

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3376

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 27 2024

RE: GOV. MSG. NOS. 556,
557, 558, 638

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred Governor's Message Nos. 556, 557, 558, and 638, submitting for study and consideration the nominations of:

STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH

G.M. No. 556	SAMUEL "RAY" RICE, for a term to expire 06-30-2027;
G.M. No. 557	LEA DIAS, for a term to expire 06-30-2027;
G.M. No. 558	JON FUJII, for a term to expire 06-30-2027; and
G.M. No. 638	LILLIE CHRISTINE MONTAGUE-HICKS, for a term to expire 06-30-2028,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal histories, resumes, and statements submitted by Samuel "Ray" Rice, Lea Dias, Jon Fujii, and Lillie Christine Montague-Hicks for service on the State Council on Mental Health.

SAMUEL "RAY" RICE

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Samuel "Ray" Rice from the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services.



Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. Rice's over twenty years of experience in the field of social work, commitment to public service, and passion for advocating for children and families, disabled and elderly, and those with mental illness, qualify him for reappointment to the State Council on Mental Health. Your Committee notes that Mr. Rice has been serving on the State Council on Mental Health since July 2022, as a member representing a principal state agency with respect to social services, and if reappointed, will continue to serve in the same capacity. Mr. Rice earned a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from Hawaii Pacific University and a Master's degree in Education, Administration, and Supervision from the Tennessee Technological University. Mr. Rice is currently the Assistant Program Development Administrator for the Department of Human Services' Adult Protective and Community Services, Social Services Division, a position he has held since December 2015. Mr. Rice's professional experience also includes serving as a Supervisor for the Adult/Juvenile Community Service and Restitution Unit for the Court of the First Circuit of the Judiciary, Command Coordinator for the Marine Corps Community Services Hawaii's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Unit, and Supervisor of the Department of Social and Health Services' Behavioral Support Section. Your Committee finds that Mr. Rice has a thorough understanding of the role and responsibilities of board members and his extensive experience in mental health awareness and training and will continue to enhance the effectiveness of the State Council on Mental Health. Your Committee therefore recommends that Samuel "Ray" Rice be reappointed to the State Council on Mental Health based on his knowledge, background, and dedication to public service.

LEA DIAS

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Lea Dias from the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and one individual.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Dias's over thirty years of experience in the field of vocational rehabilitation, commitment to public service, and passion for assisting individuals with disabilities, including those with significant mental health challenges, to overcome obstacles, recognize their strengths, and attain their career and life goals qualify her for reappointment to the State Council on Mental Health. Your Committee further notes that Ms. Dias has



been serving on the State Council on Mental Health since July 2022, as a member representing a principal state agency with respect to vocational rehabilitation, and if reappointed, will continue to serve in the same capacity. Ms. Dias holds a Master's degree in Education with a specialization in rehabilitation counseling from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and has spent her entire professional career working in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Department of Human Services, starting as a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist and moving up through positions such as Counseling Section Supervisor, Adjustment Section Supervisor, and Branch Administrator, to her current position as Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator. Your Committee notes that Ms. Dias has also served as the President for the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind and is a National Board Member for the National Blindness Professional Certification Board. Your Committee finds that Ms. Dias has a thorough understanding of the role and responsibilities of board members and her extensive experience in vocational rehabilitation and her strong desire to find and retain competitive employment for the people of Hawaii with mental health issues will continue to be great assets to the State Council on Mental Health. Your Committee therefore recommends that Lea Dias be reappointed to the State Council on Mental Health based on her knowledge, background, and dedication to public service.

JON FUJII

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Jon Fujii from the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, 'Ohana Health Plan, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii, Aloha Care, and Hawaii Association of Health Plans.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. Fujii's over thirty years of experience in the State's health care industry, commitment to public service, and strong desire to improve the lives of individuals experiencing mental health challenges and their families through the fortification and strengthening of the continuum of care qualify him for reappointment to the State Council on Mental Health. Your Committee notes that Mr. Fujii has been serving on the State Council on Mental Health since July 2020, as a member representing a principal state agency with respect to Medicaid and the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances, and if reappointed, will continue to serve in the same capacity.



Mr. Fujii earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Finance and Master in Business Association degree in Finance and Real Estate from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Your Committee further notes that Mr. Fujii has been working in the Med-QUEST Division of the Department of Human Services for eighteen years, as an Administrator of the Research Officer/Data Analysis and Provider Network Section from 2006 to 2015 and as the Health Care Services Branch Administrator since 2015, and therefore, has extensive knowledge of the various challenges faced by individuals suffering from mental illnesses in the State's Medicaid population. Your Committee also notes that Mr. Fujii's previous professional experience includes serving as a Senior Contract Reimbursement Manager at Hawaii Pacific Health and Medical Economics Manager at Kapiolani Health Hawaii. Your Committee finds that Mr. Fujii has a thorough understanding of the role and responsibilities of board members and his extensive experience and knowledge in health care administration, Med-QUEST, and finance, will continue to enhance the effectiveness of the State Council on Mental Health. Your Committee therefore recommends that Jon Fujii be reappointed to the State Council on Mental Health based on his knowledge, background, and dedication to public service.

LILLIE CHRISTINE MONTAGUE-HICKS

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Lillie Christine Montague-Hicks from the Department of Health.

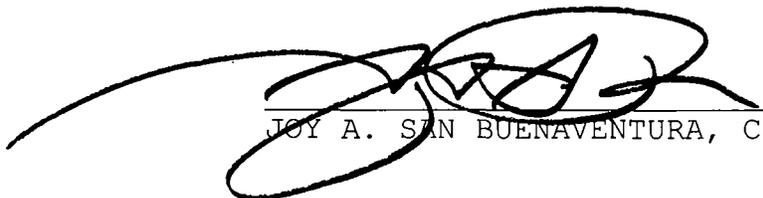
Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Montague-Hicks' over ten years of senior leadership and management experience with nonprofit organizations focusing on homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse prevention, and dedication to serving the public qualify her to be appointed to the State Council on Mental Health as a member representing a principal state agency with respect to education. Ms. Montague-Hicks earned a Master of Education in Counseling Psychology from Howard University and Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Indiana University, and began her professional career as a licensed professional counselor providing individual, group, and family counseling to youth and their families, working in various settings, including residential, outpatient, school, and community. Your Committee notes that Ms. Montague-Hicks' experience in mental health and substance use prevention, including serving as a Program Director for behavioral health



treatment programs and school and community-based prevention programs at the Southwest Behavioral Health Services, Inc. in Arizona, Director of Strategic Initiatives at Raleigh Rescue Mission, Inc. in North Carolina, and Executive Director at Berean Community Center, Inc. in Georgia, has equipped her with a solid foundation pertaining to the issues and concerns of individuals affected by mental illness. Since December 2023, Ms. Montague-Hicks has been serving as the State Mental Health Coordinator for the Department of Education, covering Project HI AWARE2 funded by the United States Health and Human Services - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which support the Department's multi-tiered system of support to implement mental health-related awareness, prevention, intervention, and resilience activities with the goal of ensuring that students have access and are connected to appropriate and effective behavioral health supports. Your Committee therefore recommends that Lillie Christine Montague-Hicks be appointed to the State Council on Mental Health based on her knowledge, background, and dedication to public service.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committee on Health and Human Services that are attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominees, has found the nominees to be qualified for the positions to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nominations.

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



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



