

A written statement that addresses the following questions:

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the State Council on Mental Health?

I would like to continue to advocate for individuals with Mental Health diagnoses and create more resources across the Hawaiian Islands as well as remove the stigma for those living with an illness they did not ask for.

(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Council on Mental Health?

I use my knowledge and resources to advocate and speak to the needs within the community I work and live.

(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Council on Mental Health, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the State Council on Mental Health.

I work for Mental Health Kokua and run the residential program in Kailua-Kona and work directly with individuals with a mental health diagnoses. I am someone who believes we all have mental health needs and some have more significant needs than other but that there is a place for mental health and we need to advocate more to better understand, treat and support mental health. I have had family, friends and colleagues struggle with mental health and want to strongly support these individuals as well as the greater community to support the needs and educate the community to better understand the needs of others.

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

I would love to get more resources for individuals struggling with mental health issues and educate more people within the community. I would love to find more housing and increase the payrates to a livable wage in all Hawaiian Islands. I want to gather more data as to where and what the need is and work with the government to prioritize resources to these areas of need. I would like to educate the police department and first responders on how to communicate better and create more resources so individuals suffering and possibly homeless don't find themselves abusing drugs or getting into trouble with the law and finding themselves in the courts or jail when medication and other supports could better assist these individuals.

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the State Council on Mental Health?

I'm a strong Advocate and driven to help people in need and find resources and ways to support people who struggle to care for themselves.

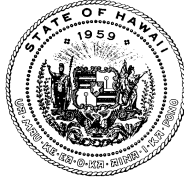
(6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the State Council on Mental Health?

I have supported families whose child was newly diagnosed to help them understand and educate themselves at a time when they are most in need. I work with individuals to support them in housing maintain medication compliance and sobriety and work with them to be more productive

individuals. I work tirelessly to remove the stigma of mental health as we all struggle at some point with mental health on a spectrum and it is not limited but affects us all.

(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the State Council on Mental Health? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

I do not foresee and conflicts currently. If one should arise I would thoroughly review and discuss it with my council members and make any necessary changes if needed to my role on the council.



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**WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY ONLY**

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 595**  
**Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the**  
**State Council on Mental Health**  
**Gubernatorial Nominee, HEIDI ILYAVI,**  
**for a term to expire 03-31-2026**

SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: Friday, March 31, 2023, 1:05 p.m. in Rm. 225/VIDEO

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) **SUPPORTS** the nomination  
2 and confirmation of HEIDI ILYAVI to the Hawaii State Council on Mental Health (“SCMH”) and  
3 offers comments.

4 **Department Testimony:**

5 Ms. Ilyavi fills the mandated SCMH membership position of a family member of a youth,  
6 pursuant to Chapter 334-10, Hawaii Revised Statutes and Federal Law, Public Law 102-321,  
7 Section 1914(c).

8 Ms. Ilyavi has participated actively as a SCMH member since 2020 and has risen to be a  
9 solid voice for parents of youth receiving mental health services and behavioral supports. She  
10 is a strong advocate for increasing the living wage for mental health care workers. As a parent  
11 of a youth and a full-time Hawaii Island resident for over 10 years and a parent partner with the  
12 non-profit organization, Child and Family Services, Ms. Ilyavi works closely with Hawaii Island  
13 families caring for youth with emotional and behavioral challenges to help them learn new skills  
14 or resources, have their voices be heard, and to navigate systems such as the Department’s

1 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) and the Department of Education. She is  
2 an vocal advocate for better data that can be used by the SCMH, the Department and the public  
3 to understand ways to improve mental health services.

4 Ms. Ilyavi is deeply motivated by the clients she works with. She imparts that they are  
5 the most beautiful people and deserved to be cared for and live well. She advocates for  
6 caregivers by attending service coordination meetings and providing technical assistance with  
7 completing paperwork to access benefits and services. Her firsthand knowledge as a parent of  
8 a youth and her perspective on the needs, resources and service gaps of the behavioral health  
9 support system will be an asset to the Council's deliberations.

10 We respectfully request your favorable consideration in confirming the appointment of  
11 Ms. Ilyavi to the Hawaii State Council on Mental Health.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on her behalf.

13

14 **About the SCMH**

15 The SCMH is an active advocacy group with 21 volunteers representing service  
16 recipients, family members, community members and state agency representatives who  
17 provide a voice for children, youth, adults and their families on behavioral health issues.  
18 Established in 1984, the SCMH's mission is to advise, monitor, review and evaluate the  
19 provision of mental health services in the state. Collectively, the SCMH advises the Department  
20 through the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD), and  
21 Child Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) on issues of concern, policies and programs;  
22 providing guidance in the development and implementation of the state mental health plan,  
23 and serving as an advocate for adults diagnosed with serious mental illness (SMI) and for  
24 children and youth diagnosed with serious emotional disturbance (SED).