

Donald Sakamoto  
Member, Anuenue Chapter National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii  
EMAIL: cylonone@aol.com

March 15, 2022, 9:30 am

Subject: Testimony for Kathryn Keim [confirmation](#) for the State Advisory Elections Committee

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and other members of the JDC Committee,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide my strong recommendation testimony for Kathryn Keim confirmation for a position on the Hawaii State Elections Advisory Committee. As you may not know, Kathryn has been and continues to be a champion and strong advocate for persons with disabilities. She has served as a long-time member with the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii and has garnered the respect of those she works with. She is well-versed and has extensive knowledge regarding with the challenges issues that occurred during the last elections of 2020.

In fact, Kathryn has submitted numerous written testimonies during the prior Hawaii State Legislative Sessions regarding with SB548 RELATING TO elections by mail to have voters with special needs advisory committees as well as other pertaining matters with the bill. I have worked with Kathryn for some years now and am confident that she will be a tremendous asset as a board member of the Hawaii State Elections Committee. Her passion and dedication to advocate for fair elections for those persons with disabilities is evident and her wealth of knowledge is invaluable.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration of my strong recommendation for Kathryn. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Donald Sakamoto

Testimony of Virgil Stinnett Before the Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hawaii State Senate Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2022  
March 15, 2022, 9:30 AM, The Committee on JDC, consideration and confirmation to the  
Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory Committee, Gubernatorial Nominee, Kathryn  
Keim.

Good morning chair, vice chair, and members. My name is Virgil Stinnett, elected statewide  
President of The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I am in full support of Kathryn  
Keim's appointment and confirmation to the Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory  
Committee

Ms. Keim has 27 years of experience in issues related to blind and print disabled access and her  
right to vote privately and independently. Her experience includes her work with Hawai'i and  
federal government agencies as well as her advocacy with local and national legislation for  
opportunity, rights and accessibility issues for the blind and other disabilities.

I have great faith in her commitment, her ability to listen to her peers integrating data for the  
good of all and her skill in networking and seeking out critical data when required to support  
change in access and opportunity. I know she will serve this committee well.

Ms. Keim has years of experience as a liaison between individuals with disabilities and  
government entities using her gift of diplomacy, yet persistence to ensure success with all parties  
participating coming to an agreeable, accessible and "Win Win" resolution.

Ms. Keim's leadership experience as a blind Hawai'i business woman, will add an important  
component to the committee's work with the Office of Elections and the needs of our Hawai'i  
voting residents with special needs, ensuring everyone has the ability to vote, privately and  
independently.

Mahalo for your consideration and vote of confidence in her appointment to the committee.

**GM-595**

Submitted on: 3/13/2022 10:45:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/15/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

To Chair Sen. Karl Rhoads and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I fully support and encourage the appointment of Kathryn Keim to the Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory Committee.

I have known Katie since 2006, when my husband and I decided that living full-time in sometimes frigid Chicago was too much — and we bought an apartment at Tropic Seas, the coop building where Katie and her husband live.

My first real encounter with her was in that town square of apartment life, the laundry room. Our main topic of conversation that day was geography, and Katie wanted her memory to be refreshed as to how, in the state of Michigan, one could travel south and reach Canada.

Katie's curiosity and desire to know how things work and fit together complement her photographic memory. During her very successful tenure as president of the coop board, she kept figures, names and dates in her mind - while most of the rest of us scrambled for notes and papers. In my 16 years at Tropic Seas, I have never known a board president who was as sharp as Katie, or as adept at juggling egos and politics of palace intrigue.

Before I knew Katie well, I watched her and knew she was someone I'd like to get to know. She and Virgil would host gatherings for their friends and for business associates - both blind and sighted. Some were newly blind - just beginning to deal with the world that Katie was forced to conquer decades ago.

I've always admired Katie's ease of entertaining and welcome - true aloha. She is a great cook - banana bread, cakes, pesto - and she loves to cook for others, fortunately. She has a green thumb. She has managed to grow a lime on her sunlight-challenged lanai, where she has produced basil, potatoes - and has high hopes for a Meyer lemon blossom turning into a lemon.

Katie's interest in the world around her is amazing to me. When Katie and Virgil visited us in Chicago, we went on the architecture river cruise. As other tourists were talking and taking photos, Katie was listening to the docent's every word - taking it all in and asking questions afterward.

Because of her background in fashion design, she always is interested in what people are wearing. She will feel the texture of my shirt and if it's not one of my usual hole-riddled polos, she'll compliment me when I'm sporting something that's, usually, outside my comfort zone.

Katie has a wicked sense of humor. A good storyteller - one whose tales are based on fact not hyperbole. But she's also a good listener, the first to comfort me when our cat died a few weeks ago.

I have only a few friends who - by meeting them - changed my life for the better. Katie is one of those rare friends: life-affirming, loving and very dear. People throw around the word "inspiration" quite a bit, but it fits Katie like a glove.

Stephen Miller

**GM-595**

Submitted on: 3/13/2022 10:52:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/15/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Norman Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Re: GM 595 Kathryn Keim JDC Confirmation Hearing - 3/15/2022

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

My name is Norman Miller and I am writing in whole-hearted support of my friend, Katie Keim's nomination to the Statewide Voters with Special Needs Advisory Committee.

I am a retired administrator, formerly with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and I have known Katie for almost 16 years since we both have apartments in the same building. Katie has impressed me from the start of our friendship with her intelligence, wit, and communication skills. She has an amazing ability to warmly connect with others. She listens, researches, responds, retains, and remembers. I have observed that she is equally skilled meeting new people on the street as leading a committee meeting via zoom.

Katie currently serves as a board member of our building co-operative and has also been the chair for several years. Our co-op, like most, is a diverse group with wide-ranging views and opinions. I agree with many of my fellow apartment owners that Katie's contribution is a great asset to our management. In leadership she gets things done with willing hard work, consultation, delegation, negotiation, and fairness.

On a more personal level, I am constantly in awe of Katie's ability not only to navigate daily a world that is set-up predominately for sighted persons, but more than that, to power forward in it, and to be a force for the blind community, promoting their skills, talents, and contributions, while always advocating for their needs. She has a wide network of colleagues and ohana who respect and love her.

Katie would be a vital and hard-working contributor to the advisory committee bringing extremely valuable life and work experience. In these times when minority voting access is under serious threat, Hawaii and the rest of the US needs to hear more strong voices like Katie's to ensure we all have an equal say in our leaders and lives.

Please confirm her appointment to the committee.

**Curtis Chong**  
**14152 East Linvale Place, Unit 201**  
**Aurora, Colorado 80014**  
**Email: chong.curtis@gmail.com**

**March 13, 2022**

**To whom it may concern:**

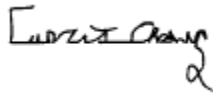
**I submit this letter in support of Kathryn Keim to serve on the Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory Committee. She is more than capable of advocating in support of the interests of voters in Hawaii who are blind, visually impaired, and/or print-disabled.**

**Ms. Keim, who is herself blind, has herself traveled the long road from being a person with fully normal vision to someone who, in spite of blindness, lives an active and productive life. Ms. Keim has decades of experience working as an advocate for blind and visually impaired people in Hawaii. In addition, Ms. Keim has herself served as a professional in the field of work with the blind and has been a key player in helping Hawaii's agency for the blind, Ho'opono, to transition its programs from a service delivery system with an archaic and repressive notion of blindness to a powerful service delivery system which recognizes the competence and innate normality of blind people.**

**I myself am a blind person who, for more than twenty years, grew up in the state of Hawaii back in the 1960's. Back then, programs for the blind in Hawaii were not as they are today. Back then, I and my blind friends were more likely to have to sit through group therapy sessions with a sighted psychologist instead of participating in sessions led and skillfully moderated by successful and active blind adults who can serve as role models encouraging younger children and teenagers to aspire to do great things with their lives.**

**As a nonvisual access technology consultant who helps blind people, young and old, to master the technologies we must use to get online, I will say without equivocation that Ms. Keim understands both the powerful abilities which technology can offer to those of who are blind as well as its more vexing and frustrating challenges. This, combined with her personal knowledge of how the blind conduct the necessary activities of life (among them, voting) makes Kathryn Keim a tremendously wonderful candidate for the Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory Committee.**

**Yours sincerely,**

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

**Curtis Chong**

March 13, 2022

Peggy Chong  
14152 E. Linvale Pl, 201  
Aurora Colorado, 80014  
[chongpeggy10@gmail.com](mailto:chongpeggy10@gmail.com)

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to write in support of Kathryn Keim to serve on the Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory Committee for the state of Hawaii.

Ms. Keim has always taken a keen interest in the affairs of the blind, not just in Hawaii, but across the nation. Her outgoing personality, easily befriends individuals from all walks of life. Being a blind person and diabetic she embraces life to its fullest and personally encourages others to do the same.

She serves as an example to everyone she touches. Willing to try anything, she demonstrates to others how a problem becomes a triumph. Through her participation in her community, Ms. Keim learns much from others, building on her knowledge and joyfully conquers the next community needs with joy.

When involved in issues of importance to her, Ms. Keim diligently seeks out stakeholders from all points of view to ensure the decisions she makes can provide quality, maximum results for all concerned.

I believe Ms. Keim will be an asset to the committee and to the state of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peggy Chong". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with the first and last names clearly legible.

Peggy Chong



## Testimony in favor of Kathryn Keim to be a member of the Statewide Voters With Special Needs Advisory Committee

Presented by David Eveland, former administrator of Hawai'i DVR - Blind Services, Ho`opono

Dear legislators:

I have worked alongside Katie Keim for over 20 years. She helped our agency deal successfully with many technical issues including those involving computer equipment and Braille communication, as well as how to conduct effective outreach to potential consumers of Ho`opono's programs and services. Thanks to her efforts we were one of the few organizations across the country to be recognized as a program of excellence by the National Blindness Rehabilitation Certification board. I am confident that Katie will be a great asset as a committee member and that she will work diligently to ensure that all people will be able to cast their votes.

Dave Eveland

3/11/2022

Susan Rockwood Gashel  
Attorney at Law  
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March 14, 2022

Committee on Judiciary  
Hawaii State Senate  
March 15, 2022 9:30 a.m.  
Hearing on GM595

Dear Chair Rhodes and Members of the Committee:

I have known Katie Keim both professionally and personally since approximately 2005. I have always been impressed with her grasp of complex issues, her work ethic, her understanding of human dynamics, and her ability to meld those qualities to effectively and efficiently accomplish tasks. When I first met Katie her position was consulting and instruction in assistive technology for the Department of Education.

She has always been generous with her time to assist others to understand complex regulations and policies. Katie has spent much time mentoring the newly blind and blind youth, and serves as a positive role model to all. She is truly an example of how an individual with a disability can overcome the barriers placed in her way, not only by her disability, but by the attitudes of individuals who hold false beliefs about the abilities of the disabled.

Katie has worked hard as liaison to consumer groups in her past positions, and is perceived as fair and attentive to the needs of all stakeholders. Formerly employed by the State of Hawaii's Division of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services, she was charged with drafting the state plan for a number of years. I have known Katie to be always willing to step in to take on duties to ensure that staff shortages did not prevent her from performing not only all of the functions that were assigned to her, but other duties as well, to ensure the smooth functioning of the office.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning Katie Keim or her qualifications for the position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Rockwood Gashel".

Susan Rockwood Gashel

Kathryn Keim Response to Senate JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
February 20, 2022

1. Understanding of the role and jurisdiction of the Statewide Voters with Special Needs Advisory Committee.

The committee's role and jurisdiction is defined by the legislature to ensure voters with special needs have equal and independent access to voter registration, casting ballots, and all other office of elections services.

2. The role and responsibilities of a member of the Committee.

Committee members must identify barriers to private, independent and equal access which limit special needs voters, identify solutions to reduce or eliminate barriers, and present administrative or legislative options for resolutions to the barriers found.

3. My interest in serving.

A blind individual, I applied with my personal commitment to equanimity and access for all people, willingness to serve, and to ensure full access to integration with our community, solutions for all individuals with special needs.

4. Qualifications.

Diverse special needs voting experience since 1995 (adult onset blindness), professional work with federal and state regulations, policies and programs and an advocate leader in the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii (NFBH).

5. Expected accomplishments.

Provide experience based leadership, develop an Office of Elections relationship for the understanding and implementation of accessible outreach for special needs voters and give guidance for authorized electronic ballot returns.

6. Issues to address.

Development of Office of Elections "buy-in" embracing the committee's purpose, collecting input from special needs voters to identify equal access barriers, and with the new state's vote-by-mail emphasis, integrating an appreciation for the importance of accessible alternatives to special needs voters with the election personnel.

7. possible conflicts of interest.

I foresee no possible conflicts of interest from my appointment and serving on the committee. If any arise, I will professionally and ethically address them accordingly.

8. Relative experience.

Over 25 years a business owner, working with federal and state regulations, and a volunteer leader representing NFBH locally and in Washington D.C., offers relative experience establishing laws and policies, inclusive of beta testing accessible electronic and voting equipment for the optimum access of special needs voters in Hawaii.

9. Potential negative Background or controversial considerations.

I am not aware of any potential negative or controversial background issues that may arise for the Senate.

10. Resume attached.