as we practiced medicine together in this state (her in the ER and me in the OR). She's always been collaborative, engaged, ethical, and pure... the characteristics that are most important when you are entrusted to care for the public health of a place. She has the qualities and characteristics that will promote partnership and trust with the agency.

We believe that Dr. Char's extensive experience coupled with her character and her medical degree from the University of Hawaii, John A. Burns School of Medicine qualifies her for this position.

Thank you for the opportunity to support GM 506. Your consideration for the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D.  
President and Chief Executive Officer



Hawai'i Convention Center  
1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815  
**kelepona** tel 808 973 2255  
**kelepa'i** fax 808 973 2253  
**kahua pa'a** web [hawaii-tourism-authority.org](http://hawaii-tourism-authority.org)

**David Y. Ige**  
*Governor*

**John De Fries**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

Statement of  
**JOHN DE FRIES**

Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol  
via videoconference

In consideration of  
**GOV. MSG. NO. 506**  
**RE: DR. ELIZABETH CHAR**

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Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Committee on Health: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** the governor's nomination of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as director of the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH), and we are hopeful that the Senate will confirm her for the position.

Dr. Char was appointed as interim director of the DOH last September, and she started that role on the same day that I started as president and CEO of HTA. We have collaborated over the past five months. Dr. Char is knowledgeable and highly capable of handling the challenges associated with this important role, thanks in large part to her previous experience as an emergency physician and as the former director of Honolulu's Emergency Services Department. Under her leadership, the DOH implemented a robust and comprehensive vaccination plan, and the COVID-19 case counts have trended lower in recent weeks.

It is for these reasons that we **support** Dr. Char to be confirmed as director of the DOH. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony.

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 1:00 PM  
Via Video Conference

**Senate Committee on Health**

To: Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

**Re: Testimony in Support of GM 506  
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the  
Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char, M.D.**

---

My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

**HPH writes in support of the confirmation of Elizabeth Char, M.D. as the Director of the Department of Health (DOH).**

With over 30 years of experience as both a physician practicing in internal medicine and emergency medicine as well as various roles in government, Dr. Char brings to the DOH a wealth of medical experience and knowledge about the health issues impacting Hawai'i's diverse communities.

For example, in current her role as the interim director for the Department of Health, Dr. Char has demonstrated that she is able to work with various interest groups in coordinating an effective response to the COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

Dr. Char's hands-on experience in both clinical and administrative matters which will greatly benefit the people of Hawai'i HPH fully supports Dr. Char's nomination and HPH urges this Committee to confirm her as the director of the DOH.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.





**GM506 Director of DOH: Dr. Elizabeth Char**

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH:**

- Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair; Sen. Rosalyn Baker, Vice Chair
- Wednesday, March 3, 2021: 1:00
- Videoconference

**Hina Mauka Highly Recommends Dr. Libby Char as DOH Director:**

*ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current CEO of Hina Mauka, a non-profit Treatment and Prevention agency for substance use disorders, mental health disorders and other behavioral health conditions providing treatment for over 2,500 patients a year and providing prevention to thousands of youth and families each year.*

Hina Mauka appreciates Dr. Char for her years of service as both a most capable physician and a medical leader to those agencies that provide valuable services to the community. Dr. Elizabeth Char has demonstrated her value in service to our community and we believe that she will continue to have the best interests of people in our community who need healthcare services.

We fully support Dr. Elizabeth Char's nomination as Director of DOS.

*Aloha, Alan Johnson, President and CEO, Hina Mauka*

March 1, 2021



Senator Jarrett Keohokalole

Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH)

**Related to GM 506, Confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char**

Aloha Senator Keohokalole,

I am writing today to offer my strong unqualified support for the confirmation of Dr. Libby Char as the Director of Health.

I have had the good fortune to work with Dr. Char over the last 8 years on the statewide POLST Task Force. Kōkua Mau serves as the lead agency for POLST (<https://kokuamau.org/polst/>) and our Task Force provides leadership and guidance on education and implementation. Dr. Char has been a consistent team player, bringing her expertise of Emergency Medicine to the table. Her participation and wide-reaching understanding of health care has enabled us to have a strong partnership with the Emergency Services as well as Fire Departments across the state. Additionally she has helped us to appropriately work with Emergency Departments in our hospitals and other health entities.

Kōkua Mau is a statewide coalition that is committed to improving care for those with serious illness. We have been working in Hawaii for over 21 years and have been very busy during the COVID-19 pandemic getting resources and information out to our network as well as identifying and hopefully solving problems. As a public health professional, I have been very reassured and impressed by Dr. Char's thoughtful and straight forward approach to the pandemic and helping our state to respond to the myriad of issues that arise.

Hawaii is lucky to have Dr. Char come forward to serve in this position. I am happy to answer any questions but have no hesitation in recommending her confirmation.

Best regards,

  
Jeannette G Kojane, MPH  
Executive Director

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 11:14:22 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James J Augustine	Testifying for The Metropolitan EMS Medical Directors Global Alliance	Support	No

Comments:

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole

Chair, Senate Committee on Health

State of Hawaii

Re: Letter of recommendation for Elizabeth Char, MD as Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health

I write to support the appointment of Elizabeth Char, MD as Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health. This is in relation to GM 506, which is to be considered on March 3, 2021.

It has been a true honor to serve with Doctor Char for the last eleven years as a member of the Metropolitan EMS Medical Directors Global Alliance (the Eagles). Elizabeth became part of that organization as a result of her activity as Medical Director for Honolulu.

Following her Emergency Medicine residency at the University of California, Los Angeles, Doctor Char has served the state of Ohio in a multitude of important roles. These have brought a much better emergency care system to the State, and to the many jurisdictions where she has had direct roles. She is an award-winning medical educator.

1. served as an emergency physician in some of the larger Emergency Departments on the Island, and became heavily involved in Emergency Medical Services and Fire Departments. She has taken advantage of those opportunities to participate in most of the preparedness operations of the Departments. She served with the Metropolitan Medical Response System, and in that role also chaired committees for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperative. She has served as Medical Director for Honolulu, Kauai, American Medical Response, Hawaii, and Oahu EMS.

Doctor Char has been a tremendous contributor to the medical directors of the largest Fire EMS Services in the United States and across the globe. She has been a regular contributor, innovator, and problem solver for the physicians serving those organizations. In recognition for her contributions, in the middle of the pandemic year of 2020, Dr. Char was recognized by the Metropolitan EMS Medical Directors with a cherished award. Doctor Char received the Michael Keys Copass Award for Service, Contributions and Leadership in out of hospital emergency care.

Elizabeth is honorable, truthful, intelligent, and dedicated to public service and public safety. She is a clear and energetic communicator.

Doctor Char has received several awards for her efforts and dedication to emergency services and high quality care in Hawaii.

I would be happy to answer any further questions or provide background on Doctor Char.

With great respect, and best regards,

James J Augustine, M.D., F.A.C.E.P

Clinical Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine, Wright State University School of Medicine

Medical Director, Atlanta-area Fire Rescue Departments

Past Chair, Ohio EMS Board

Member, Metropolitan EMS Medical Directors Global Alliance

David Mendonsa, PA-C, MCHS, MPA  
640 Komo Ohia Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair,  
Senate Committee on health (HTH)  
State of Hawaii  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 S Beretania St  
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 16, 2021

Dear Chair and Representatives,

Please support **GM 506**. The position for the Director, State of Hawaii Department of Health is vital. Please support Elizabeth A Char, MD as the Director.

I have known Dr. Char for over 20 years. I vividly recall (2000) when she rode along on the ambulance with the Honolulu City & County EMS Metro 1 Crew. She was a valuable resource, EMS director, and we loved her.

Since then her career in emergency medicine, healthcare, and EMS advocacy is impeccable. She is an experienced leader. Dr. Char is a champion that is well respected and extremely approachable.

I appreciate this opportunity and humbly ask for your support for Elizabeth A Char, MD as the Director of the State of Hawaii Department of Health. Dr. Char is the right individual for the position. Please support **GM 506**. Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,



David Mendonsa  
EMS Provider, Physician Assistant  
Prior Service Member, UH EMS Faculty, Aeromedical Provider



## THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND CEO ■ 1301 Punchbowl Street ■ Honolulu, HI 96813 ■ PH: 808-691-4688 ■ FAX: 808-691-7801

March 3, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: Support of GM 506, Consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Dr. Elizabeth A. Char, MD, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Committee Members:

On behalf of The Queen's Health Systems, mahalo for the opportunity to share our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth A. Char, MD as the Director of the Department of Health.

At Queen's, we have the pleasure of working with Dr. Char in her capacity as a physician for the Queen's Healthcare Centers and previously as a staff physician in our Emergency Department. Dr. Char's significant clinical and administrative experience in both private and public organizations demonstrate her deep commitment to improving the health and welfare for all the people of Hawai'i. She knows firsthand the healthcare challenges facing our state and understands the leadership qualities needed to address them. Dr. Char has been at the forefront of pursuing opportunities the help to keep Hawai'i safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic, and we value the close collaboration we have had on the pandemic response and vaccination efforts for our community.

The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a nonprofit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, and more than 1,500 affiliated physicians and providers statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

We respectfully ask that the Senate Committee on Health support Dr. Char's confirmation for this position. The State will be well served by Dr. Char's continued leadership of the Department of Health, and we believe that she will carry out the duties required with great success. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill Hoggard Green, PhD, RN  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
The Queen's Health Systems

Jason C. Chang  
Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer  
The Queen's Health Systems

*The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.*

Jeffrey K. Farris  
581 Ulumu Street  
Kailua, Hawaii 96734  
(808) 386-5910

February 22, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Health  
Hawaii State Legislature  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha,

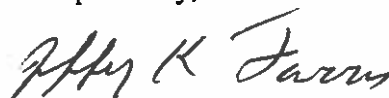
I am submitting testimony in support of the confirmation of DR. Elizabeth Char  
Director, Hawaii State Department of Health

Having previously served 32 years with the Honolulu Fire Department, I have known and worked with Doctor Char for many years. Our professional relationship has spanned her career as a Queens Hospital emergency room doctor, the Chief of Honolulu's Emergency Medical Services Division, and as a subject matter expert providing advice and counsel in the City and County of Honolulu response to the COVID – 19 Pandemic.

Doctor Char's experience and diversity in roles and duties associated to the health and welfare of Hawaii's people makes her an excellent appointment for the Director position. I have observed over these years her utilizing a manner of leadership that employed sound decision making, embracing organizational ethics, and a genuine respect for others. Additionally, she brings integrity and transparency to the directorship position, instilling confidence to our State's collective efforts to protect the health of Hawaii's residents and visitors alike.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey K. Farris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffrey K. Farris



February 19, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH)

Re GM 506

Dear Senator Keohokalole

This is a letter of recommendation for Elizabeth “Libby” Char, MD to serve as the Director of the Department of Health. Libby is an outstanding individual with great qualities of intelligence, personal skills, trust and dedication. She is devoted to the post and very well suited to serve as the Director of the State Department of Health. I highly recommend Dr Char for the job.

Sincerely yours,

Howie Klemmer, MD  
Chief of Emergency Medicine  
The Queens Medical Center  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

February 19, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH)

Re GM 506

Dear Senator Keohokalole

This is a letter of recommendation for Elizabeth “Libby” Char, MD to serve as the Director of the Department of Health. Libby has deep knowledge of and dedication to the community through her practice as an ED physician and medical directorship in emergency medical services. Above all Libby is a collaborative, professional and deeply genuine individual. I highly recommend Dr Char for the job.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel Cheng, MD MPH  
Assistant Chief of Emergency Medicine  
The Queens Medical Center  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

February 16, 2021

TESTIMONY TO  
SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR  
AND THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (HTH)

For Hearing on Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1 p.m. via videoconference

By Lorrie Ann Santos, MPA  
Public Health Educator

**Governor's Message 506: Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of  
the Department of Health,  
Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH A. CHAR, MD,  
For a term to expire at 12:00 noon on December 5, 2022**

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Baker and Members of the Committee:

It is my honor to submit this testimony in **Strong Support** of the confirmation of Elizabeth A. Char, MD as Director of the Department of Health (DOH). I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Char over the past years in planning and conducting Continuing Medical Education (CME) within the field of Trauma for multidisciplinary healthcare professionals (physicians, nurses, advanced level providers, and EMS personnel) involved in the care of critically injured patients.

Dr. Char has dedicated her entire professional career of over 30 years to serving the people of Hawai'i. From being a graduate of the University of Hawai'i, John A. Burns School of Medicine, to being an Emergency Physician at The Queen's Medical Center, and State of Hawai'i EMS District Medical Director for O'ahu. The unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic to Hawai'i and the loss of public confidence in the State Department of Health brought about the emergency appointment of Dr. Char in August 2020. Since stepping into such a difficult position that has taken a toll on the health, well-being, and livelihood of many in our State, her leadership has brought about a collaborative and collective effort to restoring public confidence and regaining the health of our communities and State. She is a dedicated and compassionate public servant who has shown she is perfectly suited to continue to lead DOH during these challenging and unprecedented times.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Governor's Message 506. I humbly request your favorable decision.

Aloha Committee Chair Senator Keohokalole,

As a member of the Fire Service, I have been fortunate to work with Dr. Libby Char over the past few years. She has been extremely invaluable in providing her guidance as a medical director for my organization. Her expertise is second only to her passion for medicine and the patients that she serves. Dr. Char has always treated others with respect and met those around her with praise and true aloha; while remaining humble and committed to the betterment our community statewide.

In closing I know that Dr. Char will act in good faith. I am confident she will operate in the best interest of the all stakeholders that fall under the scope of the Department of Health. I believe her to be an excellent leader who can communicate vision and yet possesses the humility to be a steward of her position and to care for those around her.

Thank you for your time and for receiving my written testimony.

Mahalo

Nicholas Pananganan

February 19, 2021

TESTIMONY TO  
SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALO, CHAIR  
AND THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH (HTH)

For Hearing on Thursday, February 25, 2021  
3 p.m. via video teleconference

**Governor's Message 506: Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director  
of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH A. CHAR, MD  
For a term to expire on December 31, 2022**

Dear Chair Keohokalele, Vice Chair Baker and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of confirming Dr. Elizabeth (Libby) Char as Director, Department of Health.

In my professional capacity as the Manager, Office of Continuing Medical Education at The Queen's Medical Center, I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Char for well over a decade. Dr. Char has been a valued collaborator in an annual multiple-day trauma symposium for healthcare providers across the State of Hawaii. She is skilled in this capacity, having held a wide range of leadership positions in the State and establishing collaborative relationships nationally and locally.

Personally, as a resident of Kaneohe and the State of Hawaii with higher education and training in public health, I feel Dr. Char has brought much-needed stability to the Department of Health in her time as Director. I feel confident in her continuing efforts to better position the Department to handle public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other challenges in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Y. Iwahashi, MPH, CHES

February 19, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH)

Re GM 506

Dear Senator Keohokalole

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve as Director of the Hawaii Department of Health. I have known Dr. Char for 8 years, and have greatly appreciated her collaboration when we faced the task of opening the Queen's West Emergency Department in 2014. She has also regularly attended our Emergency Department monthly meetings at Queen's Medical Center as a representative from the EMS System. She has many years of experience in the field of medicine and has a keen understanding of the challenges that both providers and patients face in Hawaii. I would highly recommend Dr. Char for her new role without reservations. Please let me know if you require any additional information.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Han Park', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Han Park, MD  
hanpark@teghi.com  
President, The Emergency Group  
Emergency Physician  
The Queens Medical Center  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

T

February 22, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health

Testimony for GM 506

Dear Senator Keohokalole,

I highly recommend Dr. Libby Char, MD to serve as the Director of the State Department of Health. Libby is a highly intelligent and compassionate individual who is fully devoted to the role. Libby is a dedicated leader who is able to analyze a challenging situation, provide a tangible solution, and educate both lay and medical providers of the best path forward. Dr. Char is a leader that listens, and she elevates the team around her through her reliability and ethical decision making.

I trust Dr. Char with my life, and I trust in her leadership as the Director of the State Department of Health.

Sincerely,

Evan Grosjean, MD  
Patient Safety Officer for Emergency Medicine  
The Queens Medical Center



National Association of EMS Physicians®

4400 College Boulevard, Suite 220, Overland Park, KS 66211

Phone: (913) 222-8654, Toll Free: 800-228-3677, Fax: (913) 222-8606

info-NAEMSP@NAEMSP.org • [www.NAEMSP.org](http://www.NAEMSP.org)

Michael Levy, M.D., FAEMS, FACP, FACEP President

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole

Chair, Senate Committee on Health

Testimony for Elizabeth Char MD confirmation as Director of the Department of Health

Dear Senator Keohokalole:

It is an honor to recommend Dr. Elizabeth Char be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Health and I do so with enthusiasm and with no reservations based upon well over a decade of professional interactions. Dr. Char and I have both been very active in the medical direction of Emergency Medical Services in our home states as well as nationally. Dr. Char had the distinction of having been selected to join an elite group of national and international EMS leaders (the Metropolitan Municipalities EMS Medical Directors Alliance) where she has been an esteemed contributor to the important body of work done and it was how we first met.

As the Medical Director for Emergency Programs for the State of Alaska, Dr. Char and I have noted some of the similarities in the challenges faced by EMS in our respective states with regard to geographic separation, remote and rural populations and movement of the sick and injured to higher levels of care and have therefore done some brainstorming and shared education on such things as improving cardiac resuscitation for our communities. Dr. Char, in fact, was able to bring to the islands a new technique called "High Performance CPR" taught through numerous resuscitation academies in Hawai'i she set up to improve outcomes from cardiac arrest. During these collaborations I have been awed by Dr. Char's leadership style: she is a confident, quiet, respectful, focused leader whom people want to follow and work with and I think that this is because of her clear plan and collaborative nature. Her vision channels her innate intelligence with extensive research on a topic followed by, typically, looking to thought leaders and other do-ers to help effect change in a pragmatic way appropriate to local culture and resources.

In closing, Dr. Elizabeth Char is a remarkable person, a unique and valuable asset for the State of Hawai'i and it is my hope that she will be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Health.

Aloha,

Michael Levy MD, FAEMS, FACEP, FACP  
National Association of EMS Physicians





## National Association of EMS Physicians®

4400 College Boulevard, Suite 220, Overland Park, KS 66211

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Michael Levy, M.D., FAEMS, FACP, FACEP President

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 4:57:02 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Curt S. Morimoto	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

It is with my highest regard that I urge the Senate Committee on Health to support the CONFIRMATION of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char as the DIRECTOR of the State Department of Health.

Dr. Char has already shown much progress as ‘interim’ SDOH DIRECTOR which she’s held during the most challenging & stressful times of the COVID-19 pandemic in Hawaii. Her capabilities lend to continued progress & accomplishments across the entire SDOH scope.

She is dedicated to the overall health of residents & visitors across the state. **Please APPROVE her CONFIRMATION.** Thank you.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 7:39:02 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Fischberg, MD, PhD	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am a physician and have practiced medicine in Hawaii since 2004. I have collaborated with Dr. Char extensively since then, advancing the POLST paradigm program in Hawaii, to ensure people living with a serious illness receive care that respects their wishes. Throughout the years, Dr. Char has impressed me with so many qualities that make for an effective leader. Dr. Char is highly intelligent and extremely well trained, of course. Yet it is her ability to listen to others and build consensus and her quiet but strong leadership style that marks her as an exemplary candidate for this position. The people of Hawaii would be very fortunate, indeed, to have Dr. Char leading the Department of Health.

Patrick Gragas

137 Auoli Drive  
Makawao, HI 96768

February 23, 2021

To: Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH).

Re: **GM 506** Confirmation Hearing for Dr. Elizabeth Char, Director of Health, SDOH.  
Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 1:00 P.M.

Dear Senator Keohokalole,

Dr. Char has served as interim Director of Health since September 16, 2020. Her gubernatorial appointment came at an extremely challenging time for both our state and nation. I am strongly in support of her continued service as director.

As a Maui County paramedic for the past 36 years, Dr. Char, “Libby”, has been an integral part in maintaining the high standards of pre-hospital emergency care statewide. She has provided guidance through her varied experiences and positions held.

Despite her numerous accolades as an emergency physician, educator, researcher, it is her character of integrity that has impressed me. Very approachable, down to earth, honest. When tasked, she works hard to find resolution.

I hope the Senate confirms Dr. Char’s continued service to Hawai’i as the COVID pandemic remains at the forefront. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH)

Dear Senator Keohokalole,

I wish to offer my support for the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char as Director of the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH).

As you may recall, Dr. Char was named director at a time of great stress on the state’s healthcare system and a period of instability in the DOH. In the five months she has served in the position, Dr. Char has worked to instill a renewed level of energy and passion for the department’s role in ensuring the health of our communities.

I had the privilege of working directly with Dr. Char while working with the DOH and the Governor’s office in 2020. I saw firsthand the commitment and work ethic she brings to her job, often working seven days a week and not leaving the office until late at night.

With our state’s response to COVID-19 of critical importance, it was Dr. Char leading a team who organized the massive vaccine delivery framework, working collaboratively with healthcare providers around the state and other government leaders. She oversaw the implementation of various initiatives that engaged the DOH with non-profits and businesses to improve pandemic response. And she played a leadership role in the Safe Travels pre-travel testing program and the subsequent launch of the Aloha Safe Alert app, as well as education programs for COVID prevention, all while keeping the multitude of other public health programs running.

It has been my experience that Dr. Char is well-regarded by members of her department, the community, business, government and non-profit sectors. I believe she is making considerable progress in establishing a level of trust in the DOH and is ensuring that the department fulfills its mission to serve the health needs of the people of Hawaii especially during this difficult time.

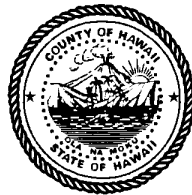
I believe Dr. Char has the experience, expertise and commitment to lead our state’s health services and encourage you to confirm her as Director of the Hawaii Department of Health.

Sincerely,

Lori Teranishi

**Mitchell D. Roth**  
*Mayor*

**Lee E. Lord**  
*Managing Director*



**Robert R.K. Perreira**  
*Acting Fire Chief*

**County of Hawai'i**  
**HAWAI'I FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

February 22, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Committee on Health  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 231  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Keohokalole:

RE: Governor Message (GM) 506 Relating to the Confirmation as the Director of the  
Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth Char

I am Chris Honda, Battalion Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department assigned to the Emergency Medical Services Bureau. I am writing in support for Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director for the Department of Health.

I have worked closely with Dr. Char for over 20 years and feel confident expressing my full support for her selection as the Director of Health. Dr. Char's knowledge, experience and leadership skills have been instrumental to all first responders here in the State of Hawai'i. Dr. Char's key role in establishing our High-Performance CPR program in the state has led to an increase in prehospital cardiac arrest survival rates. Her assistance was very helpful when we were faced with issues such as Dengue Fever mitigation, sulfur dioxide exposure with our 2018 lava eruption and our current COVID-19 pandemic issue.

I humbly ask for your support with the confirmation of Dr. Char as the Director of the Department of Health.

Please feel to email me at [chris.honda@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:chris.honda@hawaiicounty.gov) should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chris Honda  
EMS Battalion Chief  
Hawai'i Fire Department



**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 8:33:17 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
peter halford	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am writing to strongly support Dr. Libby Char for the Director of Health position. I have known and worked with her over the past 25 years and can attest to her excellent qualifications. I am presently a retired surgeon from the Queens Medical Center but was very active in the care of the injured patient from the 1980s until 2018. Dr.Char was an emergency room physician over this time and eventually moved into leadership positions with the EMS system for the City and County. Her noteworthy qualities are a true outstanding work ethic combined with being a smart, trustworthy, honest, and compassionate physician. She is well liked and has been a great leader in the Emergency Services arena. Her performance thus far in the Department of Health has also been well received in this pandemic environment. She understands our culture, and will be an ideal person to guide and oversee this State Department. Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify. Peter Halford MD

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 10:35:51 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christopher R Sloman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I would like to submit my testimony in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's nomination as Director of the Department of Health for the State of Hawaii. I have known Dr. Char in a professional capacity for nearly six years and during that time have repeatedly had the opportunity to work with Dr. Char in various state and local capacities related to emergency medical services.

Dr. Char's education, experience, and integrity make her the ideal candidate to lead Hawaii's Dept. of Health moving forward.



**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 6:04:04 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

As a Fire Fighter, Advanced EMT, and former Fire Captain in charge of the Medical Section for the Honolulu Fire Department I have had the privilege and honor to work with Dr Char. I recommend and whole heartedly support her nomination.

She embodies professionalism, competence and compassion. Her humble work ethic, and unwavering commitment to personal excellence has earned her the respect of her colleagues locally, nationally and truthfully around the world. Never one to seek attention she is constantly sought out as a subject matter expert and advisor due to her calm demeanor, grounded perspective and unerring ability to navigate difficult waters.

In these challenging times the DOH needs a leader who has subject matter expertise, is able to articulate that knowledge and experience to the public, and has a calm commanding presence in the most stressful situations. Dr. Char has the skill set and emotional intelligence the DOH and the State of Hawaii needs.

I urge your support in the confirmation of Gubernatorial nominee Dr. Char for the post of Director State Department of Health.

Mahalo,

Michael Jones

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 9:47:17 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorin Kim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the confirmation of Dr. Char for Director of Health.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 11:18:34 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Mendonsa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern;

I have had the privilege of working in collaboration with Dr Char over the past 15 years in the setting of Hawaii Emergency Medical Services (EMS). I have been a perpetual student, as is the case of most healthcare jobs, and an employee with American Medical Response, with Dr Char consistently playing a leadership role as a medical provider, educator and company medical director. In my experience, Dr Char has always been professional, approachable, humble, intelligent and consistent in keeping up-to-date on the most available evidence-based practices. She has championed initiatives and worked tirelessly to incorporate them into our own healthcare system. The best example that comes immediately to mind is her work with High-Performance CPR, which survival data demonstrate is more effective than traditional CPR. She is a scholar and a scientist who has demonstrated time and time again her dedication to public service.

Thank you for your time and consideration of Dr Char's candidacy for Director for Department of Health, and for witnessing this testimony in **strong support of this nomination.**

Sincerely,

Jessica S B Mendonsa, MCHS, MICT, PA-C 588, Paramedic 1891

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 12:03:22 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Matthew J. Shim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

GM506/March 3, 2021

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony for GM506.

My name is Tina Hamayasu and I am testifying in support of the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the position of Director of Department of Health.

Dr. Char was the Director of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) when I started my career as an Emergency Medical Technician and became my Medical Director when I became a flight paramedic for American Medical Response (AMR) Air Hawaii.

While I was a city paramedic, Dr. Char made herself available as an advisor, guiding me towards my future career goals. She encouraged me to pursue higher levels of medical service and education. Ultimately, I completed my master's degree in Public Administration and became a certified critical care flight paramedic. I am now the Hawaii Clinical Operations Manager for LifeSave KuPono, an air ambulance company based in Honolulu. The critical care flight paramedic is considered the highest level of paramedic care in EMS.

Dr. Char made herself available, day and night, as the Medical Director for AMR Air Hawaii. She would answer our calls with full intention of assisting us with our questions or concerns regarding patient care. I believe Dr. Char was fair and honest in her assessments, reasonable in her decision making, and took the time to gather and listen to all the facts presented. My colleagues and I never hesitated to communicate with Dr. Char as she was easy to talk to, and always a patient advocate. Dr. Char would also give us pertinent feedback on our critical care treatments and charting; as well as follow up on the patients who were given a poor prognosis. Dr. Char would call the medical crews after difficult calls to debrief, showing compassion to the healthcare providers and ensuring we were taken care of as well. Her time and dedication to improving the State of Hawaii EMS system as a whole, by investing time in individuals, is what set her apart from the other Medical Directors I have since worked for.

I believe the State of Hawaii is fortunate to have Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health. I know she will lead us with compassion and integrity to get us through this difficult time.

Thank you for your time and considerations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tina Hamayasu".

Tina Hamayasu, MPA, FP-C  
3201 Loulu Street  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
808-352-7726

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/25/2021 8:35:24 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janet Berreman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dr. Char has done an exceptional job of taking a leadership role in the Department of Health at an extremely challenging time. She should be commended for her work to date, and the state will be fortunate to have her confirmed in this position. Her clear, level-headed, and decisive leadership is precisely what our state needs.

**GM-506**

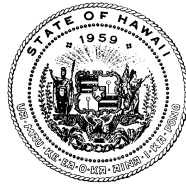
Submitted on: 2/26/2021 10:00:08 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Virginia Pressler, MD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Virginia Pressler strongly supports Dr. Libby Char for Director of Health. I have known Dr. Char for almost 30 years. She is highly qualified for this position. She is honest, hard working, dedicated and has many years of experience working in emergency services for our state and City and County of Honolulu. We are very lucky to have her as Director of Health.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. BOX 3378  
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

Testimony of Dr. Keith E. Kawaoka, Deputy Director, Environmental Health  
in SUPPORT of GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 506

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the  
Department of Health

**ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D., FACEP** for a term to expire 12-05-2022.

**SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Hearing Date: March 3, 2021      Room Number: via teleconference

This testimony is submitted in very strong support of the nomination and confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth (Libby) Char as the Director of the State of Hawaii Department of Health (DOH).

Since joining the Department, Dr. Char has literally hit the bricks running! Her past experience and knowledge have allowed her to take on this huge challenge. Dr. Char, during her relatively short period at DOH, has fostered at both DOH and outside agencies a teamwork attitude and creating an atmosphere of determining critical decision-making and getting the job done.

She has demonstrated the necessary skills set, effective management style, and dedication to assist department programs to do their jobs. Please grant her the opportunity to continue her leadership and commitment to the overall goals of the Department of Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/26/2021 1:57:04 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathryn Braun	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I urge you to confirm Dr. Libby Char's appointment as Director of DOH. I am a professor of public health and social work, testifying as an individual. Dr. Char agreed to serve because she believes she can make a positive difference, especially during this pandemic. She also strongly believes that improving the public's health requires partnership across communities and sectors. I feel that she is succeeding on both of these fronts and will continue to be a good leader of DOH.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/26/2021 7:22:09 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lon Paresa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support Dr. Libby Char as the Director of Health. She is an asset to the State of Hawaii.

GM506/March 3, 2021

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony for GM506.

My name is Kenneth Toru Hamayasu and I am testifying in support of the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the position of Director of Department of Health.

Dr. Char and I served in the cabinet of Mayor Mufi Hannemann.

Dr. Char was Director of Emergency Services Department and I was Deputy Director of Department of Transportation Services and later I became Interim Executive Director of Honolulu Rapid Transportation Authority. I am now fully retired.

Dr. Char impressed me during the cabinet meetings as an intelligent and articulate individual who ran the department efficiently and effectively. I heard she was a decisive and fair leader who gained a lot of respect and support from the staff. I believe that demonstrated her superior managerial skills. I think she is an excellent choice for DOH.

One of the staff who admired her was our daughter who was a paramedic at the time and worked under Dr. Char. Dr. Char was a mentor and role model for our daughter, and we became good friends.

As my wife and I got to know Libby, we were impressed with her compassion and professionalism as one who is genuinely dedicated to helping people.

It seems compassion is what is needed in the leadership at the department today, and Libby will bring it.

Being a doctor and helping those in need is not just a profession for her but she takes to heart as one who is grateful that she was given the mind and skills to be one.

One example of her dedication to the profession is that she helps her friends and their families whenever she can. When Libby was informed of our aging parents and in-laws receiving medical attention, Libby would pay a visit, day or night, and provided the added level of comfort with her advice and care. She is a friend who never forgets she is a doctor.

My grandfather, who practiced medicine in China in the early 1900s, had preached and practiced the old Chinese saying that medicine is not only a science but a way of humanity.

Dr. Elizabeth Char exemplifies that saying. Department of Health and State of Hawaii are fortunate to have her as the one to lead us through this difficult time.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/27/2021 12:37:44 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
MICHAEL S HAYASHI	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dr. Char is a lifelong Trauma and Emergency Medical Services leader in Hawaii and Nationally. Exceptional experience, judgment, community relationships, and procedural knowledge necessary for this essential role.

February 27, 2021

To: Senator Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Baker, Vice Chair  
Committee Members  
Senate Health Committee

Fr: Laurel Johnston  
*Laurel Johnston /s/*

RE: Governor's Message # 506  
Elizabeth Char  
Director of Health

### Testimony in SUPPORT

Please accept my testimony in strong support of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char as Director of Health.

While I knew of Dr. Char's extensive work in emergency medicine and public health, it was last Summer 2020 when I first personally heard her as an advisor to the City and County of Honolulu in a meeting about COVID-19 testing. Her voice was calm, and her advice was informed by current research that she had closely studied. She was also an active listener to the varying points of view being discussed in these ongoing meetings.

Based upon that meeting and subsequent interactions into Fall 2020, I believe that Dr. Char agreed to take this position, during a pandemic, because of her deep concern for our community and her background in public health. Her courage in stepping forward at this time should be recognized as equally important as her medical background. She is the right person, at this time, to be leading the Department of Health.

I urge your approval of her appointment as Director of Health.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of my testimony.

CRUSH COVID NOW!  
Wash, Mask & Distance + Vaccinate

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 10:45:27 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chris Rose	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am writing in support of the confirmation of Dr. Char as Director of the Department of Health. I have had the privilege of working in and with organizations Dr. Char has had oversight of. Her Clarity of vision and strategy of implementation, made moving forward with changing policies and procedures so successful. When American Heart Association changed CPR protocols for EMS responders, Dr. Char was able transition Maui County To High Performance CPR in a logical, easy to apply manner. Dr. Char's hands on approach allowed for all people involved to have input and created an environment of inclusion. Her calm demeanor and patience have always encouraged an open exchange of ideas. Our state needs someone of Dr. Char's caliber to guide us through this constantly changing health care landscape.

CARRIE K. S. OKINAGA, ESQ.

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole,  
Chairperson  
Senate Committee on Health  
[HTHcommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HTHcommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Re: GM-506 - Testimony in Support of Confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char

Dear Chair Keohokalole and Committee Members,

Please accept this testimony in unqualified support for the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of the State Department of Health (DOH). I have known Dr. Char (known to me as Libby) for more than 20 years, first in the Pacific Century Fellows program, and then I had the honor of working with her at the City and County of Honolulu when she served with distinction as Director of the Emergency Services Department (ESD) for over five years. Libby's mind is brilliant and unflappable, her leadership style is effective and inspiring (her heart is quite literally humongous, her energy is infinite, and her humility is uniquely inspiring), and her desire to serve the people of our state is pure and sincere. Governor Ige could not have picked a DOH Director better suited to calmly lead our state through this pandemic, as she has done for the past five months.

Before working at the City and County, Libby served as an Emergency Room Physician at the Queen's Medical Center, well known for its role as the State's trauma center. That facet of Libby's background, as a Queen's ER doctor, captures the full extent of her ability to calmly assess and then handle crisis and human suffering. We have already benefited from her steady hand and public health experience in bending the infection curve downward even while vaccine supply has been limited.

Libby is also an effective leader, as I witnessed firsthand at the City where as ESD Director, I watched her take on very difficult, multi-jurisdictional policy issues, including how to improve cooperation between her department's EMS division and the Honolulu Fire Department's emergency medical technicians. Without ego, she and then-Chief Ken Silva sought and obtained efficiencies without sacrificing public health, all by doing what she does best, *i.e.*, solving problems and helping people. Libby has worked effectively with multiple county and State administrations, and she leads without ego and without sleep; DOH needs her leadership and experience in every county, with crisis management responsibilities that it has never before had to perform.

Finally, taking on the role of DOH Director during a pandemic is an act of pure selflessness, involving 24-7 diligence and focus. As a friend I worry about her sleep


Chair Keohokalole  
March 1, 2021  
Page 2

deprivation and too many skipped meals, but as a citizen, I am very grateful for her willingness to serve, and her service is inspiring. It is no surprise to me that the drama that seemed to unfold almost daily at DOH has disappeared from headlines, and DOH and we as the public are now able to focus on that which we care about most, i.e., infection rates, vaccination availability, and reopening of our economy. Her desire to serve our community is pure and is what drives her to give 200 percent. She has demonstrated throughout her career that she takes positions of great impact and responsibility, not because of a desire for power (pretty sure she is the classic reluctant leader), but because of her competence, her brains, her energy, and her very big heart.

In summary, Libby has the calm presence and public health expertise, in addition to the leadership skills and the passion that this position requires. Libby will continue to bring tremendous experience, knowledge, energy, relationships, enthusiasm, and heart to the DOH, as she has to everything else she has done. I respectfully submit that the people of Hawaii are extremely well-served by her appointment to this position.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of support for the appointment of Dr. Libby Char as Director of the Department of Health. If you have any questions regarding the above, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Carrie K. S. Okinaga", written in a cursive style.

Carrie K. S. Okinaga



February 28, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair,  
Senate Committee on Health

Subj: Support of GM 506, **Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of the Department of Health**

I strongly support the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char as Director of the Department of Health.

I have known Dr. Char for more than a decade as we collaboratively worked on the overlapping issues of end of life care and the EMS system. Her integrity and knowledge are beyond reproach. She approaches each and every problem she faces with those values which most represent our island home: Collaborative solutions and respect for all. Her humility coupled with clinical capability has engendered a wide based respect from along the entire health care continuum, from the EMS and first responders to those of us in end of life care services. In the five months that she has been doing her job as Acting Director, you can easily see that she is outcome oriented and no drama about helping others jointly be successful in combatting COVID-19.

After I retired as a Hospice Executive, I joined the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee (EMSAC) at the invitation of Dr. Char. She consistently demonstrated a broad range of comprehension of both the work on the ground as well as mission and objectives of the senior leadership of the Division.

Senator Keohokalole, I am your constituent and we have chatted when you have come to my home to ask for my vote. Now I ask for your vote, and those of the members of Senate Health Committee to confirm Dr. Char.

Sincerely,

/s

Kenneth Zeri, RN, MS  
EMSAC Chair,  
Retired Hospice CEO

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 6:07:29 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jerris Hedges, MD	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Aloha Senators Keohokalole and Baker,

Please accept this note in support of the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth (Libby) Char as Director of the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH). As you are aware, Dr. Char stepped up to serve as interim director of the DOH under challenging times in September of 2020. During the SARS-Coronavirus pandemic, she has demonstrated the ability to bring about active change in the DOH under her servant leadership style which our state has needed during the pandemic. The public now has greater confidence in messaging from the DOH and we have seen a more proactive adjustment of DOH guidance/activities for both the general public and healthcare providers during the ever changing pandemic.

Dr. Char is well grounded in medicine as a graduate of the John A. Burns School of Medicine and well seasoned in the handling of medical emergencies as a specialist in emergency medicine and as a past director of emergency medical services (EMS) for the City & County of Honolulu and other EMS medical director posts.

Dr. Char is a knowledgeable, methodical thinker who listens to multiple parties and takes decisive action after considering the alternatives. She has repeatedly demonstrated her ability to do so when required during periods of considerable uncertainty when outcomes are time-dependent as we have seen with this pandemic.

She has my full support as the best candidate for appointment as state DOH Director.

Jerris R. Hedges, MD, MS, MMM

Professor & Dean

John A. Burns School of Medicine

University of Hawai'i Manoa

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 7:52:49 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Debbie Kim Morikawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chairperson

Senate Committee on Health

Re: GM-506 - Testimony in Support of Confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char

Dear Chair Keohokalole and Committee Members,

It is my honor to testify in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's appointment to the position of Director of the Department of Health. I have known Dr. Char for over 20 years. We are both Pacific Century Fellow alumni and most recently I served with her under the Hannemann Administration at the City and County of Honolulu where she was the Director of Emergency Services.

Dr. Char's knowledge of medicine and her commitment to the highest quality of patient care are unsurpassed. As an Emergency Room Physician at the Queen's Medical Center she demonstrated the ability to remain calm under fire in the most critical of healthcare situations. At the City, in her position as the Director of Emergency Services, she demonstrated her effective leadership skills in responding to both medical crises and negotiating through complex political issues.

In 2018 she became recertified in Emergency Medicine by the American Board of Emergency Medicine, an extremely challenging certification and completely voluntary process which reflects Dr. Char's commitment to staying current in her profession and dedication to the delivery of the highest quality of care.

She has a lengthy list of organizations she has served on, where she has generously shared her knowledge and expertise with her peers and the community. Dr. Char is straightforward and highly transparent, a trait that is critical in her role as the Director of Health.

I am extremely grateful for Dr. Char's self-sacrifice in accepting Governor Ige's appointment of her to this position. To take on the challenge of such a large department during a time of such extreme crisis is a pure act of selflessness and service to our community.

I could go on and on about Dr. Char's accomplishments, areas of expertise, and leadership skills. However, the traits which I believe make Dr. Char the best suited for this position are her integrity, her humility, and her unwavering commitment to doing what's right and in the best interest of the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of support for the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of the Department of Health.

Yours truly,

Debbie Kim Morikawa

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 7:56:17 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lori K Suan	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the committee: I am testifying in strong support of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char, nominee for director of the Department of Health (DOH). Dr. Char currently serves as the department’s interim director. Dr. Char brings comprehensive medical and clinical knowledge in addition to extensive administration and leadership experience to the department during this unprecedented time. Her passion to help our communities through her collaborative leadership-style, level of accountability and diligence is an asset to the State of Hawaii. Having known Dr. Char for over 15 years, I strongly recommend her to the position. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of Dr. Char.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 9:33:42 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
William Haning, MD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dr. Char is my spouse.

I fully support this endeavor. In addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, to which she has been committed since well before this interim appointment, she has already made substantial personal sacrifice. She is prepared to continue doing so.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 10:37:56 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Kasuya	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I would like to respectfully offer my strong support for the approval by the Senate of Governor Ige's appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the State Director of Health. As a physician and educator for over 30 years, I have had the pleasure and privilege of working with Dr. Char in many different capacities. She has proven to consistently be of the highest integrity and character in all she does. The State needs individuals with her skill, commitment, and spirit to lead us through this critically important time. I unequivocally trust her to always act in the best interest of the health and safety of the people of Hawaii. Thank for the opportunity to offer this brief statement of support for Dr. Char, and thank you all for your ongoing public service.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 4:38:27 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David A Miramontes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have worked with Dr. Char for over 15 years on numerous projects and with the National Association of EMS Physicians and The US Metropolitan Urban EMS Medical Directors Consortium ( EAGLES) . She has always demonstrated high ethical principles and a passion for improving patient care and wellness. I fully recommend her confirmation as Director of the Department of Health for the State of Hawaii.

David A. Miramontes MD FAEMS FACEP NREMT

Medical Director San Antonio Fire Department

Associate Clinical Professor

University of Texas Health- San Antonio

4522 Fredericksburg Road Suite 101

San Antonio, TX 78201-6521

MiramontesD@uthscsa.edu

Work 210-567-7827



**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 5:47:54 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeremy Cole	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

We were fortunate to work with Doctor Char while she was the medical director for the Kauai Fire Department. While she worked with KFD she spearheaded the evolution of Kauai Fire Department's CPR skills. She was a vital link from the island of Kauai to world class EMS providers like Seattle Fire Department. She was able to translate the mindset and commitment to excellence of a much larger metropolitan department to an isolated community like Kauai. Undoubetly there are individuals alive on Kauai today that were saved by the committment and culture Doctor Char helped to create.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 8:43:27 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Matthew Ing	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to provide support for Dr. Libby Char continuing in the role of Director of the Department of Health. Since starting in the role, Dr. Char has provided clearer guidance and leadership during the ongoing COVID pandemic.

Sincerely,

Matthew Ing

February 22, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
And Member  
Senate Committee on Health  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: GM 506: Consideration and Confirmation of Elizabeth Char as the Director of Health Hearing:  
Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 1:00PM Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

I write to support the nomination of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of Health. I have known Dr. Char for over 15 years, as we are both long-time supporters of the American Heart Association and its mission equitably to improve public health. In that context, I have witnessed first-hand Dr. Char's relentless commitment to ensuring that all citizens of the State benefit from the best that science has to offer. For example, in March, 2017, as the medical director for the Honolulu Fire Department, Dr. Char led a demonstration by her team of a cutting-edge form of CPR, generally known as High Performance CPR, that she had learned about, researched and trained her team to perform. This form of CPR was so advanced that at the time only Seattle had implemented it. The demonstration left a strong impression with members of the AHA's regional board who observed it, as they recognized that all residents of Honolulu were receiving the benefit of the very latest science, even ahead of the mainland, thereby improving outcomes and saving lives.

Dr. Char's concern for public health extends to addressing health equities and social determinants of health as well, which is critical in such a diverse community as Hawaii's. Her concern about disparate health access and outcomes began well before the current lens of COVID-19 made everyone aware of it.

Dr. Char's commitment to public health is as undoubtable as her passion for public service. I support unreservedly her confirmation as Director of Health.

Very truly yours,



Les Ueoka

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 11:48:25 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anna Mendez-Paro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

I support confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of the Department of Health.

Mahalo,

Anna Paro

HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

3375 KOAPAKA STREET, SUITE H-450 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-1814  
Phone: (808) 723-7800 • Fax: (808) 723-7836



RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR

IAN T.T. SANTEE, MPA.  
ACTING DIRECTOR

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice-Chair  
And Members  
The Senate Committee on Health  
State Capitol Room 231  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Baker, and Members:

SUBJECT: Governor's Message 506  
Dr. Elizabeth Char

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Elizabeth Char, MD as the Director of Health.

I have worked with Dr. Char in various capacities when she worked at the City & County of Honolulu. Dr. Char brings a wealth of experience to the Department of Health with her work in the private, government and non-profit sectors.

Dr. Char is a knowledgeable and fair leader and has kept the best interests of the community as her priority.

In closing, I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Dr. Elizabeth Char.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ian T.T. Santee", is written over a horizontal line.

Ian T.T. Santee, MICT, MPA  
Acting Director

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 12:52:11 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thinh Nguyen, M.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am Thinh Nguyen, M.D. I am a board-certified emergency physician and have been involved in emergency medical services for over 25 years. I have worked in Hawaii for the last 19 years. I am currently the medical director for the Honolulu Fire Department.

I have known and worked with Dr. Libby Char for over 18 years. Not only is she an outstanding physician, both caring and compassionate, but a superb leader. After choosing to be the Director of the Department of Health, Dr. Libby Char has shown she can do the job.

I highly endorse Dr. Libby Char and hope that you confirm her appointment as the Director of the Department of Health.

Sincerely,

Thinh Nguyen, M.D.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 1:41:09 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
wilfredo tungol	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

March 1. 2021

**RE: GM 506 -Confirmation of Elizabeth Char as DOH Director**

Senator Rosalyn Baker and members of the CPH Committee,

I am submitting this individual testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char's confirmation as Hawaii Director of Health. Dr. Char is well qualified to serve as the director given her extensive background as a practicing physician with a breadth of experience as administrator, practicing surgeon, and emergency physician.

She is a homegrown product of our University of Hawaii system and returned to Hawaii upon completion of her specialty residency in Emergency Medicine to serve our community at the local and state level.

As the DOH Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Officer, I am also familiar with her strong belief in a safe, fair, and friendly work environment. Since taking over the helm of DOH, I can feel the improvement of morale in the department. as she leads the DOH and the state in battling the COVID19 pandemic. We as a state is indeed fortunate that she is willing to serve in this important and at times controversial position in order to help our community.

I urged that your committee act favorably towards her confirmation.

Very truly yours,

Wilfredo Tungol

Pearl City, Hawaii

March 1, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health  
Thirty-First State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Keohokalole,

It is my honor to write in support of the Libby Char, MD as the Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health.

In my previous capacity as the Medical Director of the Neuroscience Institute and Stroke Center of the Queen's Medical Center, I worked with Dr. Char both clinically and in program development in areas that involved the neurosciences and the emergency department. During this time, I found Dr. Char extremely knowledgeable and collaborative in patient care. In the emergency department, she is a phenomenal team member that embraces input from the prehospital provider, patient, family, emergency department and inpatient multi-professional and multidisciplinary team. She also was very engaged in helping to improve processes that impeded best care for patients. Later in her capacity working with the emergency medical transport and prehospital teams, Libby has been a straightforward communicator and always facilitates processes and methods to improve care. I saw this in her efforts to facilitate rapid and best care for the acute stroke patient throughout the continuum of prehospital care. Just as importantly, Dr. Char shows compassion and empathy which have been demonstrated by her efforts to personally arrange a meeting between cardiac arrest patients and the emergency medical teams that has been inspirational and very emotional for patients, families and the health care providers alike.

I also served with Dr. Char as members of the Providers Orders for Life-Sustaining Therapy (POLST) for the State of Hawaii. During this time, she has worked with a team of experts to help provide continuous patient-focused care for the patients of our State throughout their life.

Dr. Char uses her compassion, clinical expertise, excellent communication skills, and ability to work in teams both large and small to make changes and support systems of care that make sense. Libby also has a well-honed sense of humor based in a strong sense of humility for such an accomplished individual. All these qualities and skill sets make her an excellent and well-qualified candidate for the Director of the Department of Health. The State of Hawaii will greatly benefit by her leadership in this role.

Sincerely,



Cherylee Chang, MD, FACP, FCCM, FCNS  
Division Chief, Neurocritical Care  
Professor Neurology  
Duke University

Clinical Professor of Medicine and Surgery  
John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawaii at Manoa



TO: Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair, Senate Committee on Health

It has been my great pleasure to work with Dr. Libby Char in relation to Emergency Medical Services for nearly fifteen years. I am a practicing Emergency Medicine physician for over thirty years, and have been active in EMS for over twenty-five years. Through multiple organizations, I have worked with Dr. Char, and have come to admire and respect her abilities. I have always valued her opinions, her insight, and the dedication she has brought to the practice of medicine and in the support of the people of Hawaii. As an educator and researcher in medicine, I feel that Dr. Char will always give her utmost effort, intelligence and integrity to her position as the Director of Health. The people of Hawaii will now have a highly dedicated and respected physician to lead this department.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish to further discuss Dr. Char's appointment.

With respect,  
Marc Conterato, MD, FACEP, FAEMS  
Adjunct Professor  
University of Minnesota School of Medicine  
Director, Therapeutic Hypothermia Services  
North Memorial Health Hospital

March 1, 2021

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Committee on Health

RE: GM 506

Dear Senator Keohokalole and Distinguished Committee Members:

This testimony is presented as strong support for the appointment of Elizabeth A. Char, M.D as the Director of the Department of Health.

I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Char on numerous occasions over many years. This included her role as an emergency room physician, while working side-by-side on various committees such as the Emergency Medical Professional and Emergency Medical System Advisory Committees, and as the Chair of Kapi'olani Community College's EMS training department. Therefore, I feel highly qualified in providing this letter of support.

There are two qualities in particular I greatly admire. It is Dr. Char's ability to actively listen along with how she responds to the information provided. It is this high-quality engagement that has earned the respect of so many who have had the pleasure in working with Dr. Char. Her responses are always thoughtful, fact-based, and in the best interests of our community.

Dr. Char has also demonstrated consistent support of our pre-hospital Emergency Service System along with our important training endeavors at the college. She truly cares about quality education and about our EMS community and those that we serve.

In conclusion, I strongly support the appointment of Dr. Char as the Director of Health for the State of Hawai'i. She is and will continue to be an amazing public servant.

Sincerely,

Jeff Zuckernick, BS, MBA, NR-P

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 3:21:33 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Glenn Asaeda, MD, FACEP	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am excited to highly support Dr. Elizabeth Char for the position of the Director of the Department of Health for the State of Hawaii. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Dr. Char for nearly a decade with the US Metropolitan EMS Directors consortium as part of the "Eagles" group.

Dr. Char has demonstrated her leadership qualities as a physician leader in the public health realm, time and time again, leading EMS activities in Hawaii and continuing recently with our World-wide COVID pandemic. We have leaned on Dr. Char's expertise in EMS and public health issues on many occasions. She will be a tremendous asset in this position - so very professional, compassionate, and a true natural leader. She is always calm in any potentially overwhelming situation. Thank you for allowing me to participate in this confirmation process.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 4:51:10 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Seu	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Aloha mai kakou. Please accept this as a strong statement of support for the nomination of Dr. Libby Char as Director of Health. I have known Dr. Char on a personal basis for well over 15 years, and to me she embodies the most favorable qualities of a public servant - dedicated to serving her community, no personal agenda for gain or fame, and committed to straight talk and getting things done. Perhaps because of her training as an ER doc, she's quick to assessing problems, prioritizing, and then putting things into motion. Libby will work tirelessly for the good of our State and our community, and will do the right thing. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of her nomination.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 9:48:10 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kenric Murayama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I encourage the approval by the Senate of Governor Ige's appointment of Dr. Char, as Director of Health. Dr. Char stepped in at a time of need for our state and has done an exceptional job leading through the crisis we face. She is passionate and committed to the well-being of the people of Hawaii.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
DANETTE WONG TOMIYASU  
TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

G.M.506  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DIRECTOR OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, ELIZABETH CHAR,  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE AT NOON ON 12-05-2022

March 3, 2021  
1:00 p.m.  
Videoconference

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker and Members of the Health Committee:

I am Danette Wong Tomiyasu, Deputy Director for Health Resources Administration at the Department of Health (DOH). It is my pleasure to provide testimony in **strong support** of the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char as the Director of Health.

Dr. Char is the right leader for the Department of Health and our state. She stepped in to serve our community during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and brought strong, collaborative leadership along with her extensive knowledge and skills in emergency medicine and emergency management. Dr. Char is able to quickly understand and distill a great deal of imperfect information from different sources then take decisive action with collaborative support. This is what is needed during these rapidly changing times. Her integrity and commitment to communicating honestly and openly remains steadfast.

Dr. Char is intelligent, hardworking, honest, and compassionate. She is a leader that truly values and supports the DOH team. Her commitment, dedication and humor energizes and inspires the best in those around her. I respectfully urge you to support the confirmation of Dr. Libby Char as the Director of Health.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 7:18:59 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Foley	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am writing in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's appointment as Director of the Hawai'i Department of Health.

Dr. Char is a fine and honorable person, an excellent organizer and leader; someone who respects the opinions of others but is able to quickly separate the wheat from the chaff.

Dr. Char is also technically competent, one of the finest physicians that I have ever known. Her ability to understand what needs to be done and to motivate others to achieve those goals is something that the Department of Health truly needs.

Michael Foley  
808-396-6430

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 8:00:39 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pamela Foster	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am in full support of the confirmation for Dr. Libby Char as the Director of Health for Hawaii. I have known Dr. Char for more than a decade and find her to be the most honest, knowledgeable, and capable person for any position she wishes to fill. She is truly dedicated to making Hawaii a better place for us to live, work, and play. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Pamela Foster, RN



**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 8:37:09 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eddie Mersereau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker,

I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in strong support of the confirmation of Dr. Char as Director of Health. The state needs and deserves a leader like Dr. Char to continue to steer us through the current public health crisis of COVID and to set the priorities for the future.

Mahalo,

Eddie

Ralph S. Goto  
44-547 Kaneohe Bay Drive  
Kaneohe HI 96744

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health  
State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu HI 96813

Senator Keohokalole, Senator Baker, and Members:

RE: Elizabeth A. Char, MD

My name is Ralph Goto, I am the retired Administrator of the Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division, Honolulu Emergency Services Department, City and County of Honolulu (1981-2013), and a current member of the Board of Directors of the Hawaiian Lifeguard Association. I am writing to offer this testimony in support of Dr. Libby Char's appointment as the Director of the State Department of Health.

I have known Dr. Char personally and professionally for over fifteen years. We shared work and experiences in emergency medical services and public health initiatives in the state, she as an emergency room physician and I as the person in charge of the City and County of Honolulu's ocean lifeguard service. I had the pleasure of serving with Dr. Char on a number of committees including the State EMS Advisory Committee and the Department of Health's Injury Prevention Advisory Committee

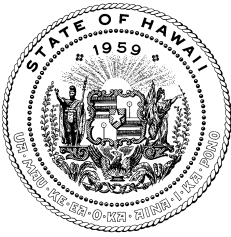
Prior to her appointment as the interim Director of the State Department of Health in September of 2020, Dr. Char was the Director of the Honolulu Emergency Services Department from 2008 through 2012, and was responsible for the oversight of the City's EMS and Lifeguard Services Divisions. Having served under six mayors and ten city department directors as a division administrator, I can state that Dr. Char is extremely qualified and capable of leading one of the largest departments in our state government.

In addition to her training as a physician, Dr. Char has the invaluable knowledge of and experience in government organizations and relations that will allow her to navigate and implement meaningful solutions to our current public health crisis. Since her appointment as the interim Director of Health last September, Dr. Char has assumed responsibility and leadership of the Department of Health in a time of uncertainty and perceived dysfunction. Her calm demeanor and presence have provided us all with much needed confidence during this "uncertain, unprecedented" time. She is able to understand the complexity of the current situation and formulate effective interventions to deal with issues in an intelligent, realistic and effective manner.

The citizens of this State will be extremely fortunate to have Dr. Elizabeth A. Char serve as the Director of Health for the next two years. I respectfully urge your committee to confirm her appointment and thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. Aloha nui,

Sincerely,

Ralph S. Goto



# HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

235 South Beretania Street, 5<sup>TH</sup> Floor, Honolulu, HI 96813 | [energy.hawaii.gov](http://energy.hawaii.gov)

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN  
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

(808) 587-3807

Testimony of  
**SCOTT J. GLENN, Chief Energy Officer**

before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**  
Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 1:00 PM  
Via Videoconference

In SUPPORT of  
**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 506, ELIZABETH CHAR**  
**As Director, Department of Health**  
**(Written Testimony Only)**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Members of the Committee, I am writing in support of the appointment of Ms. Elizabeth Char to serve as the Director of the Department of Health.

Ms. Char has admirably led the Department as the acting Director through COVID-19 pandemic. She is an effective leader as evidenced by the progress the State has made on containing the spread of the coronavirus through coordinated communications, effective deployment of available resources, development of a framework and plan that balances needs across stakeholder and community groups, and timely distribution of test kits and vaccinations across the state. Her continued leadership is critical at this time for the state to recover its industries and economy. During this time, the Department of Health has worked with agencies and stakeholders to identify and prioritize high risk critical infrastructure workers, including energy workers, balanced with the focused care and outreach to vulnerable populations. This helped ensure that critical community lifelines have been able to continue to function and for these workers to maintain delivery of the essential services needed by those most in need. These efforts have better positioned Hawaii for a more resilient economic recovery and further achievement of Hawaii's ambitious energy and climate goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 10:30:51 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kelley Withy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dr. Char has been doing an outstanding job as evidenced by our improved status in Hawaii. She is smart, hardworking and dedicated. Please confirm her so our improving health trend continues!

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 10:43:22 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jenna Tanigawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I am in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char to be confirmed as the Director of the Department of Health. I have known her for the past 5 years, and she is honest, hardworking, and has the best interest of the community.

Thank you,

Jenna Tanigawa



## THE QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER WEST O'AHU

91-2141 Fort Weaver Road ■ Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706 ■ Ph: (808) 691-3000 ■ FAX: (808) 691-3001 ■ [www.queenswestoahu.org](http://www.queenswestoahu.org)

March 3, 2021

The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee of Health

Re: Support of GM 506, Consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, Elizabeth A. Char, MD, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit support on the nomination of Elizabeth A. Char, MD as the Director of the Department of Health.

Professionally, I have known and worked with Dr Char for 17 years. Throughout that entire time, I have noted Dr Char to be professional and to hold herself and the organizations she works with to the highest standards. I have worked with her as a peer physician and find her medical knowledge and ability to navigate systems to be excellent. As a fellow member on the State of Hawaii Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee, it is apparent that Dr Char always approaches situations and issues with from a stance of what is best for the community and of constantly assessing if current processes serve the community. Dr Char's national work and networking in Emergency Medical Services has brought great improvements in survival from out-of-hospital cardiac arrests to the people across the State of Hawaii. These examples serve to demonstrate Dr Char's ability to lead groups and organizations. All with the guiding principle of improving the access to health for the people of Hawaii.

Respectfully, I encourage the Senate Committee on Health to support Dr Char's confirmation for the position of Director of the Department of Health. She has demonstrated past success in leading large organizations and improving the access to health in Hawaii. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ronald Kuroda, MD.

Chief Medical Officer,  
The Queen's Medical Center – West Oahu

March 2, 2021

**TO:** The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Health

**FROM:** Cathy Ross

**SUBJECT:** **GM 506, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022**

I am in **strong support** of the confirmation of Elizabeth Char, M.D. as the Director of the Department of Health (DOH). Dr. Char bravely joined the DOH in September 2020 in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the short six months that she has been with the department, she has steadied the ship with her sound decision-making and excellent leadership skills.

If her work experience is any indication of how she will serve as the Director of Health, she will definitely be able to successfully manage the pandemic response in addition to the multiple priorities the department regularly faces, and do so with grace and humility. She regularly spends time listening to various perspectives - from experts and lay people alike - and generously shares her knowledge with people rather than holding on to it for any perceived advantage. She is the kind of boss and colleague we all value.

With Dr. Char as the Director of Health, our state will successfully address the ongoing public health challenges as we fight COVID-19 while continuing the ongoing public health programs to serve our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Dr. Char.



**LATE**

**Written Only**

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



DR. CHRISTINA M. KISHIMOTO  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/03/2021

**Time:** 01:00 PM

**Location:** Via Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Health

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** GM 0506 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the Department of Health, Gubernatorial Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire at noon on 12-05-2022.

**Purpose of Bill:**

**Department's Position:**

I strongly support Governor Ige's nomination and the Senate's confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH). Dr. Char's unrelenting support of the Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has been essential in the preservation of vital safety nets for our students and their 'ohana. Her leadership has also allowed the expansion of the use of public health nurses on Department campuses to aid in the pandemic response.

Beyond this, Dr. Char has ensured the DOH's continued support for initiatives and programs benefitting all Department students and staff. Her leadership has provided critical support for behavioral health, chronic disease and health promotion, and sexual health prevention efforts. This support allows the Department to maintain its foundation for implementing a comprehensive and holistic approach in addressing the health-related needs of its students and personnel.

Dr. Char is a capable and astute leader who has exhibited openness and an uncommon willingness to engage with the Department to address the needs of the Department in compliance with DOH guidance. As a result, the Department's plan to return students to safe and healthy school campuses and the resumption of in-person instruction is quickly underway.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this confirmation.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII



WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
CHAIRMAN  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

TYLER I. GOMES  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

**LATE**

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM J. AILA, JR, CHAIRMAN  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
HEARING ON MARCH 3, 2021 AT 1:00PM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

IN SUPPORT OF

**GM506**

for consideration and confirmation as the Director of the  
Department of Health,  
Gubernatorial Nominee, **ELIZABETH CHAR**,  
for a term to expire 12-05-2022

March 3, 2021

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker, and members of the Committee:

We provide this testimony in support of Governor Ige's nomination of Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health.

In the midst of a growing coronavirus pandemic, and a population needing public health information, guidelines, and direction, Dr. Elizabeth Char took on the task to assure the public and its government of answers and competence. After receiving her medical degree from the University of Hawaii – John A. Burns School of Medicine, she did a residency in General Surgery, University of Hawaii Integrated Surgical Residency, then a residency in Emergency Medicine at UCLA. She is licensed as both Physician and Surgeon, in both Hawaii and California.

Her medical experience has primarily been emergency medicine. After her residency, she served in the Emergency Department, The Queen's Medical Center; Medical Director, Oahu Emergency Medical Services; Director, Emergency Services Department, City & County of Honolulu; Staff Physician, Emergency Department, Straub Clinic and Hospital; Metropolitan Medical Response System, Physician, City & County of Honolulu; and Medical Director of both the Honolulu and Kauai Fire Departments.

In this as-yet-unending emergency crisis, she has served her home and community as Acting Director, Department of Health since September 2020. With her calm demeanor, she has answered hundreds of questions, often repetitive, to instill confidence, and Yes-we-will-get-through-this. She is well qualified for this position.

We respectfully ask your committee to advise and consent to this nomination, and we thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**LATE**

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/3/2021 9:48:30 AM

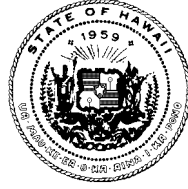
Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Pang	Testifying for Department of Health	Support	No

Comments:

Full support for Elizabeth Char as Director of the Department of Health

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 2, 2021

**LATE**

Written Statement of  
Cathy Betts

before the  
**Senate Committee on Health**

Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
1:00 p.m.

In consideration of

**G.M. 506**

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Director of Health, Gubernatorial  
Nominee, ELIZABETH CHAR, for a term to expire  
at noon on 12-05-2022**

Dear Chair Jarrett Keohokolole, Vice Chair Rosalyn H. Baker, and members of the Committee on Health:

It is my pleasure to submit this testimony in **strong support** of the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director for the Department of Health. Dr. Char's commitment and dedication to our greater public health has been unwavering during this pandemic. She is collaborative, knowledgeable, and committed to leading the department with integrity. DHS regularly collaborates with our DOH colleagues and will continue to work with Dr. Char to ensure we collectively serve our residents most in need. Thank you for this opportunity to provide supportive testimony for Dr. Char.

**LATE**



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Date: March 2, 2021

To: Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Health

Re: Support for GM 506, Elizabeth Char, M.D., Director of the Hawai'i  
State Department of Health

Hrg: March 3, 2021 at 1:00 PM via Videoconference

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The Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>i</sup> (HIPHI) provides testimony in **Support** of Dr. Elizabeth Char as Director of the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH).

Dr. Char brings a wealth of clinical and administrative experience that will serve her well as the DOH Director. She is an assistant clinical professor of surgery, emergency physician and graduate of the University of Hawai'i, John A. Burns School of Medicine. Dr. Char has also served as Emergency Medical Services' District Medical Director for O'ahu, Medical Director for American Medical Response, President of Hawaii's American Heart Association chapter, and chair of the state Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board. In 2020, Dr. Char received the Michael Key Copass Award for her longstanding service, contributions and leadership in out-of-hospital emergency care.

Dr. Char stepped into the role of Director during the biggest public health challenge in the state's history – the COVID-19 pandemic. Such a monumental task requires teamwork; her collaborative approach to leadership has been instrumental in the fight against COVID-19 and restoring the public's trust in the Department. Partnerships and trust will be key to the success of the Department's mass vaccination campaign.

HIPHI supports Dr. Elizabeth Char's nomination as Director of the Hawai'i Department of Health.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jessica Yamauchi'.

Jessica Yamauchi  
Executive Director

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<sup>i</sup> Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 1:00:24 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carlyn Ko	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am writing in support of confirmation of Dr. Libby Char as a head of Department of Health for State of Hawaii. I have known Dr. Char as a colleague, a fellow ER physician, and a friend for past 23 years. She has always been a superb physician with extraordinary knowledge and skills. And as a head of Dept of Health she has done a fabulous work in a difficult situation where lives of Hawaii people are on the line. We need Dr. Char at this juncture to face this pandemic and prepare for the future ones. She has it all, the people skill, management skill as well as the integrity, honesty, thoughtfulness, and open mindedness that are necessary to do this incredibly difficult job well.

Believe me when I say her love of Hawaii and its people is deep as the ocean surrounding us. Dr. Libby Char is the best person for this position and I wholeheartedly support her.

Carlyn Ko MD

**LATE**

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 1:26:30 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aphirak Bamrungruan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Aphirak Bamrungruan. I am the Executive Director of the Office of Language Access (OLA). I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's appointment to the Director of the Department of Health.

As an attached agency within the Department of Health, I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Char in her current capacity as acting Director of Health and know her to be hard-working, dedicated and balanced in her approach. I strongly believe that Dr. Char's years of experience and dedication will be a great benefit to both the Department of Health and the people of Hawaii should she be appointed Director of the Department of Health.

Respectfully submitted.



March 2, 2021



The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole  
Chair Senate Committee on Health (HTH)  
The State Senate, State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: GM 506 Testimony in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char for the Director of the Department of Health

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Baker and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit support on the nomination of Elizabeth A. Char, MD as the Director of the Department of Health.

My name is Sean Covant and I am an Emergency Physician that practices in Kailua and Wahiawa. I am writing this letter in support of Elizabeth Char as Director of Health. I have known Dr. Char for 10 years and she epitomizes the idea of service and leadership. Her leadership skills were demonstrated when she was appointed the Director of the Honolulu Emergency Services Department. She was successful integrating her personal experience as a physician into both the scale depth need to run a critical city agency.

Libby, as Dr. Char is known, and I first met when she presented at a medical conference. I was impressed by her presentation of the medical coverage of the 2011 Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) event that was held in Honolulu. During the presentation she was able to deftly switch back and forth between the attention to details needed for daily operations and the broader, larger view needed for the logistic planning for such a large-scale event. Her ability to lead a diverse group of stakeholders led to a successful event.

When Hawaii found itself facing the effects of a worldwide global pandemic Dr. Char responded to the needs of all of Hawaii and assumed the position of Acting Director of Health. I strongly, and without reservation urge you confirm Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char to the Director of the Department of Health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean Covant".

Sean Covant DO

**LATE**

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 11:10:16 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Judy Kakazu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair, Senate Committee on Health (HTH)

Dear Sir,

I would like to offer testimony in regards to the Senate confirmation of Dr Elizabeth Char for the position of Director of Health. As you probably are already aware of her outstanding accomplishments and recognitions listed within her curriculum vitae, I would like to keep it brief and provide witness for Dr Char's excellent character. I have known Dr Char for over 30 years. First professionally as an emergency room physician at Queen's Medical Center, while I was working as a paramedic. And soon afterwards as a personal friend. In both roles she has always shown integrity with the highest work ethic. She has always provided knowledgeable medical care for her patients along with a sincere interest and caring, which she extends to her friends and family as well. I have never seen her compromise her high standards or values, even when situations were difficult and challenging. Dr Char has always been willing to listen to the opinions of others and work towards a better outcome. Dr Char has the intelligence, integrity and the courage to lead in a time that is unprecedented with medical challenges. The Department of Health would be very fortunate to have Dr Char continue to serve the public. Thank you for your time.

Judy Kakazu BA, MICT

**LATE**

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/3/2021 6:24:21 AM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lee Buenconsejo-Lum	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Baker and members of the committee,

I stand in strong support of Dr. Elizabeth Char as the Director of the Department of Health. Her communication, managerial, and decision-making skills have been widely applied for years in service to the Hawaii community. Her ability to build bridges, create effective working relationships, and forge new partnerships has been demonstrated in the last five months. Libby truly cares for the community. In her professional career, she has witnessed first-hand the impact of inadequate access to care, support, and services. She firmly believes in health equity and in doing the right thing to benefit the greater good. She has been and continues to be an exceptional leader -- a humble, servant leader -- during one of Hawaii's most difficult times. Thank you for your consideration.

**LATE**

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/3/2021 11:06:41 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Lynn Rocard-Dukelow	Testifying for Airport Rescue Fire Fighters	Support	No

**Comments:**

Dr Libby Char is a knowledgeable consistent conscientious physician. I have enjoyed working with her initially as a medical resident and she an Emergency Room Attending and later a colleague in conjunction to take care of the airport rescue fire fighters. She has done an amazing job in the limited time of her office and one can only imagine that she will continue to make the best decisions to ensure the safety of this state. She is a very smart individual and one who will make decisions not because they're popular but are righteous in the eyes of God. As a physician she has taken an oath first to do no harm, I am certain that this will be the same sentiment as she begins a new chapter in her medical career and servant to the state as she serves as director for the department of health. Thank you for your time.

**LATE**

**GM-506**

Submitted on: 3/3/2021 9:31:32 PM

Testimony for HTH on 3/3/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Jason Hughes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Libby Char over the past several years and have found her to possess the rare combination of intelligence, drive, compassion, and approachability. She stepped into a very difficult position at a very difficult time and has handled the demands and pressure with both grace and efficiency. Dr. Char has my highest endorsement as our Director of the Department of Health. With her in this role the health of our great state of Hawaii will be in competent and caring hands.