

GOV. MSG. NO. 596

1/10/23

Personal Statement: Neil Abercrombie Ph.D.

It was 63 years ago this September that I arrived at John Rogers Terminal on a Pan American Airways propeller driven airplane.

Professor Clarence Glick, Chair of the Sociology Department at the University of Hawaii at Manoa was there to greet his first post-Statehood Graduate Assistant complete with a brush cut, Bermuda shorts and a determination to pronounce the name of students at the 8:00 am Saturday morning Introductory Sociology labs - flawlessly.

For six (6) decades the University of Hawaii has been a centerpiece in my life. To learn that I have been nominated for consideration as a Regent is a singular honor and a most welcome opportunity for service not only to the University System but to Hawaii's people – the public that I have faithfully and gratefully served for five (5) decades.

I have carefully examined the Advisory Council's description of duties and responsibilities of the BOR and believe I can provide effective and constructive membership calling upon my lifelong experience with and support for the University of Hawaii.

I am thoroughly familiar with virtually every element of the ten (10) functions of the BOR listed in the Advisory Council's final draft of duties in 2007 developed in conjunction with Act 56. I have been immersed academically and in my public life with every aspect of those requirements for over half a century.

As for the seven (7) questions posed in the Candidate Application Form I am grateful the people of Hawaii have expressed a high level of confidence in my commitment to public service, education both lower and higher and decision-making in a multitude of circumstances in thirty-six (36) primary and general elections over a fifty (50) year span.

With Respect to qualities of and capacity for leadership, governing and meeting complex organizational challenges including raising and administration of funds and resources I will rely on your judgment of my attached record.

Whether there are issues like TMT, the direction of collective bargaining for faculty and staff, Systems vs. individual campus governance, the relevance and appropriate role of inter collegiate athletics, relationships with the State Executive and Legislature, fair and equitable tuition, the University as a major economic force and the role of the faculty as the central feature of its viability, strengthening of and advocacy for academic freedom and diversity of academic offerings from Community College to Graduate School or resolving infrastructure shortfalls - above all membership on the BOR requires commitment to and focus upon the management and operations of the University on behalf of all Hawaii's people.

I have dedicated both my public and personal life to giving back to Hawaii all that it has meant and given to me. Service as a Regent of the University of Hawaii brings me full circle.

The malihini kid looking out of the G.A. window in Crawford Hall at the cows grazing just past the Mid-Pac border in 1959 couldn't foresee that one day he might have an opportunity to return to U.H. to help another generation of students prepare for Hawaii's future. My gratitude is deep and abiding.

Aloha,

Governor Neil Abercrombie

Neil Abercrombie, Ph.D.

Curriculum Vitae

2015-2024 **Pacific Strategies, LLC, Chinatown, Honolulu Hawaii**

- Counseling and Advice Services
- Development and construction of permanent affordable rental units
Chinatown/Urban Honolulu
- Gavel Resources – Washington D.C.
Director of Hawaiian Operations

2010-2014 **7th. Governor-State of Hawaii**

The State of Hawaii Government is an \$11 billion dollar organization (\$70BGDP) serving 1.4 million residents and 8.5 million visitors through 41,000 employees in 18 Departments and 108 attached agencies.

Fiscal Management: In December 2010 the State faced a \$220 million deficit. We achieved an \$884 million positive balance in FY 2013; over \$600 million in FY 2014 after recapitalizing depleted fiscal reserves and initiating the pay down of unfunded state retirement liabilities now on a path to full-funding.

- **Information Technology:** In December 2010 the State had 35 lines of business/220 business functions with less than 5% of services on-line with 735 legacy IT applications, some 40 years old.
- Initiated the Enterprise Resource Planning Project, instituting a 7-phase, 12-year roadmap of technology transformation: payroll, time, asset and grants management, acquisitions, budget and finance and human resources to achieve a fully digital based transparency and accountability.

• **Environmental Stewardship:**

- Rain Follows the Forest Watershed Initiative: Restoration of watershed forests and native ecosystems, elimination of invasive species, re-establishment of forests as an economic resource.
 - Appointed the first state-wide Sustainability Coordinator with cross-agency responsibility.
 - Led and secured Hawaii as the site for the World Conservation Congress in 2016 with participation of over 160 nations.
 - Green Energy Model Securitization (GEMS) program. A \$100 million financing program to allow low and moderate-income homeowners, renters and non-profits to access alternative and renewable energy improvements through on-bill financing.
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•**Education:**

- Established the Executive Office on Early Learning at Cabinet level to develop comprehensive integrated state-wide early learning system.
- State-wide School Readiness Program: statutory establishment and prioritization of funds for expansion of pre-school availability.
- Secured \$75 million federal "Race to the Top" competitive grant. The U.S. Department of Education gives Hawaii a flawless progress report on its education reforms - Honolulu Star Advertiser, March 6, 2015
- 21st. Century Schools: Pilot project which allows the Department of Education to leverage its lands with private developers to fund improvements of public school facilities and infrastructure.

Higher Education:

- Incorporated University of Hawaii President and Superintendent of Education into all cabinet-level meetings for cross-department coordination.
- Construction of the Advanced Technology Solar Telescope on Mount Haleakala and completed planning and permitting for the Thirty Meter Telescope - the world's most advanced- on Mauna Kea on the Big Island of Hawaii.
- Opened West Oahu campus of the University of Hawaii to bring university access to under-served groups of Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, Pacific Islanders and other residents of the Kapolei and Waianae Coast of Oahu areas.
- Broke ground for the Palamanui Campus of the University of Hawaii on the Kona Coast of the Big Island of Hawaii, ending decades of frustration over lack of higher education facilities.
- Concluded collective bargaining agreements one year ahead of schedule with the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) faculty union with virtually unanimous approval.
- University of Hawaii at Manoa – Hamilton Library Archives
The Hawaii Congressional Papers Collections
1986-87/1990-2010/2010-14

Civil and Human Rights

-Passed and signed into law legislation allowing Civil Unions in Hawaii - 2011.

- Called Special Session of the Legislature to address issue of marriage equality for same-sex couples. Signed Bill into law December 2013.
- Passed and signed into law the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. Second state in the nation to pass this legislation.
- Enacted legislation that protects victims of sex and labor trafficking.

Presidential Appointments:

- Appointed to the Council of Governors - 2010-2014
 - The Council consists of ten of the fifty governors (five Democrats and five Republicans) focusing on matters of National Security, Homeland Defense, coordination of state and military activities in the United States and matters of pertaining to the respective National Guards.
 - The Council works directly with the Secretary of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security.
- Appointed to the President's Taskforce of Climate Preparedness and Resilience – 2013
 - A select group of governors, mayors and other leaders who developed recommendations on how the federal government can better support local preparedness and resilience building programs and projects in the wake of climate change and global warming.

1990-2010 **United States House of Representatives, 1st District - Hawaii:**

- Armed Services Committee
- Natural Resources Committee
- Co-authored landmark legislation creating public-private venture partnerships (PPV) between the military and private developers to build, manage and maintain housing for military families nationwide
- Protection of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands - Papahānaumokuākea
- Chairman, Sub-Committee on Tactical Air and Land Forces 2008 -2010
- Budget and policy responsibility for Natural Defense Authorization Acts
- Author- Blood of Patriots with Richard Hoyt, 1996- Forge Books

Plot: Terrorists storm the U.S. House of Representatives- murder, money and

militias.

"A trip through the looking glass of American Politics" Paul Theroux
"Blood of Patriots will not only command but demand a great deal of media attention. Watch for it!" Norman Mailer

1988-1990 **Honolulu City Council:**

- Special election for seat vacated by Councilwoman Marilyn Bornhorst to run for Mayor
- Protection/preservation of Hanauma Bay - East Oahu.
- Council representative for the State Legislature
- Chairman, committee on Parks, Recreation, Honolulu Police Department (HPD)
- Member committee on Budget

1987-1988 **Special Assistant to Superintendent of Education, State of Hawaii:**

- Oversight of implementation of state-wide multi-island distance learning
- Oversight of initial curriculum development of AIDS education
- Oversight of negotiation and implementation of state-wide Special Education rules and regulations with emphasis on individual education plans (IEP)

1986-1987 **United States House of Representatives, 1st District - Honolulu:**

- Special election to fill unexpired term of Rep. Cecil Heftel who resigned to run for Governor
- Appointed to Armed Services Committee

1974-1986 **Hawaii State House of Representatives and Hawaii State Senate:**

- Formation of Committee on Culture and the Arts
- Appointment of Master to restore life-savings of hundreds of Japanese-American families defrauded in an industrial labor company failure
- Creator of Healthy-Start - state-wide comprehensive prevention program for at-risk mothers and children
- Funding for shelters for abused spouses and children
- Founding of Children's Justice Center, sparing sexually abused children from the trauma of courtroom confrontation
- Reformed child-support payment system by incorporating collections into the jurisdiction of the Attorney General's office
- As Chair of the Higher Education Committee, oversaw the establishment and accreditation of The Schools of Law and Medicine in coordination with Governor Cayetano the then Chairman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee

1970-1974 **University of Hawaii, Manoa Campus American Studies Department:**

- Graduate Teaching Assistant
- Candidate, United State Senate, Democratic Party Primary 1970

- Organizer, Board Member Hawaii United Federation of College Teachers -AFT
- Executive Committee, Hawaii State AFL-CIO
- Sociology Lecturer, Leeward Community College
- Ph.D. - American Studies, 1974

Thesis: Mumford, Mailer and Machines: Staking a Claim for Man
 Comparing and Contrasting Lewis Mumford and Norman Mailer as they explored, in Mailer's words "*the chasm between the technology and metaphysics, the psychology of machines and the dreams of men...*"

1967-1970 **Back Pack World Trek:**

- Hawaii, U.S. Mainland, Europe, Balkans, Egypt, Sudan, East Africa, India, Nepal, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Japan and back to Hawaii
- March on the Pentagon- Washington, D.C., 1967
- Researcher- Kerner Commission, New York City, 1967
- Paris-May-June, 1968
- American Delegation- World Youth Congress, Sofia Bulgaria, 1968
- Prague Spring, Czechoslovakia, 1968
- Travelled Length of the White Nile from Alexandria through the Sudan to Lake Tanganyika in Uganda
- Stayed with Barak Obama, Sr. in Nairobi, Kenya, 1968
- Travelled India from Kerala to the Punjab and Kashmir; from Goa to Delhi to Calcutta, 1969
- South Vietnam, Saigon-Delta Region, 1969
 Lived in Cholan Area
 · Hosted by Members of U.S. Army 4th Psychological Operations Team
- Returned to Hawaii from Hong Kong and Japan, 1970

1964-1967 **Deputy Probation Officer, Marin County, California**

- Sentence Recommendation and Supervision Responsibility - from traffic tickets to murder
- Initiated First Urinalysis Drug Testing Program
- Work Furlough Supervision
- Volunteer Counseling, San Quentin Prison
- Volunteer driver for Senator Wayne Morse - Campaign for President

1959-1964 **University of Hawaii, Manoa Campus, Honolulu Hawaii**

- Sociology Department
- Met and became friends with President Obama's father
- Graduate Teaching Assistant, Sociology
- Janitor- Mother Rice Preschool
- Locker Room Desk Clerk- Central YMCA
- Waiter, Chuck's Steakhouse - Waikiki
- M.A. Sociology 1964

The Lonely Crowd

David Reisman, Nathan Glaser, Reuel Denney

Explored the inner-directed and other-directed personality thesis of **The Lonely Crowd** and the religious orientation of university students under the

supervision of Reuel Denney.

1955-1959 **Union College Schenectady, New York**

- B.A. Sociology, 1959

1952-1955 **Williamsville New York Central High School**

- National Honor Society

- Class Officer

- 3-year Varsity Letter Winner: All-League Guard-Football 1955

- New York State Regents Scholarship

Personal:

Born: Buffalo, New York – June 26, 1938

Parents: **G. Donald Abercrombie** – Food Broker: Abercrombie, Logan and DeRose
Vera June Abercrombie – Kindergarten Teacher

Religion: Episcopalian

Spouse: Nancie Caraway, Ph.D.
B.A., M.A., Ph.D. – Political Science
University of Hawaii – Manoa

M.S. – Journalism
Columbia University

Author: Segregated Sisterhood: Racism and the Politics of American Feminism
University of Tennessee Press, 1991

Research Fellow: Globalization Studies, College of Social Sciences
University of Hawaii, Manoa

Contact Information:

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