



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Friday, April 8, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

By
Bonnie Irwin
Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

GM 796 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems, Gubernatorial Nominee, RODRIGO ROMO, for a term to expire 06-30-2023.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on GM 796 in support of the confirmation of Rodrigo Romo to the Board of Directors for the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES).

Mr. Romo worked with PISCES from 2014 to 2021, first serving as Program Manager, then as Program Director. While with PISCES Mr. Romo worked to create opportunities for applied research and workforce development for the benefit of the State and our youth. Projects Mr. Romo guided include Helelani Planetary Robotics, Basalt Research and Planetary LEGOs, and the PISCES STARS program to promote and encourage women in STEM.

Mr. Romo currently works for Mauna Kea Observatories Support Services as Visitor Information Station Manager. Previously in his career he spent 16 years as the Vice President of Engineering for Zeta Corporation, a company that offers green technology solutions for water conservation and fouling prevention in water systems.

Mr. Romo has been a tremendous asset in his prior roles with PISCES, and will continue to be an asset as a member of the PISCES Board of Directors. We strongly support the confirmation of Mr. Romo to this appointment.

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/6/2022 6:24:26 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqui Hoover	Testifying for Hawaii Island Economic Development Board	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

On behalf of the Hawaii Island Economic Development Board (HIEDB) incorporated in 1984 for the purpose of strengthening and diversifying Hawaii Island's economy, it is my privilege to support the nomination of Rodrigo Romo to the PISCES Board of Directors. HIEDB has collaborated with PISCES on a number of successful programs and projects related to aerospace, robotics, education, and community outreach over the years, and worked closely with Mr. Romo during his tenure with PISCES as program manager. Please approve and mahalo for allowing us to speak in support of this nomination.

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/5/2022 3:24:05 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Misalucha, and committee members,

I'm in full support of this nomination. I've had the honor to work with Mr. Romo on community projects. He is an incredible contributor and holds a great passion for STEM education and the development of important STEM-related industries.

Thank you,

Noel Morin

Hilo

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/5/2022 3:51:23 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Dowd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have worked with Rodrigo over the past 2 years and he is a space and high tech visionary who is passionate about bringing industry investments to the state of Hawai'i. He is also committed to our keiki and the future. The PISCES program needs to be funded and the board filled with professionals like Rodrigo.

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/5/2022 5:01:35 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doug Simons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha –

I strongly support the nomination of Rodrigo Romo to the Board of Directors of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems. I have worked with Rodrigo for many years including his time as Director of PISCES and have the highest regard for his commitment to serving our community, “get the job done” approach to managing challenging projects, and dedication to opening doors for local students on STEM pathways. PISCES has demonstrated convincingly that they are a pioneer in high-tech development activity on Hawai‘i Island and they have become an integral partner on many fronts with the Maunakea Observatories, a leader worldwide in astronomical research. The high-tech research conducted and supported by PISCES benefits the development of aerospace and other local industries in Hawai‘i and Rodrigo has been front/center every step of the way. Under Rodrigo’s effective leadership PISCES has been a strong supporter of STEM education and workforce development for high school and college students, partnering on numerous occasions with the Maunakea Observatories and providing unique opportunities in robotics design and engineering. You will be hard-pressed to find a more qualified and dedicated person to be on the PISCES Board than Rodrigo Romo.

Mahalo,

Doug Simons

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/5/2022 5:19:07 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
matthias kusch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I have known Mr. Romo for 14 years, and during that time he has demonstrated considerable integrity, energy and high moral character. I could not identify a more capable and respected person for the PISCES Board of Directors. You shall never regret your decision to confirm him to the Board.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Thank you,

Matthias Kusch

mkusch@msn.com

808 938-0680

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/6/2022 7:57:20 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ron Terry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support Rodrigo Romo's appointment. He was at PISCES for 7 years and was a key factor in the agency getting major research grants from NASA and linking outreach programs with corporate sponsors. The work in developing basalt as a feedstock for manufacturing was particularly noteworthy. He knows aerospace, and works well with colleagues and the community, as I have learned in my community work with him. Our State needs him in this position.

Pauline Roth
15-1892 Beach Road
Kea'au, HI 96749

April 6, 2022

Aloha,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Rodrigo Romo to the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) Board of Directors as proposed by the Governor in GM796. Mr. Romo will be an excellent addition to the PISCES Board.

I am writing as the former PISCES administrator. I worked for PISCES from March 2012 through June 2021 when I retired. For those nine plus years, I served as the administrative liaison for the PISCES Board of Directors. I am very familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the PISCES Board members. I worked with Rodrigo Romo at PISCES from 2013 through my retirement, so I am also aware of Rodrigo's talents and abilities. The last several years of my tenure, Rodrigo served as our director and leader. He did an excellent job and, after working directly with the Board for so many years, he knows exactly what kind of support a director or manager needs from each of its Board members. Rodrigo is an ideal candidate for a PISCES Board member.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pauline Roth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" at the end.

Pauline (Polly) Roth

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/6/2022 7:16:39 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandy Ryan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems, Gubernatorial Nominee, RODRIGO ROMO, for a term to expire 06-30-2023.

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/6/2022 7:56:08 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Annette Lynch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the nomination of Rodrigo Romo to the Board of Directors of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/7/2022 9:07:05 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leilani Ventura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of GM796 to nominate Rodrigo Romo to the Board of Directors of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems.

Mahalo for your consideration!

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/7/2022 9:21:45 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Hardwick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Gubernatorial Nominee, RODRIGO ROMO as Member of the Board of Directors of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems.

LATE

GM-796

Submitted on: 4/8/2022 11:11:25 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/8/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christian Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wish to submit testimony in support of adding Rodrigo Romo to the Board of Directors of PISCES. I worked closely with Rodrigo for several years when he was the Director of PISCES in my capacity as a Director of a local STEM education nonprofit. Rodrigo is passionate about serving the community, has invaluable experience, and has the highest integrity. I submit my highest recommendation to have Rodrigo serve on the board of PISCES. Mahalo!