



Business and Hospitality Department

February 24, 2024

Dear Senator Kim,

It's my honor to support Lauren M. Akitake's confirmation for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat. I've known Lauren since 2015, when she taught business and hospitality law at UHMC. As program coordinator, I witnessed widespread praise for her teaching ability and student care.

Lauren's dynamic use of real-world case studies made learning relevant and stimulating for our students. They gained foundational legal knowledge and, crucially, developed the ability to apply their understanding to complex scenarios. I'm proud to count Lauren as both colleague and friend.

Her high energy and generous spirit make her a role model for students and faculty alike. Her ardent commitment to service includes serving as a per diem District Court Judge for the Second Circuit Court, State of Hawaii. Since her interim appointment to the Board of Regents, she's demonstrated active engagement by meeting directly with UHMC faculty and staff. We felt genuinely heard. This dedication, alongside her legal expertise, makes her an invaluable asset.

I wholeheartedly support Lauren's confirmation. Her example will continue to inspire our community.

Yours sincerely,

Liping Liu, Ph.D. CHE  
Professor & Program Coordinator  
Hospitality and Tourism  
University of Hawaii Maui College  
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**MAUI COLLEGE**



Social Sciences Department  
Early Childhood Education

February 25, 2024

To Governor Josh Green:

I am writing this letter of support for Lauren M. Akitake for a permanent position on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I have known Ms. Akitake as both a colleague and client of her law practice for many years and can attest to her high ethical standards, communication skills, knowledge of the law, and commitment to the University of Hawaii System.

I am a professor and department chair for the University of Hawaii Maui College. In this role, I must make professional judgments regarding both applicants for positions for our college and evaluate the performance of faculty members. I evaluate the accuracy of the information provided by the instructor, the efficiency in the completion of their duties, and their “soft skills” in developing and maintaining positive relationships. My experience with Ms. Akitake is that she excels in all areas.

Ms. Akitake taught Business Law as an Adjunct Instructor, otherwise known as a Lecturer. While she was not in my department, I learned that she was respected and admired by both students and colleagues.

In her role as interim BOR member, Ms. Akitake has demonstrated that she is up to this task. She took time to address the University of Hawaii Maui College Academic Senate to introduce herself and learn about concerns regarding the Board of Regents’ activities. She also followed up with individual faculty members to better understand any questions or concerns that were raised in this meeting.

As a resident of Maui County, I would be proud to know that Ms. Akitake was working to meet the needs of my community and the State of Hawaii in the area of higher education. I have no doubt she would represent the BOR well.

Sincerely,

*Julie Powers*

Julie Powers, Professor  
Department Chair, Social Science  
Program Coordinator, Early Childhood Education



February 25, 2024

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Chair Donna Mercado Kim  
Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Letter of Support for Lauren M. Akitake

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

My name is Clayton Fuchigami and I am the President/CEO of Maui Federal Credit Union. I am pleased to write this letter supporting Lauren M. Akitake for appointment as a Board of Regent to the University of Hawaii.

My association with Ms. Akitake spans nearly seven years and began when our children first started elementary school together at Pomaikai Elementary.

During our interactions as parents, I found Lauren to be very articulate, possessing a leadership presence, caring, and having a disposition that compliments her positive personality. I continue to be impressed with her intelligence and the respect she commands with other parents and those employed by the school. When my son was attending that school, she tirelessly volunteered as a parent representative on the Pomaikai School Community Council serving on our behalf.

Recognizing her education, legal, judicial, professional and community experience, I am confident Lauren would make an excellent choice to be a Board of Regent and contribute greatly to its effectiveness. As a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I will be honored if you approved her nomination and confirmation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clayton Fuchigami", is written over the printed name.

Clayton Fuchigami  
President/CEO



February 26, 2024

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 218  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Kim,

My name is Tim Carson, President and CEO of SMS Research & Marketing Services, a full-service market research and consulting company in Honolulu, and I am writing to strongly recommend that Lauren Akitake be confirmed for the Maui County seat on the UH Board of Regents. Lauren has already proven to be an exceptional regent with a wealth of experience in diverse areas of law.

Lauren's impressive qualifications include a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Kansas School of Law, a Master of Science degree in Applied Social Research from the University of Stirling, Scotland, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Policy Analysis/Politics from Pomona College in California. She was also a 2020 Ka Ipu Kukui Fellow, a 2020 Hawaii State Bar Association Leadership Institute Fellow, and a 2016 Hawaii Emerging Legal Practitioners Access to Justice Fellow.

In addition to her outstanding academic and professional accomplishments, Lauren has demonstrated a deep commitment to education and community service. She has taught Business Law at the University of Hawaii Maui College from 2015-2021, served as a board member for the Maui County Bar Association, and is a current board member of Women Helping Women and member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Lauren's leadership skills are also exceptional. She has been appointed by Maui Circuit Court Judges as Kokua Kanawai, Special Administrator, and Commissioner in various contested cases, demonstrating her ability to navigate complex legal issues and manage sensitive situations. Furthermore, her continued appointment as a per diem District Court Judge for the Second Circuit Court, State of Hawaii, underscores her exemplary judgment, ethics, and professionalism.

In conclusion, I strongly endorse Lauren Akitake for the full term as the Maui County representative on the UH Board of Regents. Her extensive legal experience, outstanding academic and professional qualifications, and deep commitment to education and community service make her an ideal to continue the good work she's already done as an interim board member. I have no doubt that she will continue to serve the University of Hawai'i and its students with distinction.

Mahalo,



Tim Carson  
President & CEO  
SMS Research & Marketing Services, Inc.

LAW OFFICES  
OF  
**MARVIN S. C. DANG**  
A Limited Liability Law Company

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February 27, 2024

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: **GM 532 (Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE, for a term to expire 06-30-2028)**  
**Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 1:00 p.m.**

I'm a partner of the Law Offices of Marvin S.C. Dang, I, along with my law partner Marvin S.C. Dang and associate attorney Renee M. Furuta-Barnum – who are also signing this letter – **strongly support** the nomination and confirmation of **Lauren M. Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.**

Mr. Dang, Ms. Furuta-Barnum, and I are alumni of the University of Hawaii. We have known Ms. Akitake for over 6 years. Before her appointment as a per diem Judge of the District Court of the Second Circuit, she had made numerous special court appearances on Maui for our firm's clients. During this time, we have known her to be an extremely intelligent, responsible, and hardworking person who always exhibits exemplary professionalism.

In addition to our professional work with Ms. Akitake, I have had the opportunity to know Ms. Akitake on a personal level. I can say without reservation that she is honest, compassionate, trustworthy, and respectful. She is a thoughtful listener who carefully considers the views of others.

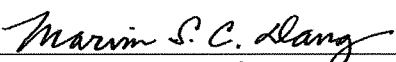
All of Ms. Akitake's qualities, and her experience as an Interim Regent on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents since July 2023, make her an excellent addition to the Board of Regents for the next 4 years. If she is confirmed, we have no doubt that she will continue to be engaged and committed in her service on the Board and will act in the best interest of the University of Hawaii.

For the above reasons, we strongly support the nomination of Lauren Akitake and urge her confirmation. Thank you.

Sincerely,



JASON M. OLIVER

  
MARVIN S.C. DANG

  
RENEE M. FURUTA-BARNUM



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February 26, 2024

**VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President  
and Members of the Hawaii State Senate  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: UH Board of Regents – Support for Lauren Akitake**

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate:

I am writing to support the confirmation of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I have come to know Ms. Akitake over the years through her work as a lawyer. She has an excellent professional demeanor and has consistently demonstrated knowledge of the law and that she is a tenacious advocate. One of Ms. Akitake's most compelling attributes is her passion for advocating for justice. In other words, Ms. Akitake strives to do what is right and fair, and what should be done in every situation.

Ms. Akitake is a great choice because she will be able to readily apply her strong research and advocacy skills to her duties as a Regent. Ms. Akitake's attributes would serve her and the Board well in the mission to advance a strong university system for the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my support for Ms. Akitake.

Very Truly Yours,  
/s/ Addison D. Bonner  
Addison D. Bonner

# Wright & Kirschbraun, A Limited Liability Law Company

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Deborah K. Wright

(Email: Deborah@wkmaui.com)

Douglas R. Wright

(Email: Doug@wkmaui.com)

February 26, 2024

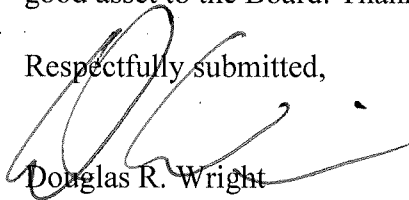
The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second Legislature  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Nomination of Lauren Akitake  
Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i

Dear President Kouchi and members of the Senate:

This letter is sent in support of Lauren Akitake's nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents, a continuation of her work since July 1, 2023. I have a great deal of respect for Lauren. I have gotten to know her over the past few years in various capacities as a private attorney, when she did work for the Bar Association or, more recently, serving as a District Court per diem judge. It is clear that Lauren takes the time to prepare, is thoughtful in her comments and questions, and is very knowledgeable about the subject matter at-hand. Lauren has the ability to devote boundless energy and enthusiasm in her efforts to understand, convey and advocate the Maui community's needs and perspectives. I have found her to be thoughtful and someone who cautiously exercises reasoned judgment. I believe she will continue to be a good asset to the Board. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas R. Wright

LAW OFFICE OF  
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**February 26, 2024**

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second Legislature  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: Testimony in Support of Gubernatorial Nominee Lauren M. Akitake, Esq.**

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate;

I hereby submit this written testimony in support of the confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee Lauren Akitake (“Ms. Akitake”) to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

I have known Ms. Akitake for close to a decade and feel my impressions of her, both professionally and personally, are well-founded. I first became acquainted with Ms. Akitake as a colleague when I first entered into the Maui legal community. From the outset, she was outgoing and generous with her time, offering any assistance she could provide to a new attorney. Her professionalism, kindness and willingness to help have persisted over the years. Although we have both been busy with our legal careers, when we randomly run into each other she still always takes the time to ask about my family and how the practice going.

I am confident the motivation, competency, moral aptitude and devotion Ms. Akitake possesses will allow her to not only meet the obligations of the UH Board of Regents position, but to exceed expectations. She has proven herself to be a pleasure to work with, and has the ability to remain calm and courteous even during stressful situations when emotions are high. While serving as a per diem judge on Maui, Ms. Akitake has further demonstrated her work ethic, inquisitive nature and willingness to consider all sides of an issue, while also maintaining the ability to make difficult decisions when necessary. Outside of the legal professional, she is an involved member of the Maui community, and a devoted mother of two young boys.

I believe these qualities, in conjunction with a firm grasp of the law in Hawaii, would be an asset to the UH Board of Regents, and make Ms. Akitake an excellent candidate to the fill the Maui County Seat. If I may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Alex Wilkins, Esq.  
Direct: (808) 740-6030



February 26, 2024

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second Legislature  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**RE: 532 GM Testimony for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE**

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate,

I am honored to submit testimony regarding Lauren Akitake for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. Lauren's work serving Maui Health and our patients and their families since 2017 has been exemplary and compassionate.

In her legal practice, Lauren regularly goes well beyond what is asked of her in seeking guardianships for some of Maui Health's most vulnerable patients. The point at which legal intervention becomes necessary is often fraught with conflict and emotion. Not only do these situations require time and energy, they also require an understanding of Maui's culture and people and compassion for everyone involved. Lauren always shows true understanding and humility in her thoughtful and community minded approach to her work with our hospital and long-term care teams, and with our patients, their families, and their lay caregivers.

Lauren has always been generous in offering Maui Memorial Medical Center, Kula Hospital, and Lana'i Hospital her community resources and connections in order to best serve patients in vulnerable situations. Additionally, she volunteers her deep understanding and connection to the Maui community to Maui Health's leadership team, helping us to better serve Maui.

As a result of Lauren's excellent work and the care and dedication she has exhibited for Maui Health's patients and the Maui community, I wholeheartedly support her confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,



Stephen Massaro  
Counsel  
Maui Health System, a Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, LLC

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 8:56:24 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ernie K. Wilson	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Although Lauren Akitake is only now being reviewed for approval to a five-year term representing Maui County due to a delay in the hearing/confirmation process, she has served as a Regent on the UH Board of Regents (BOR) since July 2023 (the original beginning date of her five-year term). During this almost eight-month period, Lauren has shown that she has both the interest and desire to perform her duties in a manner that will enhance the BOR's efforts to ensure that the University of Hawaii System meets its goals and objectives. I therefore strongly support the approval of her appointment.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 7:09:21 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lauren Zirbel	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for Lauren Akitake's nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. I have had the privilege of knowing Lauren for several years, and her dedication to education and her community is unparalleled.

Lauren's commitment to excellence in education is evident in her professional endeavors and her volunteer work. Her innovative ideas and collaborative approach make her an invaluable asset to any institution.

Moreover, Lauren's deep roots in Hawai'i and her understanding of its unique cultural and social landscape make her particularly well-suited for this position. She recognizes the importance of preserving Hawai'i's heritage while also promoting progress and growth within the university system.

I am confident that Lauren Akitake will serve with integrity, diligence, and compassion on the Board of Regents. Her leadership will undoubtedly contribute to the advancement of higher education in Hawai'i and benefit students, faculty, and staff alike.

Thank you for considering Lauren Akitake for this important role. I wholeheartedly endorse her nomination and encourage others to do the same.

Sincerely,  
Lauren Zirbel

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/23/2024 7:21:23 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Raynette Bista Rizzo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former student of hers, I strongly support Ms. Lauren Akitake for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii.

Ms. Akitake was my Professor at UH Maui College where I had the opportunity to be one of her students in her Business Law class. I thoroughly enjoyed it and learned so many practical truths about the law that I had never known about prior to taking her class. I learned the ability to be able to analyze cases and develop and defend positions. She made learning very difficult and complex material, specifically “Business Law”, much more manageable and interesting. She used examples and scenarios from many different cases, both local and international, that were broken down for our class to make it easier for us to understand and grasp the various concepts, which required using our critical thinking skills.

She once shared with us a case about Honolulu Cookie Company and Big Island Candies. She brought into class two different cookies for each of us and placed them in front of us on the table, one cookie from Cookie Corner and a cookie from Big Island Candies. She asked us if we could note any difference between the two. Big Island Candies sued locally owned Cookie Corner in July 2001 for trademark infringement. Ms. Akitake discussed trademark infringement with our class, what it meant, and how/when the law is applied, and what does or does not deserve legal protections. The best part of the lesson was, when it concluded, Ms. Akitake allowed us to eat both cookies! They were both delicious! She was always positive, interesting and engaging with our class, and most of all very creative in teaching difficult topics to get us to be able to help us understand the law, which can sometimes be very intimidating and daunting to learn about as a student with no prior knowledge about the subject.

What I learned from her class, I was, and am still able to apply it to my daily life. From learning about Torts, to Contracts, I learned valuable lessons that aided me in knowing what to do before signing any binding contracts that could potentially be catastrophic for me.

I am grateful to have had her as my former professor, and now, as my friend.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and again, please support her confirmation to the Board of Regents.

Sincerely,

Raynette Bista Rizzo

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/23/2024 8:06:13 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
SYBIL LOPEZ	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Im in STRONG SUPPORT for LAUREN AKITAKE for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee.

I was privilege to meet Lauren through the Ka Ipukukui Fellows Program which is to promote and develop future leaders through a community-based program designed to address planning for Maui Nui's future. She is a dynamic person and will be an asset in this capacity.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/23/2024 8:30:12 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jesse K. Souki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

I appreciate the opportunity to register my support of the confirmation of Lauren Akitake, Esq. to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/23/2024 9:17:13 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stephanie Haro Sevilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom it may concern:

I am writing this in support of Lauren Akitake. Lauren has a deep passion for others and is a great representative of our community. As a professor she guided all of her students, helping achieve their full potential. Lauren was an incredible mentor to me in my years with her as my professor. Her dedication to helping others inspired my passion for law and gave me the courage and confidence to go to law school and ultimately graduate and pass the bar. I do not know anyone more qualified and deserving of this role. I strongly support and recommend Lauren Akitake for this position.



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 12:47:56 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jonathan Lau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Comittee members,

Please approve Lauren Akitaki to continue to serve Maui County and the State as an excellent UH Board Regent. We need smart, hardworking, **homegrown** Regents to help guide UH toward excellence!

Mahalo!

Jonathan K. Lau

Jennifer Suzuki  
244 Molehulehu St.  
Kahului, HI. 96732  
808-385-2942

February 24, 2024

The Honorable Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawaii  
Executive Chambers  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Governor Josh Green, M.D.,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Lauren Akitake on her nomination to the District Court of the Second Circuit. I am a media teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate School and also run the after school program. The focus of my class is journalism and video production. It is my mission to provide as many real world experiences as possible for my students which includes having them follow local stories, interview key figures, and become more aware of local issues and opportunities in the community. It has been my luck to have made some connections to various experts on the island and to have been able to have them interact with and advise my students.

Ms. Akitake is one of the most responsive and helpful experts I have come to call a friend over the past 8 years. She has assisted my students in multiple stories by explaining the legal aspects of issues and has also come and spoken to my class numerous times on the path to becoming a lawyer and how best to prepare for it as a career. She is always respectful, responsive, and kind when communicating with my students. She is also able to explain all sides of a situation and the different opinions of opposing sides in a clear and understandable way. This ability to take difficult concepts and present them in an understandable way is a gift that Ms. Akitake possesses. She is able to see to the heart of the matter and look at it from all sides, and still be objective, fair, and comprehensible when explaining it to students.

I feel confident that these abilities will allow her to serve our community fairly and objectively and that she will be able to explain the rationale for her decisions in an understandable way. She is a thoughtful, intelligent, ethical woman who would be an asset to our judicial system. It is my opinion that you could not select someone who would do a better job for the people of the county of Maui.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Suzuki



Anthony P. Takitani  
Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran  
David M. Jorgensen  
Joseph L. Wildman

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# TAKITANI, AGARAN, JORGENSEN & WILDMAN

A Limited Liability Law Partnership

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February 24, 2024

Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Sen. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Nomination of Lauren M. Akitake - UH Board of Regents

Dear Senators Kim and Kidani:

This letter is being sent in support of the nomination of Lauren M. Akitake for as seat on the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. I previously submitted testimony to Governor Josh Green in support of Lauren when she was appointed to an interim seat on the Board and I am happy and honored to submit the following testimony in full support of her nomination to the Board.

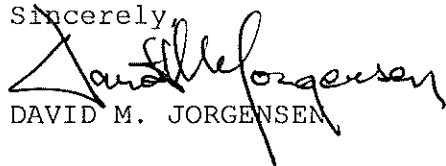
I first met Lauren when she worked for my prior law firm as an intern while she was finishing up law school at the Richardson School of Law. She needed to travel back and forth to Oahu in order to be able to fill the position and I was impressed with her responsibility and diligence in following through on all of her obligations, not just to us, but for completing her law degree.

In addition, I was extremely impressed with Lauren's intelligence, her understanding of the law, and her work ethic while she was with us. Since that time, I have followed her career as a friend and a fan. I know how much she cares about Maui and how strongly she supports education at all levels, especially as a single Mom of two young sons, and I know how much her time teaching at UHMC meant to her and to her students. Lauren is a very responsible and self-motivated person and her level of comfort in communicating her thoughts and ideas, whether in support of or contrary to an argument, is impressive.

I have the utmost respect and Aloha for Lauren, I believe her to have the highest level of integrity, and I have no hesitation in wholeheartedly requesting your favorable consideration and support of her nomination for a seat on the Board of Regents.

Please let me know if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

  
DAVID M. JORGENSEN

Johanna Moore  
PO Box 72  
Kula, HI 96790

February 24, 2024

Senator Donna Mercado Kim  
Senate Higher Education Committee Chair  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Kim:

I am writing to highly recommend Lauren M. Akitake confirmation on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents for Maui County.

I initially got to know Lauren in the fall of 2015 when she was hired as a lecturer for business law at UH Maui College. I was a professor of Accounting, Chair for the Business and Hospitality Department, and served as a mentor for Lauren. I retired from the college at the end of 2017. Lauren served as our attorney to prepare our will and trust documents. Additionally, we are both officers of the American Association of University Women Maui Branch.

While Lauren was a lecturer at Maui College, Lauren was truly interested in her students' learning. I evaluated her teaching and found her engaging; she encouraged student participation and exceeded in her ability to explain the law in a manner in which the students found interesting and comprehensible. I have had many conversations with Lauren about teaching our diverse students during the time we were together at Maui College. I truly believe Lauren knows UH Maui College's student body and understands their educational needs. With her teaching experience in the UH system, Lauren is extraordinarily qualified to be a UH Board of Regent.

In preparing our trust and will documents, I found Lauren to be very knowledgeable, competent, and professional.

As a co-president of the Association of University of Women-Maui Branch, Lauren is a supporter of higher education and the equity of women. She is well connected to the community. She leads the organization efficiently; she listens to branch members to receive information and provides guidance and leadership with intelligence and understanding.

I highly recommend Lauren Akitake's confirmation as a University Regent.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [moorejan3@gmail.com](mailto:moorejan3@gmail.com).

Sincerely,  
Johanna B. Moore

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 2:03:48 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kimberly Delmore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of Lauren Akitake's nomination and confirmation to the UH Board of Regents. Lauren has been serving in an interim capacity and been able to show how capable she is in this role. I have gotten to know Lauren well since our children were in preschool together approximately six years ago. I am always impressed with Lauren's commitment to our community, to her family, and her profession. Lauren is such a positive person. She has a lot of grace, is intelligent and fair. I cannot think of anyone better suited to fill this role.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 2:16:48 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jack Edward Belsom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of Lauren Akitake's nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. She has been serving as an interim. During that interim, she has participated fully, made many trips, and been diligent in her duties as a regent. Ms. Akitake has long been involved in working for the good of Maui and the State of Hawaii. She brings her experience as an attorney and also as kama'aina. I urge you to approve her nomination by Governor Green.

Thank you.

Jack Belsom



February 24, 2024

**VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 27, 2024, 1:00 P.M.  
Conference Room 229

**RE: (STRONG SUPPORT) GM532; Confirmation of Lauren Akitake to the  
University of Hawai'i Board of Regents**

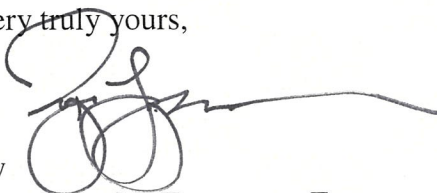
Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ryan M. Toyomura, and I am an attorney with the law firm Ashford & Wriston LLP, writing on behalf of myself only, in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the confirmation of Ms. Lauren Akitake as a member of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents ("Board").

I have had the pleasure of knowing Ms. Akitake for several years and hold her in the highest regard for her professional acumen as an attorney and per diem judge. But most importantly, I consider her a trusted friend. The breadth of her knowledge, experience, and demonstrated commitment to our keiki and 'ohana on Maui currently adds a unique and fresh perspective from a new generation of leaders to the Board. Her work on the Board thus far as an interim member has been described as thoughtful, honest, and engaging. As a proud alumnus of the University of Hawai'i at Manōa, I am confident that Ms. Akitake will forge a brighter future for a school that means so much to our State and community.

Therefore, I respectfully ask this Committee to vote to recommend the confirmation of Ms. Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

Very truly yours,

  
By  
Ryan M. Toyomura, Esq.

MAILING ADDRESS

Post Office Box 131 / Honolulu, HI 96810

STREET ADDRESS

First Hawaiian Center / 999 Bishop Street, Suite 1400 / Honolulu, HI 96813  
T 808.539.0400 / F 808.533.4945 / E atty@awlaw.com / www.ashfordwriston.com



**Date:** 02/24/2024

**Committee:** Higher Education

**Person Testifying:** Robert S. Kawahara, CPA

**Title of Hearing:** GM532 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

**Position:** Support of Nominee

As an alumni of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I support the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii.

Ms. Akitake and I are both alumni of the Ka Ipu Kukui fellowship program. Ka Ipu Kukui is a year-long leadership development program uniquely designed for community-identified current and future leaders of Maui Nui. The curriculum specially addresses the many challenges that face Maui Nui and provides unfiltered access to a variety of individuals and locations on Maui.

Through this fellowship program, I have come to know Ms. Akitake as a passionate individual who is highly-driven to achieve positive outcomes in all that she does. Ms. Akitake remains active in her support of the program as a testament to her commitment and willingness to share her what she has learned with other cohorts in the program.

I've also come to Ms. Akitake through other community events. Ms. Akitake is always giving her time freely to help others. Ms. Akitake's extensive and varied legal background should make her a highly qualified individual as a Regent. The Board of Regents would be very fortunate to have such a dedicated and knowledgeable member.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Lauren Akitake for the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii. If you have any questions regarding my testimony please feel free to contact me at [robert@mauicpa.net](mailto:robert@mauicpa.net) or (808) 264-5357.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 3:24:04 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
david rosen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have known Lauren M. Akitake, who has been nominated for the position on the UH Board of Regents, for almost 15 years. Ms. Akitake worked for me for several years as an attorney early in her career. She was an independent thinker, hard worker, and an exceptional researcher, writer, and problem solver – all skills that evidence her ability to be an effective advocate and Regent.

Since leaving my employment, Ms. Akitake has expanded her areas of public service and legal knowledge. During the past decade, she has developed a favorable reputation on the Island of Maui amongst the judiciary, other attorneys, and the public. Ms. Akitake and her family have deep roots on Maui and in serving their community, which will also assist her and the University of Hawaii system. I think she would make an excellent Regent. I hope you will vote in favor of her confirmation.

February 24, 2024  
Maui, Hawaii

**Testimony in Support of the Confirmation the Appointment of Ms. Lauren Akitake, Esq., to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, Maui County Seat**

Members of the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

Ms. Lauren Akitake has asked me to provide testimony to you in support of her confirmation by you of her appointment by Governor Green to serve as a member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents for the Maui County Seat. I am very happy and honored to have this opportunity to provide testimony. Ms. Akitake has my highest recommendation for confirmation, and I am certain that if she is confirmed she will serve successfully, with dignity and that she will be a great asset to the Board of Regents, to our State and to our Maui community.

I first met and got to know Ms. Akitake when she served as my Law Clerk for the period of August 2007 – April 2009, during the time I served as Chief Judge of Hawaii's Second Judicial Circuit (Maui County). We worked together closely during this time to manage a very busy court docket involving both civil and criminal cases, and including the Maui Drug Court, which I established and presided over.

Since the time she served as my Law Clerk, Ms. Akitake has practiced law, served as lecturer at the University of Hawaii, Maui Campus and served our community in many other capacities, including, since November 2021, in the capacity of Per Diem District Court Judge of the Second Circuit, by appointment of Chief Justice Recktenwald. I'm not surprised that she has been so successful. She has since very early in her life dug in and found ways in which to contribute to the welfare of our Maui community, actually more successfully than most anyone else here in Maui that I can think of.

Ms. Akitake, in my experience, is very diligent, intelligent, ethical, creative, and resourceful. The work she performed for my Court required a great deal of effort and concentration. Not only did she do a great job as my Law Clerk, but she worked effectively, thoughtfully and empathetically well with others in Second Circuit and, importantly, with citizens who reported to our court for jury service as well as the members of our Drug Court who were striving to rebuild their lives. I believe she is a natural leader and a very effective "self-starter" who succeeds as most everything she attempts.

The bottom line is that I believe Ms. Akitake possess the intellectual, ethical and personal abilities to serve very successfully as a member the Board of Regents. She is especially well grounded to represent her Maui community on the Board. I highly recommend the confirmation of her appointment to the Board of Regents.

Please let me know if you would like further information or elaboration on my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Shackley F. Raffetto  
Chief Judge (Ret.), Second Circuit, State of Hawaii  
[jsraffetto@aol.com](mailto:jsraffetto@aol.com); 808-344-2155  
215 Alanuilili Place, Kula, Hawaii 96790

t

Hana Kraker  
28 Akea Place  
Kula, HI 96790  
February 24, 2024

Senate High Education Committee

Re: Lauren Akitake

Dear Committee members:

I am writing in support of Lauren Akitake's continued appointment to the UH Board of Regents. She has been serving in that capacity on an interim basis for the past several months and has represented the interests of Maui very well.

I have known Lauren since she was hired as a law clerk for Retired Judge Shackley Raffetto, and have kept in touch with her since then. She has proven herself to be a valued member of our community, actively participating in many different organizations. Lauren is one who does not take participation in an organization lightly, and is not one to join a group just to say she belongs; she gives her time, energy and commitment to all of her endeavors.

When I was working at the Court and we were looking for Per Diem judges, I contacted Lauren and asked her if it was something she would consider. She didn't say yes immediately; she wanted to know more about what the position required and what kind of commitment she was being asked to make before making her decision. Once she made her decision, though, she dove into the position, taking the time to sit in Court when other judges were presiding to take notes and learn the ropes. She is not afraid to ask questions and for advice from the other judges, and proven herself to be a very good jurist. She familiarizes herself with cases and listens to the parties appearing before her. She is even-keeled and treats all parties with respect. The Judiciary is lucky to have her.

Lauren is the person that Maui needs on the UH Board of Regents. Many times the needs of students from the outer islands are ignored and we need someone to give a voice to those needs.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let Maui's needs be heard.

Mahalo,

Hana Kraker  
808-283-7135  
hanajeon@yahoo.com

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 5:16:09 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael R Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Michael R Brown

529 Ania Pl

Wailuku, HI 96793

WeR3DMAui@gmail.com

(808) 357-2235

02.24.24

Governor Josh Green

Office of the Governor

Dear Governor Green,

I am writing this letter to express my enthusiastic support for the appointment of Lauren M Akitake as a member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. As a concerned citizen and an advocate for education, I believe that Ms. Akitake possesses the qualities and experience necessary to make valuable contributions to the Board.

I have had the privilege of knowing Ms. Akitake for 7 years and during this time, I have been consistently impressed by her dedication to education, her leadership skills, and her commitment to community service. Ms. Akitake's background in uniquely positions her to bring a wealth of knowledge to the Board of Regents.

One of the qualities that sets Ms. Akitake apart is her passion for ensuring access to quality education for all. She has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of the challenges facing educational institutions and has actively sought solutions to address these challenges. I am

confident that her commitment to educational excellence will greatly benefit the University of Hawaii system.

Furthermore, Ms. Akitake's ability to collaborate with diverse groups of people and her strong communication skills make her an ideal candidate for a position on the Board of Regents. Her inclusive approach and willingness to listen to various perspectives will contribute to the Board's ability to make informed and equitable decisions.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support the appointment of Lauren M Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I am confident that her passion for education, her leadership abilities, and her commitment to community service will make her an invaluable asset to the Board. I trust that she will work diligently to advance the mission and goals of the University of Hawaii system.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of Lauren M Akitake's confirmation. I believe that her appointment will contribute positively to the University of Hawaii, its students, and the broader community.

Sincerely,

Michael R Brown

Feb 25, 2024

The Honorable Donna Kim  
Senate Chambers  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Madam,

I write to you in support of Lauren Akitake's appointment to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Having known Lauren since she was a child, she has always been a driven, community minded individual. She has always shown a strong determination to excel in academics, extra-curricular activities and community service. This has carried over to her professional life. While running a law office, Lauren has always been a community-focused person. She has taught business law at the Maui Community College and is currently serving as a per diem District Court Judge for the Second Circuit Court for the State of Hawaii. She has also been serving as an interim member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

We write to you to recommend the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Sincerely,

Lynda Takara



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 6:58:42 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Timothy Alan Stewart 2d	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Timothy Alan Stewart 2d. I am a Social Studies Department Co-Chair at Kekaulike High School in the State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Maui District. My testimony is for GM532.

I've worshiped with Lauren and her family at Iao United Church of Christ over the last 17 years. Lauren has demonstrated from her proven record of success in professional practice, non-profit board member leadership, school community leadership, higher education, and interim Regent experiences that she has the numerous skills necessary to be highly effective in this appointed role. I am honored and privileged to support the nomination, confirmation, and appointment of Lauren Mei-Siang Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii-Maui County Seat.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 7:17:37 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Randall Parabolicoli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of the nomination and confirmation of Lauren Akitake for the UH Board of Regents.

Lauren and I were part of the Ka Ipi Kukui Fellows 2019 cohort and this is where I met her and got to know her. The Ka Ipi Kukui Fellowship program is a leadership program based in Maui County.

She has strong integrity and is always seeking the truth and fact in matters. During our time in the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellowship program we would meet professionals and leaders in different fields and Lauren was never afraid to ask them hard questions.

Lauren is a great leader as well - many times organizing our group together for meetings and discussions.

She is also very motivated and a hard worker. Lauren continues her law practices while also serving as a Per Diem Judge at the District Court, Second Circuit for the County of Maui. She is also serving on various boards including as an interim board member for the UH Board of Regents today. On top of all this, she puts her family first and is always doing the best she can for her children.

I believe as a confirmed UH Board of Regents member Lauren will serve the university and community with utmost sincerity and quality.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 7:58:17 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Anna Mayeda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a family friend who has known Lauren Akitake since she was born, I have witnessed how she has grown and matured into a person who deeply cares about her community as a mother and professional. With young children, Lauren knows the importance of education and as a former teacher at UHMC, she knows the impact of higher education in neighbor islands. Lauren will be an asset to the UH Board of Regents as a voice for the next generation of leaders representing the Maui and our State.

Thank you for allowing me to express my vote of confidence for Lauren Akitake, Esq, for UH Board of Regents.

Anna Mayeda

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 8:42:58 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tambara Garrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Senator Donna Kim,

Chair Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Members of the Higher Education Committee, Hawaii State Senate

Date: February 24, 2024

From: Tambara Garrick, Lahaina, Maui, Hawai'i

Subject: Support for Confirmation of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents, University of Hawai'i

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

I write to you today in full support of the confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee, Lauren Akitake, to the Board of Regents for the University of Hawai'i, for the term ending on June 30, 2028.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Ms. Akitake for several years, having first connected with her through our mutual involvement in the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows leadership program. In our professional collaborations, Lauren has consistently demonstrated a steadfast commitment to enriching our community. Her extensive volunteer work with various non-profits showcases not just her work ethic but her genuine passion for service.

Since her appointment as an interim regent on July 1, 2023, Lauren has proven to be an asset through her contributions to the board's mission and objectives. Her ability to articulate and address the needs of our community while upholding the university's values is commendable.

Lauren's diligence, integrity, and collaborative spirit make her an ideal candidate for the Board of Regents. I am confident in her ability to represent Maui with distinction and contribute positively to the governance of the University of Hawai'i.

I respectfully urge the committee to confirm Ms. Akitake's nomination, assuring you that her leadership qualities and vision align with the best interests of our university and the broader community.

Mahalo,

Tambara Garrick Resident of Lahaina, Maui

[tambarag@gmail.com](mailto:tambarag@gmail.com)

(808) 269-8457

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 9:02:54 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
DONALD C CHAIKIN, Esquire	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Kim, Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee,

I recently learned that the attorney Lauren M. Akitake has been submitted for consideration for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat.

It was delightful to see Lauren Akitake considered as I think she is wonderful and wanted to write a letter of support for her. The purpose of this testimony is to provide the highest level of praise and recommendation that Lauren Akitake be selected for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Lauren Akitake and I have known each other both personally and professionally for 8-9 years. In both cases she has impressed me with her charm, intelligence and professionalism. Our families have met at numerous family events (prior to covid that is) and every time Lauren was enjoyable to be around for myself, my wife and my small children.

Lauren Akitake is smart, calm, level headed, intelligent and good communicators, especially with the public in general who are not legal professionals. These are all qualities I believe that Lauren Akitake possesses.

It is my professional opinion that Lauren Akitake would make an outstanding addition to the Board of Regents and she should be confirmed.

Thank you,

Donald C. Chaikin

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Donald C. Chaikin, Attorney at Law LLC

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 3:07:28 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Graham Russell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to support the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, reference GM532.

I have known Lauren since 2003 when she came to Scotland as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar to study at the University of Stirling. I was President of the Rotary Club of Bridge of Allan and Dunblane who were hosting Lauren during her time in Scotland. She was a very confident and competent young lady, was well organised and participated willingly in various Club activities. Part of her responsibilities were to give presentations to ourselves and other Rotary clubs during her time with us and these were always well received.

After her studies were over and she returned to Maui, we kept in touch and I have followed her career progression with interest over the years.

I am sure she will make a very competent and hard working appointment if she is selected and I am happy to offer my support to her application.

Yours sincerely

Graham Russell

Past President

Rotary Club of Bridge of Allan and Dunblane

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 7:02:35 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Lauren Akitake for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. Based on my experience volunteering with her at AAUW of Hawaii, I know she will be an asset to the University and to the community in this role. Thank you for your consideration.



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 7:06:37 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John K Pearson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have know Lauren for 20 years. She has the perfect personality and expedience for the role of Regent in your system. I most respectfully commend her to your consideration for the position of Regent.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 7:40:39 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hokulani Holt-Padilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support Lauren Akitaki as Regent for the University of Hawai‘i. Lauren has a distinguished resume and has proven her desire to be of service to her community. I request that she be approved as Regent and support this nomination fully.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 8:23:27 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Warren K Orikasa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Senators!

I am submitting testimony in support of Ms. Lauren Akitake to be appointed to a full term as a University of Hawaii Regent.

Lauren has the resume qualifications. What the resume does not show are her psychographic qualities. She has qualities such as integrity, morality, justice, and compassion. As a Regent I believe she will continue to be a tempering force that serves the Board well as they consider a wide range of issues where emotional extremes are not beneficial. She will be able to address issues responsibly in full service of her position. Importantly, Lauren listens!

Your approval of her appointment is an positive decision toward protecting and maintaining the intergrith of the Board of Regents on behalf of the Hawaii community.

Respectfully submitted,

Warren Orikasa

808-276-8089

February 27, 2024  
Conference Room 229

**Senate Committee on Higher Education**

TO: Chair Donna Mercado Kim  
Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani

FROM: Wesley Lo

Re: Support  
GM 532 – Confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial  
Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE, for a term to expire 6-30-2028

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Akitake's nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I have known Ms. Akitake for decades, and throughout her life on Maui and her professional career, she has held herself to the highest ethical standards and has always put Community first in all her endeavors.

She is a product of local upbringing and the local public school system and has practiced law in Hawaii for over 18 years, and is currently operates her own legal practice as well as serves as Per Diem Judge for the District Court on Maui. In addition continues to be involved in many community efforts.

Ms. Akitake deeply cares about the State and Maui and is hard working conscientious citizen, who has served the Board of Regents well in her interim appointment and I am confident she will serve the State and the Board of Regents moving forward

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 9:17:46 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pearl Rockett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in favor of Lauren Akitake's appointment to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Lauren Akitake is a dedicated and conscientious individual, experienced attorney, holding a variety of legal positions, an educator and community-minded person. Her credentials as listed exemplify a promising and a fresh face on the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. She is an upcoming leader with integrity, compassion and is respected for her values. Lauren has the tenacity to resolve issues to its completion.

She has children of her own and understands the value of education for all. Governor Green's appointment of Lauren to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents speaks for itself. Lauren's vast and broad experiences will bring a wide perspective with creative ideas to the Board. Her capabilities will sit well as a Regent.

I have known Lauren since her high school days and her playing junior tennis. I know she will work with and not against fellow Regents, to reach the best solutions for the University of Hawaii and ultimately for the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration of appointing Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Submitted by: Pearl Rockett, 8457 Olena Street, Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

p.s., Lauren was an incredible tennis player.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 10:37:32 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Roya Deyhim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support Lauren Akitake's nomination to the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii. She is of good character and Ms. Akitake would bring a strong and reasonable voice to the board.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 11:00:03 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David Raatz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

Lauren Akitake has been serving with distinction on the Board of Regents as an interim appointee since last spring, and I urge the Senate to confirm her to a full-term appointment.

As a UH lecturer, I have a special interest in the Board of Regents, and I've been impressed with the energy Ms. Akitake has brought to her duties. Ms. Akitake is insightful, inquisitive, courageous, and compassionate. She's a well-respected member of Maui's legal community and has contributed to many worthy causes. I'm grateful for her willingness to continue serving.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

David Raatz

Wailuku

# Rosiana (Nani) Lynne Azman, PhD



February 25, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rosiana (Nani) Azman, PhD. I am submitting this testimony as an individual citizen in support of Lauren M. Akitake, JD, MSc, who is being considered for the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Maui County seat. I have worked for the University of Hawai'i for over twenty years and am currently a Psychology Professor at UH Maui College. Having testified in front of the UH Board of Regents many times, having been the first Faculty Senate Chair ever to present as part of the Chancellor's report to the BOR in September 2016, and having presented to the BOR and some of its committees as Co-Chair of the All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs in 2017-18, I am quite familiar with the functions and operations of the UH Board of Regents. I believe that Lauren brings a unique and needed perspective and presence to the BOR.

Lauren and I first became acquainted when she taught Business Law at UHMC between 2015-21. Having been a lecturer, Lauren understands the challenges of faculty to maintain rigor and relevance while supporting a diverse classroom of students at varying levels of college readiness. Given UH's mission to create a prosperous posterity through higher education, Lauren's experience as faculty should be considered paramount and crucial to the BOR. Had she not been appointed as a per diem District Court judge in November 2021, I firmly believe that Lauren would still be teaching for us at UHMC. Lauren's background in teaching, her work as a District Court judge, and her work as a private attorney have all provided Lauren with the ability and experience to review policies, procedures, and testimonies to find the relevant and essential elements.

The University must serve the entire state, and representation from Neighbor Islands assures consideration of those students without access to O'ahu campuses. Lauren was born and raised on Maui and is raising her family on Maui as well. She epitomizes that which we want for all our Hawai'i residents: a successful and contributing member of our community, willing to serve Hawai'i's people, both through her profession and her volunteer work.

I can think of no other person better suited to represent the people of the county of Maui as well as the state of Hawai'i while protecting the vision and mission of the University of Hawai'i as a member of its Board of Regents than Lauren M. Akitake.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosiana Azman".

Rosiana (Nani) Azman, PhD



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 12:18:46 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
MINDY FUSATO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This letter is in support for Lauren Akitake for the Maui County seat for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. My husband, Ross Fusato and I believe Lauren would be a great regent. Ross and I are both CPAs with over 20 years of industry experience. Currently we have our own public accounting firm in Wailuku, Maui which we started in 2010. We employ ten staff including CPAs, bookkeepers and administrative support staff. Lauren is currently a client of our firm in which we provide bookkeeping, payroll, and tax return services to her both for her business and personally.

We have gotten to know Lauren over the last ten years as our children attended preschool together and we see each other often at school functions or professional events. Lauren is a great mom and a great person. She is organized and involved with her children and their various activities. She is always looking for extracurricular activities for her children to help them grow and experience new things. We have handled school fundraisers and school performances together.

Lauren is an honest, forthright, and caring person. She is hard working and diligent and has the integrity that would be essential in her role. We believe Lauren would be a great candidate for the regent position.

Mindy and Ross Fusato

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 12:54:42 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeremiah Savage	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to recommend Lauren Akitake supporting her nomination and confirmation to the UH Board of Regents. I was formally a financial advisor here on Maui, Deputy Director of Finance for Maui County, and have served on many community boards and commissions, including the County of Maui's Salary Commission as Chair, Maui Youth of Family Services, and currently on the Maui Marathon Committee.

I have known Lauren Akitake for several years now through Maui's Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows nonprofit, a community-based program created to identify and develop young leaders in Maui County. Through many social gatherings, I have found her to be genuine, earnest, approachable, and highly intelligent. There is no doubt in my mind that Lauren will be an excellent addition to the UH Board of Regents.

I have always known Lauren to be of sound character, present/good listener, and has a great sense of ambition. Over three years, I have witnessed tremendous growth in her career and as a mother of her precious children.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-283-8635 or [jeremiah@savageglobal.com](mailto:jeremiah@savageglobal.com) if you have any further questions or requests.

Respectfully yours,

Jeremiah Savage

1930 Kalawai PL

Wailuku, HI 96793

Statement of  
**CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO**  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
HIGHER EDUCATION**

Tuesday, February 27, 2024  
1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of  
**GM 532**  
**Consideration and Confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of  
Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE, for a Term to Expire on June  
30, 2028**

Chairperson Kim, Vice Chairperson Kidani, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education, my testimony is submitted in **support** of GM 532, that considers the confirmation of Ms. Lauren Akitake as the gubernatorial nominee to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Ms. Akitake and I first met in 2017, first professionally. In 2017, Ms. Akitake was retained by Kaiser Permanente, with my recommendation, to handle guardianship matters for the Maui Health Systems, which was in the process of transitioning from State of Hawaii ownership to Maui Health Systems ownership. Through this retention, Ms. Akitake and I worked on guardianship cases matters. She exhibited high legal acumen, and intelligence in the cases we worked on. She always remembered the human side of her legal work and remembered the people side of her legal work. We have maintained contact as friends since 2017.

She is dedicated to serving the public. Despite her busy professional career, and taking care of her family, Lauren seems to find time to help others in the community to better the community and society, as shown in her resume.

It is Ms. Akitake's desire to serve the public through her community service that makes her a good candidate for the Board of Regents. She brings with a wealth of professional and community experiences to the role as a Regent.

Ms. Akitake has my support for Regent of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 1:45:13 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
June Loveall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to whole heartedly support the confirmation of Lauren Akitake to the UH Board of Regents. I remember her telling me she was appointed as an interim in July 2023. She is fully committed to the work and mission of the organization. Transitioning to a permanent member is a natural next step. I've enjoyed hearing about the work she's been doing and the people she has had the pleasure of working with.

Along with Lauren, I serve on the Board of Directors at Women Helping Women, a domestic violence agency serving the Maui community. She has been such an asset to the board and community at large not only with her astute legal background and experience but her compassion. She truly believes in the work she does and it shows.

I fully support this appointment and look forward to the ongoing contribution Lauren will make.

Thank you,

June Loveall

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 1:55:24 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Anthony Takitani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairperson Kim and Vice Chairperson Kidani and members of the Committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer support of Lauren Akitake to be able to continue to serve the state in her position as Member of the UH Board of Regents. I have known Lauren as a practicing attorney and community advocate for over ten years. She is born and raised on Maui and after a stellar education on the mainland and abroad returned home to pursue her life's work on Maui. She is active in many professional and community endeavors which shows her commitment to a better Hawaii. She also serves as a per diem judge in the 2nd Circuit further fulfilling much needed leadership roles on Maui. I have had many opportunities to speak to Lauren about her position on the BOR. She seems to have acclimated quickly and takes her role very seriously as part of the body who manages and controls the UH. I believe it is important that she has nearly a year of experience as a Regent as this Board looks for a new Chancellor and addresses some of the problems recently discussed in the news. Thank you for allowing me to submit my support for Lauren Akitake. with Aloha, tony takitani

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 2:07:01 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Suzette Robinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Lauren Akitake's nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. Ms. Akitake's resume speaks to her dedication to her profession as an attorney and her willingness to serve her community. She is energetic, articulate, and insightful. She will be an active member of the board, someone who researches an issue, asks questions, and makes decisions based on what she believes is best for the university and its students.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 2:26:31 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pamela Schulz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge the legislature to support the confirmation of Lauren Akitake as a permanent member of the UH Board of Regents. I've known her as a member and co-president of American Association of University Women, Maui Branch. She is active and motivated in our support of education. She has extensive legal experience. She will be a valuable member of the UH Board of Regents.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 2:43:34 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carolyn Kamidoi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Carolyn Kamidoi

Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i - GM532

February 25, 2024

My name is Carolyn Kamidoi, a resident of Maui, Hawai'i, a retired preschool teacher, and proud University of Hawai'i graduate. I am testifying on the nomination and confirmation of Ms. Lauren M. Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

I have known Ms. Akitake for 42 years, as she and my children grew up together, attended preschool, church and played tennis with the Wailuku Jr. program. During this period, I witnessed her development into a fine young lady with high goals set for herself. Ms. Akitake was an excellent student throughout her schooling, which is evident in her academic accomplishments. She is a graduate of Baldwin High School (Valedictorian), Pomona College, University of Stirling in Stirling, Scotland and received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Kansas School of Law. Upon returning to Hawai'i Ms. Akitake began gaining her experience in many areas of law practicing in state and federal courts on Maui and O'ahu. She eventually opened her law office in Wailuku and has become a per diem judge on Maui.

Professionally, Ms. Akitake was our family's estate planning attorney. She was very thorough and made us feel comfortable with our decisions. We were able to understand the process and the complex documents with her clear and careful explanations. Ms. Akitake also helped Iao United Church of Christ by sitting on the Endowment Committee for two years. She researched and shared information to help make decisions which were beneficial for the church.



Ms. Akitake has a vast experience in law and brings her knowledge to help many of our community agencies such as Women Helping Women, Maui Cancer Wellness Retreats and Pomaikai Elementary School. She is also a steward of our land and ocean, and with her sons, participates in clean up campaigns around Maui.

Your consideration of my testimony is very much appreciated. It is my hope you will recognize Ms. Akitake as an asset and confirm her nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 2:52:06 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kevin J Block	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kevin Block. I am an attorney that lives and practices on the island of Maui.

I stand in full support of the nomination of Lauren Akitake to the UH Board of Regents.

I have known Lauren since 2014 when I started my practice and she was teaching at UH Maui College. Over the years, I have personally witnessed Ms. Akitake's tireless dedication to our community, supporting young lawyers, building capacity with many different grassroots and community organizations, in both support and leadership roles.

Lauren embodies the principles of integrity, service and dedication in both her personal and professional life. She is very much an active and visible part of our legal community and is always engaged in giving back to and lifting up those around her. She does not shy away from challenges and I know the Board of Regents will benefit from her proven leadership skills and generous, cooperative style of interacting.

Lauren's nature is that of a committed advocate, a mentor and a dedicated public servant. Her resume, education, experience and community service have led her to this opportunity and she is suited for the role in both talent and temperament.

I look forward to her leadership at University of Hawaii.

Kevin Block, Esq.

February 25, 2024

Kula, HI

February 24, 2024

Hawai'i State Legislature  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senate Committee on Higher Education,

It is my great pleasure to submit this comment for Lauren Akitake, J.D. on the occasion of her gubernatorial nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i (UH). The charge of the Board of Regents is to oversee the affairs of the UH system to best serve the diverse interests and needs of UH students, and achieve its strategic goals—an important public role for which Ms. Akitake is exceptionally qualified.

I am a Tenured Associate Professor of Social Medicine, Population and Public Health at the University of California Riverside School of Medicine, a clinical psychologist raised and trained in Hawai'i, and a proud alumni of the UH system. I am also the Founding Co-Director of the Veterans Affairs Center for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Health situated in Honolulu, HI. My nationally recognized work addressing health inequities among Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders and other underserved populations has been supported by the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and City of Hope Cancer Hospital, among other entities. As a clinician and scholar who was born, raised, and maintains deep personal and professional ties across Hawai'i, and has extensive training and experience working with Hawai'i's diverse communities, schools, and systems, I am well-suited to comment upon Ms. Akitake's suitability for the role of UH Regent.

I have known Ms. Akitake for over 20 years, when she first entered Pomona College, a top-ranked liberal arts college, after graduating as Valedictorian from Baldwin High School. Based on my many experiences interacting with Ms. Akitake over this timespan, Ms. Akitake stands out as one of the most intelligent, capable, hard-working, and educationally-focused people I have met.

As my assigned mentee in the Pomona Asian American Mentor Program, I interacted closely with Ms. Akitake on numerous occasions and was immediately impressed by her rare combination of sharp intellect and problem-solving skills coupled with excellent social skills that included a friendly, even-tempered demeanor and deep caring and compassion for others. During these years, I was also impressed by her diligence, discipline, and hard-working personality as she adeptly juggled the rigorous Pomona curriculum that many students struggled with (especially those coming from public schools) while balancing an intensive training and competition schedule as a member of our Division 3 tennis team. Given these unique qualities, it has been little surprise to me then that she has achieved such a high level of success and standing during her career while also serving Hawai'i's communities in myriad ways—including as Interim Maui County UH Regent.

Among Ms. Akitake's finest qualities that make her optimally suited for the role of UH Regent is her intense commitment to advancing the educational success of Hawai'i students. This is demonstrated by her extensive educational service on Maui, which began in 2015 as a Lecturer in Business Law at UH Maui College. Since then, Ms. Akitake has assumed additional education-focused roles including Co-President of the Maui Branch of the American Association of University Women, and Member of the Pomaikai Elementary School Community Council. Due to her strong educational service and knowledge, Ms. Akitake was appointed in 2023 to serve the UH system as Interim Maui County Regent.

Looking beyond the unique character, skills, and experience Ms. Akitake brings to the position, what makes Ms. Akitake the ideal candidate to represent Maui on the Board is her profound dedication to Maui County. From the moment I met her, Ms. Akitake has displayed immense personal pride in her Maui upbringing, heritage, and schooling. As a result, Ms. Akitake has lived a life of dedicated community and educational service to the County and its people. She first returned to Maui after completing her J.D. on the mainland to serve as an Extern, Law Clerk, and Associate Attorney in Wailuku before moving to Oahu with the long-term goal of returning to open her own practice in Maui. After several years as an Associate Attorney in Oahu, Ms. Akitake chose to move back to Maui where she has led her law firm serving the County for the past seven years. Over this time, she has become intimately involved in numerous local organizations in addition to the educational service discussed above. This includes volunteering with the Wailuku Help Center and the Iao United Church of Christ, and serving on the Boards of Women Helping Women and the Maui County Bar Association. Through these actions, Ms. Akitake has become a recognized figure and pillar of the Maui community, rising during the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as a Per Diem Judge in the District Court of the Second Circuit. Informed by these experiences, Ms. Akitake brings singular insight and knowledge of Maui's diverse cultural, contextual, and educational needs/interests that will provide an essential contribution to the Board.

In sum, Ms. Akitake possesses the strong intelligence, character, experience, and commitment to education and Hawai'i communities necessary to excel as a UH Regent. Bolstering her qualifications, Ms. Akitake also stands as a proud product and exemplar of the civic and educational values and principles of Maui County. For these reasons, I recommend Ms. Akitake for this vacancy without reservation. If you have any further questions about this highly qualified candidate, please contact me at the e-mail listed below.

Sincerely,



Andrew M. Subica, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Department of Social Medicine, Population and Public Health

University of California Riverside, School of Medicine

subica@gmail.com

## Testimony of Abigail Mawae

Before the Senate Committee on Higher Education

Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 229

In consideration of GM532

LAUREN AKITAKE

Gubernatorial Nominee to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

Aloha e Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in **strong support** of the confirmation of Lauren Akitake to serve on the University of Hawai'i's Board of Regents. As a member of the Board of Regents, I only speak in my personal capacity.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Lauren since she was appointed as Interim Regent on July 1, 2023. Upon her appointment, she confidently stepped into this role and as an active and constructive member of the Board and the committees on which she serves. As Chair of the Audit Committee, Lauren has demonstrated her passion and drive to serve the University and its students by tackling the student housing issues head-on. She has prioritized student housing and advocated for the Board to tour on-campus living spaces. She does not shy away from glaring issues in the University and is willing to ask tough questions and hold the administration accountable for their actions. In her professional capacity, Lauren's achievements more than qualify her for the position of Regent. Lauren gracefully balances her services as a Per Diem Judge, attorney, court-appointed Special Administrator in probate and guardian cases, Co-President of the American Association for University Women, Board member for Women Helping Women, and Interim Regent all the while being a present and incredible mother of two.

Personally, Lauren has been a friend and mentor since she accepted the Interim Regent Position in July. She not only respects my position as a Student Regent, but encourages me to speak up, use my voice, be confident, and keep working towards my goals. Lauren holds herself to the highest standards of excellence and exemplifies the virtues and character of a great member of our lāhui, one that many wāhine should want to emulate.

Lauren's nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i is significant. I cannot imagine a better candidate for this position. She is passionate about Hawai'i, her home island of Maui, and about advocating for all students in the University system. I am confident that Lauren will execute her duties with the highest levels of professionalism and detail, as she has already demonstrated these last 8 months. I am pleased that Lauren is willing to serve on the Board, and strongly endorse her confirmation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Abigail Mawae

February 25, 2024

Senator Donna Mercado Kim  
Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 218  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha e Senator Kim,

It is with great pleasure that I extend my whole-hearted support to Ms. Lauren Akitake as the Maui County candidate to the University of Hawai'i (UH) Board of Regents. As the Professional Development Coordinator and Professor at the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC), I had the pleasure of working with Ms. Akitake when she served as a lecturer of the Business Law course for many years.


As a lifelong resident of Maui, graduate of H.P. Baldwin High School and teacher in the University of Hawai'i system, Ms. Akitake is uniquely qualified to understand the needs of our diverse population of students, its systemic challenges and issues and how the UH Board of Regents can respond to and support student success at the University of Hawai'i.

Of significant note is Ms. Akitake's active participation in campus professional development activities as a lecturer. I believe that Ms. Akitake is acutely aware of the benefits of forging collaborative relationships that benefit productive work and congenially and that serves the best interest of our students and the people of Hawai'i.

Ms. Akitake's commitment to our University and our mission of inspiring "students to develop knowledge and skills in pursuit of academic, career, and personal goals in a supportive educational environment ..." is evidenced by her membership, participation and newly elected co-chair of the Association of American University Women (AAUW) Maui Chapter, which I am a member and University Relations Chair. Our mission to "advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy" is one of the ideals that support equity for women and all of the University of Hawai'i students and employees.

I applaud and champion Ms. Akitake's nomination to serve as the Maui County representative to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. She has been a dynamic force in supporting our students at Maui College and in our community. Mahalo for your kind consideration of Ms. Lauren Akitake.

My best regards,

  
Joyce Yamada, EdD  
Professor, Professional Development Coordinator  
University of Hawai'i Maui College  
AAUW, Maui Chapter, University Relations Chair

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 4:44:04 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daryl Fujiwara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the confirmation of Lauren Akitake!

TESTIMONY

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 1:00 pm  
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

**SUBJECT: Confirmation of Lauren M. Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Maui County Seat**

Dear Chair Donna Mercado Kim and Committee Members,

I am in wholehearted support of Lauren M. Akitake for her confirmation as a Board of Regent of the University of Hawai'i, Maui County Seat.

I met Lauren four years ago through the Ka Ipu Kukui Program, a one-year, which turned into two-years due to COVID-19, community-based leadership program that identifies and develops young leaders in Maui County. The program hosts hālāwai (experimental seminars) on issues facing Maui County, presenting both sides of the issues. During these hālāwai, Lauren demonstrated her skills in critical thinking through her thoughtful questions of our speakers. She can keep an open mind while judiciously weighing all the facts from an objective and disciplined point of view.

She is a graduate of Baldwin High School, valedictorian of her class, who also, in turn, aspires young graduates of Maui to follow her lead in pursuing a career in Maui. She is also no stranger to the University of Hawaii as a past professor at UH Maui College.

I strongly believe that Lauren will provide good insights based on her experience on the strategic direction for the University of Hawaii.

Sincerely,



Leilani Pulmano  
Boardmember of Ka Ipu Kukui  
Secretary of Hawaii Public Housing Authority  
Member of the Maui Economic Recovery Committee  
Boardmember of Maui Nui Empowered  
Vice-President of Pacific Rim Land, Inc.



Bert K. Akitake, MD  
Jane C. Akitake  
904 Noela Place  
Wailuku, HI 96793

February 25, 2024

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony in Support of GM532, Lauren M. Akitake, Nominee, University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

We write to offer our highest support for our daughter Lauren Mei-Siang Akitake to be confirmed as a Regent for the University of Hawaii, Maui County Seat. My wife and I are 45-year Maui residents, and I am a retired Pediatrician after a 35-year career with the Maui Medical Group. I am born and raised in Kalihi Valley, and my wife was born in China and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. We met when I finished medical school at Tulane Medical School in Louisiana, and after residency at the University of Colorado Boulder, we made Maui our home, where Lauren and her older brother were born and raised.

We are deeply proud of Lauren and her achievements, but most importantly, we are so very proud of the woman Lauren has become. From a young age, Lauren has challenged herself and pushed herself outside of her comfort zone. As a child and teen, Lauren stood out: academically; as an athlete (she was in the top 5 in singles and top 2 in doubles in girls' tennis in Hawaii from 7 to 18 years old); and in her extracurricular activities as she was in just about every club at Iao Intermediate School and then HP Baldwin High School. She was, and is, a social butterfly who has been able to use her education and experience, coupled with her deep care for her community, to help others at every stop along her path.

Growing up relatively sheltered on Maui, when Lauren went away for college and beyond, she faced the reality of the larger world but persevered through many difficulties and barriers. She has shown patience despite having faced negative opinions (possibly rooted in ignorance and racism), which were at times very denigrating to her achievements as an Asian American woman.

We have seen from a young age that Lauren has always been a strong voice for the minority, and thus, it is no surprise that she has focused her legal career on practice areas that support and protect elders (e.g. - estate planning, probate and trust litigation, elder law, and her

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 25, 2024  
Page 2

largest client is Maui Memorial Medical Center filing their guardianships and conservatorships for incapacitated adults). She also continued to teach Business Law at UH Maui College for five academic years, almost as a calling, as there were very few Maui instructors and lecturers who looked like her and were born and raised on Maui. She received such positive feedback from her students, which kept her teaching despite her busy schedule.

It was natural for Lauren to become a per diem judge. She was unsure and worried about her ability to meet the rigorous academic needs of the job along with the weighty decisions that directly impact lives, but she jumped into the role and has been successful. We saw how she had to change her life to avoid conflicts of interest and rearrange her schedule to always be prepared for court, all while being a devoted mother to her sons. This took so much discipline with her time. As a judge, she has been able to moderate her decisions using evidence rather than beliefs or bias, and she has shown herself to be compassionate, empathetic, and respectful of the dignity of every person. She is undoubtedly open-minded and fair, almost to a fault, as sometimes she may be too frankly honest.

Additionally, she is neither ostentatious nor sets herself above anyone and has always tried to use rational judgment to create an opinion. She has the highest ethical values. Her integrity is beyond reproach, and she has the moral courage to continue her life's work of helping people in the face of any setbacks.

Personally, and professionally, the time during the Covid-19 pandemic brought many challenges for Lauren. She had to pivot in her solo practice as certain blocks of work stopped due in large part to the closure of the courts. She also saw the end of her 15-year marriage and her assault during a medical exam by a doctor on Oahu. Both were very difficult and painful experiences, but she never wavered in doing the right thing for her children, herself, and the community.

Lauren is truly a special person. We are biased as her parents, but for a Maui girl born and raised, there is no one like her. She is more than worthy of consideration to be appointed to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Respectfully,  
Bert K. Akitake, MD  
Jane C. Akitake

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 5:26:36 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elmer Kaai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the committee! Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support for Lauren Akitake. Ms. Akitake, since serving as an interim regent, has already made a positive impact on the board by challenging the UH Administration to be more receptive to all voices. In addition, Ms. Akitake's judgeship experience brings a welcomed and needed perspective in the decision-making process of the board. Please confirm Ms. Akitake.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 5:37:09 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Steven Grieb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senators -

I respectfully and strongly recommend that you approve the appointment of Lauren Mei-Siang Akitake as submitted to you by Governor Green to fill the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat. She will not disappoint.

I have known Lauren since 2004 when we were first year law students at the University of Kansas School of Law. Often when I went to the local all-night bakery to feast, Lauren would be there - studying! We have continued our friendship long-distance - she in Hawaii and I in Kansas and California.

I won't reiterate all of the items on Lauren's excellent résumé, but do call your attention to her broad legal, educational, and personal background - most recently as an interim member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat since last year, as a per diem judge in the District Court for the Second Circuit in Hawaii, as co-president of the Maui Branch of the American Association of University Women, Wailuku, Hawaii since April 2023 (a member since 2021), and as a Board Member of Women Helping Women, Wailuku, Hawaii, since 2021. In addition to her other legal and leadership positions listed on her resume, Lauren has a tremendous amount of experience in giving of herself and her time to persons in need - whether it be at a self-help center, in her own legal office, and in working for Senator Inouye in Washington, D.C. She has excellent and varied experiences as an attorney in a variety of roles, and international academic experience in Scotland.

As you know, it is very important for members of the Board to have empathy and sympathy and feelings for the persons they and the University serve. And to me the fact that Lauren has been a working mother gives her a tremendous amount of personal knowledge of the experiences of individuals and their needs to bring to the Board. Her varied educational experiences as a parent in the local schools in Hawaii and as a student in several locations around the world will serve her and the University very well. And she has also taught at the University of Hawaii for several years.

A bit of my background: after 32 years in financial services, I went to law school at age 54-57, where I met & got to know Lauren. On graduating, I took a research position with Kansas Supreme Court Justice Lawton R. Nuss. A year later I became General Counsel to Chief Justice (CJ) Robert Davis for a year, then to new CJ Lawton Nuss for 10 years, then to CJ Marla Luckert

for a year, eventually retiring at age 70 in 2020. I continue to remain active legally with the nationally-active Veteran Courts Coalition and with the San Mateo County (California) Juvenile Justice Detention Prevention Commission.

So I ask again - please confirm the submitted appointment of Lauren Akitake. She will be a terrific and very active member of the Board, should you give her that opportunity.

THANK YOU!

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Grieb, Retired General Counsel to the Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Kansas

55 W. 5th Ave., Apt. 6F, San Mateo, CA 94402

785-224-4699

phillyphan50@gmail.com

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 6:50:01 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Arthur Chin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am honored to provide this testimony for Lauren Mei-Siang Akitake, a distinguished legal professional whose remarkable journey exemplifies excellence in the legal field and unwavering dedication to community service.

Lauren's credentials speak volumes about her commitment to legal excellence and continuous professional development. With a Juris Doctorate from the University of Kansas School of Law and admissions to the Hawaii State Bar and the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii, she has demonstrated proficiency in the legal arena. Lauren's extensive experience as a Per Diem Judge in the District Court, Second Circuit, Maui County, Hawaii, handling diverse criminal and civil cases showcases her expertise and versatility in the field.

Lauren's educational background is equally impressive, with degrees from esteemed institutions such as Pomona College and the University of Stirling, Scotland. Her involvement in professional organizations like the American Association of University Women and the Maui County Bar Association, coupled with leadership roles in the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, reflects her proactive engagement in the legal community.

What truly sets Lauren apart is her commitment to community service. Through advisory councils, endowment committees, and volunteer work, she actively contributes to the betterment of society, embodying the principles of social responsibility and empathy. What's not in Lauren's resume is that as a young law student, she worked down on skid road in LA. To this day, I doubt her parents knew about this. What young person coming from a small community like Maui understands what it's really like to serve the poor? As her uncle, I'm very proud of her accomplishments, and that's the one thing that impressed me most about Lauren's journey. Everything else is just typical for any driven young person.

Lauren's professional journey is a testament to her outstanding legal expertise, educational achievements, and unwavering dedication to community service. She is a role model for aspiring legal professionals, embodying the values of integrity, compassion, and excellence in all her endeavors.



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 7:15:18 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carol Mae Kurisu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**My name is Carol Mae Kurisu and currently a coach at Yanagida JiuJitsu, Strength and Fitness. I met Lauren Akitake about 5 years ago when she joined our gym.**

**I found Lauren to be dedicated and committed to her career and family. She is of great character and sincere in her belief that she was placed on this earth to do good for her family, the County of Maui and the State of Hawaii.**

**Her education and work experience show that she would be a great asset to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents and will help the University move forward in these challenging times.**

**I fully support Lauren Akitake's appointment to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on her behalf.**



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 8:33:41 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laurie Tochiki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I currently serve as a member of the Board of Regents and Lauren has been a tireless interim member. Lauren brings a keen mind, critical questions, and a strong ethical foundation to our work. She was instrumental in bringing to light the urgent concerns about student housing at the Manoa campus. I especially appreciate that although forthright and probing, she is also respectful and thoughtful.

Thank you for your positive consideration.

Laurie Tochiki

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 8:42:17 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Liana Mancini Horovitz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Liana Mancini Horovitz, and I am an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Hawai‘i Maui College. I am writing in support of Lauren M. Akitake’s nomination and confirmation to the UH Board of Regents. I got to know Lauren well when she worked as a Business Law Lecturer at UHMC. I can attest to her professionalism, her support for the mission of our community colleges within the University of Hawai‘i system, and her dedication to our Maui community. In addition to her work as a District Court Per Diem Judge and attorney, Lauren has served as an Interim member of the UH Board of Regents since July, 2023. She has worked tirelessly to educate herself about the workings of our University, and to reach out to the community to understand and support the needs of her constituency. Lauren’s enthusiasm and energy are unparalleled, and she is an excellent fit for this position. Maui County and the University of Hawai‘i will benefit from Lauren’s continued work as a UH Regent.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Liana M. Horovitz

February 25, 2024

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Kim:

I am writing in full support of the nomination and confirmation of Lauren M. Akitake to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

I met Lauren in 2020 when she was a Ka Ipu Kukui (KIK) Fellow. KIK is a Decisions Maui and Focus Maui Nui initiative, and a yearlong program designed to develop future leaders of Maui County. As a 2009 Fellow, graduates are encouraged to remain active with the program, often hosting current Fellows for site visits at our workplaces and other activities, which is how I came to meet Lauren.

Lauren is no doubt one of the most impressive people I know. Not only is she highly educated and accomplished professionally, she is continually working to elevate her knowledge and find ways to serve her community. Just in the few years that I have known her, she became a Per Diem Judge in the Maui District Court, Second Circuit, an Interim member of the UH Board of Regents, a Board Member of Women Helping Women, Co-President of the American Association of University Women and so much more. In addition, she is able to balance her professional and personal life, ensuring the well-being of her family and serving as a Parent Representative on the Pomaika'i Elementary School Community Council (SCC).

Earlier this month, Governor Green submitted Lauren's appointment to the Senate for confirmation, Governor's Message 532. I support his choice and urge the Committee on Higher Education to confirm Lauren as its newest member of the Board of Regents. She is competent, capable, and perhaps most important of all, she is trustworthy. As a graduate of UH Mānoa, I believe Lauren will serve this great institution very well.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. I would be happy to provide any additional insight if needed. I can be contacted by email at [Kuhea4@gmail.com](mailto:Kuhea4@gmail.com) or by phone at (808) 446-5082.

Mahalo,



Kuheha Asiu

SCOTT NUNOKAWA

February 25, 2024

Senate Higher Education Committee

RE: GM 532 Lauren Akitake

Dear Senators:

I am submitting testimony on GM 532 in support of Ms. Lauren Akitake's candidacy as a Regent for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. As noted below, I have known Lauren for many years. I cannot think of anyone I know that is more passionate about the concepts of truth, justice, and fairness in all that she does. In her legal career, this has translated into her advocacy for her clients, I think these passions will transition very well to advocacy for the UH system. Lauren is very bright, is a tireless worker who strives to be collaborative and inclusive. However, Lauren is more than that. Lauren truly sees her place in life as a mission to make her community a better place. Her reputation, and more importantly her personal code, is above reproach. The University of Hawaii system would be better with Lauren's help as a Regent.

I have known Lauren for many years having first met her when we began attending the church that her family attends in Wailuku. Lauren went off to college and then law school on the mainland, but we would hear from her family how Lauren was doing and would occasionally see her when she was on break or otherwise visiting home. When Lauren was able to navigate her way home to Maui after law school, I spoke to her frequently, often about things related to my background in the developing and building of homes for the Maui community. She ended up in the Waikapu area adjacent to a number of subdivisions that I was involved in, and to this day lives up the street from where we live. A few years ago, Lauren applied for a leadership program that I am very involved with for emerging community-based leaders in Maui County called Ka Ipu Kukui, ([www.Kaipukukui.org](http://www.Kaipukukui.org)). During what turned out to be a two-year Cohort because of Covid, I got to see Lauren up close, on a regular basis, which served to solidify my belief in her.

Aside from being a graduate of the University of Hawaii system, I am not directly involved with the university system. However, my family certainly has been. Both my father and his wife are former career employees of the UH system and are both former UH Regents. My sister is also a long-time employee of the UH system. As a result, I have a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities any Regent faces. I can say without hesitation that Lauren Akitake, with her intelligence, work

ethic, desire for fairness, and collaboration, and passion to serve, is just the kind of Regent that we need. This is especially true with the crossroads that the UH system faces at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Lauren Akitake. Please feel free to call on me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Scott Nunokawa

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 10:03:10 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katherine Hashiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii - GM 532  
Gubernatorial Nominee, Lauren Akitake  
February 25, 2024

I am testifying to support the nomination and confirmation of Lauren M. Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

My name is Katherine F. Hashiro, a resident of Maui, Hawaii, a retired state of Hawaii elementary school teacher and a graduate of the University of Hawaii School of Education.

I have known Ms. Akitake for almost 40 years through family friends and through our church, Iao United Church of Christ. She has always impressed me with the high standards she has set for herself. Ms. Akitake graduated valedictorian from H.P. Baldwin High School (Wailuku, HA), then attended Pomona College (Claremont, CA), University of Stirling (Stirling, Scotland) and the University of Kansas School of Law (Lawrence, KS).

Presently Ms. Akitake has her own law office. She specializes in helping people with probation and trust matters, guardianships, conservatorships, and estate planning. She is also a per diem judge in the District Court, Second Circuit, Maui County, Hawaii.

Ms. Akitake will be a wonderful addition to the Board of Regents as she is very caring of others and community oriented. Previously she had been a volunteer at Parents and Children Together, Iao United Church of Christ Endowment Committee, Maui Cancer Wellness Retreats and several other organizations here on Maui. Currently she is a parent representative on the Pomaikai Elementary School Community Council, a board member of Women Helping Women and an interim regent (Maui Seat) with the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Please confirm Ms. Akitake for the UH Board of Regents position. She is a community minded person who will consider the needs of the UH students and the university.

Thank you.

310 West Ka'ahumanu Avenue  
Kahului HI 96732

April 25, 2023

The Honorable Josh Green, M.D.  
Governor, State of Hawaii  
Executive Chambers  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Governor Green:

Please accept this letter of support for Lauren Akitake for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat. I have known Lauren for seven years now, and she has taught many Business Law classes as a part-time lecturer over the years at UH Maui. As her supervisor during that time, I have found her particularly strong in these areas:

- Sustained leadership and service to the discipline, department, and college
- Demonstrated expertise while serving as a resource to other faculty, programs, and community
- Served as a mentor to new faculty.

Overall, Lauren is an expert in her field, and I highly recommend her for this vacancy. She has demonstrated her expertise in law while maintaining fairness with her students and the College. I am happy to discuss anything else about Lauren by phone (804-878-7835) or e-mail ([glogan@hawaii.edu](mailto:glogan@hawaii.edu)).

Sincerely,

*Gil Logan*

Gil Logan, PhD, PHR, CBP  
Business Administration Program Coordinator  
University of Hawaii Maui College

February 26, 2024

Jared Sam Agtunong, MPP  
Kahului, Maui County

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate  
Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**RE: GM532; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR JOSH GREEN'S  
NOMINATION OF LAUREN AKITAKE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII'S BOARD  
OF REGENTS**

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members:

I write in **support** of Governor Josh Green's nomination of Lauren Akitake for appointment to the Maui County Seat of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, with a term expiring on June 30, 2028.

My name is Jared Sam, a constituent from Maui County. This letter is provided in my personal capacity.

Lauren is a born and raised Maui girl with a legal professional background. She currently serves our community as a per diem District Court Judge for the Second Circuit; private practice attorney; and interim Maui County Regent for the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents. Most recently, she also taught Business Law at the University of Hawaii Maui College.

Lauren is rooted and engaged in our island community. Her community leadership experience includes being a board member for Women Helping Women Maui, Parent Representative for Pomaikai Elementary School's Community Council, a 2021 Ka Ipu Kukui Fellow, former Advisory Council Member for Maui Cancer Wellness Retreats, and former endowment committee chair for the Iao United Church of Christ.

I've personally known Lauren since 2021 through the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows Program, we are both alumni fellows. Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows is a community-based program that develops young leaders in Maui County while preparing them to understand the various policy challenges pertinent to Maui County's future. Because of my interactions with Lauren, and knowing that she is a Ka Ipu Kukui alum herself—I firmly believe that she understands the complex higher

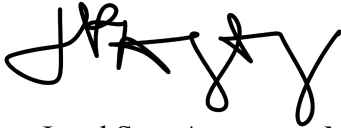


education needs in our State, and the role it plays when cross-applied to other policy challenges, such as housing, brain drain, and the demand for developing local talent.

As a Maui resident and young professional, if appointed, I believe that Lauren will serve the University of Hawaii System and our State well.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of **GM532** confirming the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents.

With Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jared Sam Agtunong'. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'J' and 'S'.

Jared Sam Agtunong, MPP  
Kahului, Maui County

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 2:55:57 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Edwin Nam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

One of the great pleasures of working and living in a smaller community, like Maui, is the distinct sense of togetherness and our ability to develop relationships in a professional and personal capacity with neighbors. I have had the pleasure of knowing Ms. Akitake in her capacity as an attorney, in a personal capacity, as a neighbor in Wailuku and as a client.

In my capacity as a law enforcement officer, I worked with law enforcement partners in Maui investigating a particularly tragic criminal investigation involving a Maui resident who was defrauded around the time of her death. I was impressed by Ms. Akitake's ability to deftly represent the family of the defrauded victim following a pre-meditated crime involving abuse and fraud against a vulnerable person. I'm convinced that Ms. Akitake's compassionate, professional and effective representation was critical in helping the victim and her family preserve and protect their estate against the fraud perpetrated by the suspect.

In a personal capacity, I observed that Ms. Akitake was a vital and active member of the community in Wailuku, investing her time and talent in educational, community and faith institutions critical in our neighborhood. I'm confident that her respect, service and love for the community will find a new outlet if she is confirmed to serve as on the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Based on my professional and personal knowledge of Ms. Akitake, it was the obvious choice to ask for her expertise when formulating an estate plan for my own family and recommending her services to friends.

After knowing Ms. Akitake professionally, personally and as a client I can confidently and whole heartedly recommend her for the important position for which she is now being considered. Thank you for this chance to share what I have observed about Ms. Akitake's diligence, integrity, competence and good character.

Sincerely,

Edwin Nam

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 5:14:57 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Felicitas Livaudais MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All. I have known Lauren for many years and she is a strong advocate for the Maui community. Our community has a "brain drain". Many talented young people go to college, get professional training and move elsewhere. Lauren is willing to tackle this issue. We should grow our own doctors, medical professionals, and other workforce needs Maui has. It is important to invest in our next generation so they can return to our communittee and thrive. It is also important to invest in sectors not related to tourism so we can diversify our economic bandwidth. Mahalo for your consideration.

Fely Livaudais - pediatrician in Maui for over 20 years

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 5:27:33 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Paloma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Laren Akitake's confirmation as a Regent of the UH Board. She is an effective and participating member that brings sound decision making. Mahalo.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 6:32:10 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Paul Tonnessen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Governor Green,

I unconditionally support the position of Lauren Akitake to continue to serve on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

As a leader of a nonprofit on Maui I personally know Lauren through her volunteerism with numerous nonprofits including mine along with her involvement with her church to enhance and enrich the lives of those in need in our community. As a parent she is also extremely active with the schools her children attend along with their extracurricular activities.

In my role as a child advocate, I have been able to personally observe her in her role as a Per Diem Judge with District Court, Second Circuit of the State of Hawaii, Maui County, Hawaii. In that role she is not only professional but also ethical, compassionate and respectful of each and everyone who's in her courtroom.

Her well-rounded work within the community highlights her consistent commitment to service and the public good, which I believe translates very well to serving the students, faculty, and staff of the University of Hawaii system.

For these reasons and more, I believe that Lauren has been a valuable asset and contributor to the work of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, as well as an effective representative from the Maui region. It is my hope that you will maintain her appointment to the Board of Regents.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely, Paul Tonnessen

Executive Director

Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 7:31:56 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mika Yamazaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to you in support of Lauren Akitake, who is nominated for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I have known Lauren since our days at Wailuku Elementary School, and our education paths continued through intermediate, high school, and even college, where we spent 2 years as suite mates. Lauren has always been driven, committed, honest, and conscientious, and her strong work ethic and commitment to her community is reflected in all of her accomplishments and leadership roles. It is my firm belief that she would do an outstanding job as a UH Regent, and I strongly support her candidacy.

Sincerely,  
Mika Yamazaki, MD

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 7:43:49 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Gotschalk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 26, 2024

Patricia A. Gotschalk

1391 Ho‘olako Street

Wailuku HI 96793

Re: University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents – Confirmation Hearing of Lauren Akitake

Dear Senators:

I am writing this letter in **Strong Support** of Lauren Akitake’s confirmation as a Regent of the University of Hawai‘i. I am currently the Co-President of the Maui Branch of the American Association of University Women with Lauren Akitake. I am one of two references that Judge Akitake submitted in her initial application to be nominated as a Regent to the University of Hawai‘i Candidate Advisory Council and I was also contacted by the CAC to give an oral reference.

I have known Judge Akitake for more than seven years, having met her shortly after my husband and I moved to Maui. Over the years we have become good friends but I have also known her in other capacities. I worked at her law office for over two years to assist in the processing of guardianship petitions for her client Maui Memorial Medical Center. During this time, I was able to directly observe her strong work ethic, her desire to always do the best for her clients, and her impeccable moral credentials. During this same period of time, Judge Akitake was teaching at UH Maui College and often told me how much she enjoyed teaching and interacting with her students, most of whom were nontraditional, older students seeking to reenter the workforce or obtain an education to find better and more secure employment. Her ongoing interest in the challenges of the nontraditional student will serve her well if permanently appointed as a Regent.

As noted above, Judge Akitake is a member of the Maui Branch of the American Association of University Women. We currently have 60 branch members. I recruited her to be Co-President with me, and I specifically sought her out because of her deep connections to the Maui



community. Having been born and raised on Maui, she has extensive contacts in the professional community and has a particular interest in helping women in this community. She has an excellent reputation in the community as well, and has taken advantage of every opportunity to be involved and useful, such as being an elected parent representative to the Pomaika'i Elementary School Council, a member of the Women Helping Women board, a 2020 Ka Ipu Kukui Fellow, a 2020 Hawai'i State Bar Association Leadership Institute Fellow, a 2016 Hawai'i Emerging Legal Practitioners Access to Justice Fellow and a former board member for the Maui County Bar Association. Judge Akitake is high energy and has excellent and realistic ideas for how to promote gender equity for women and girls.

A little information about me might help you put this recommendation in context. I worked at Michigan Technological University for nearly 20 years as adjunct faculty and as an administrator in the Office of Student Affairs, ultimately becoming the Associate Dean of Students. I am also an attorney (JD 1983, George Washington University) and I worked for more than five years as a senior claims counsel for a risk retention group that insured colleges, universities and prep schools all over the United States. In that position I advised and held compliance trainings for senior higher education administrators and boards on liability issues such as tenure and promotion policies/procedures, Title IX obligations and Clery Act reporting. So, I am very familiar with the role and responsibilities of the governing boards of universities. Based on my experience in higher education, I am recommending Judge Akitake unconditionally for confirmation as a Regent. As shown by her dedicated work to date as an Interim Regent, she is an excellent choice and will uphold her commitment to the community of Maui Nui and the entire state. She always gives 100% of effort, and has the energy, personality and intelligence to continue to fulfill the duties of Regent.

Mahalo nui and feel free to contact me if you require any additional information.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia A. Gotschalk

February 26, 2024

Barry D. Solomon, Ph.D.  
1391 Ho'olako Street  
Wailuku HI 96793

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President  
and Members of the Senate  
Thirty-Second Legislature  
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 229  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate:

I am writing in **Strong Support** of **Lauren Akitake** to be a confirmed member of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. I have known Lauren for about 7 ½ years. I am a professor emeritus in environmental policy from Michigan Technological University so I have substantial experience in the higher education community (I have been a full-time resident of Maui since December 2015). In fact, it was Lauren who talked me out of retirement to teach a course in environmental sustainability at University of Hawaii – Maui College, where she had been teaching business law courses part-time for several years and was regarded as an excellent teacher, and well-liked by students.

Lauren has already clearly demonstrated as an Interim Regent that she is an excellent choice for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. It is time for her to shed the "Interim" status. My experience with Lauren is primarily as a family friend, but I have observed her over the years and drawn conclusions about her personal and professional acumen. She is a very hard working individual, having managed her own successful private practice law firm on Maui for over 7 years while also raising two active young boys and participating in numerous community service activities. Her stature in the community is also demonstrated by her service as a Per Diem District Court Judge since November 2021. Due to being a lawyer and a judge, she understands the importance of someone in the public's eye to live a principled life with a strong ethical compass. She has served on numerous committees and is a leader, but also knows how to work collaboratively with others to reach a goal. She is extroverted and comfortable in all social situations, easily striking up a conversation with others. People trust her, respect her, and enjoy her company. In sum, she is a well rounded person who is intelligent, connected in her community, and with lots of energy and enthusiasm for the projects in which she engages.

Page 2

The name "Akitake" is well-known on Maui with positive connotations. Her father Bert is a retired, well-respected Maui pediatrician and a former president of the Maui Orchid Society. At the beginning of the COVID pandemic her mother Jane voluntarily made hundreds of distinctive masks – we saw people wearing them all over Maui. While getting to know Lauren, I learned that she was a valedictorian at Baldwin High School and played competitive tennis for the Baldwin Bears. She is still involved in the tennis community by coaching and through her two young boys, and played Division III tennis in college. She has also given back to the Maui community through numerous community service activities and her law practice. She would be a tremendous asset to the UH Board of Regents.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry D. Solomon".

Barry D. Solomon, Ph.D.  
Professor Emeritus  
Michigan Technological University

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 8:01:12 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wayne S. Higaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is my honor to offer my support to Lauren Akitake and I ask for your positive confirmation for her nomination by Governor Green.

P.O. Box 749  
Kula, Hawai'i 96790

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February 26, 2024

Senator Donna Mercado Kim  
Higher Education Committee Chair  
State Capitol Building, Room 218  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Kim:

I am writing in support of Lauren M. Akitake who has been nominated to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

I have known Lauren since 2007 when she was a law clerk for the Honorable Shackley F. Raffetto and I was a deputy public defender assigned to his courtroom. I worked with Lauren to prepare cases for jury trial presentations. Her diligence and professionalism in her capacity as a law clerk were exemplary.

More recently, I have worked with Lauren in family court where she represents Maui Health Systems in adult guardianship matters. Lauren's pretrial filings are thorough and accurate and clearly support her client's position. She is always prepared to present her petitions to the court.

Lauren will bring a wealth of experience to the board of regents. She brings "neighbor island" insight to the board of regents and will ensure that the needs of our college campus on Maui not only get heard, but ultimately met.

Lauren has the intellect, demeanor, and patience to be a true asset to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents as an advocate for the community of Maui. I hope you consider her nomination strongly.

Sincerely,

Adriel C. S. Menor

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 8:35:55 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Araki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This testimony is in support of Lauren Akitake appointment to the UH Board of Regents. Her commitments to the community and her vast experience in the field of law, including her prior experience as a lecturer in the UH system, makes her an ideal candidate for this leadership position.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 8:45:38 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Strong Endorsement for the Appointment of Lauren Akitake to the UH Board of Regents

Dear Members of the Board of Regents Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. Lauren is a listener and a green light that makes things happen for our community. Lauren's exceptional qualities and diverse experiences make her an ideal candidate to contribute to the advancement of our university system. I am a former attorney, current Associate Professor at UH Maui College, and longtime Oahu and Maui community member.

- 1. Professional Experience:** With a successful career in Estate Law and as a per diem judge, Lauren has demonstrated exemplary leadership and strategic thinking. Her estate planning and litigation skills will support the challenging planning and sustainability decisions UH Regents must make. Judicial work at this level requires engagement with community members from all walks of life, providing essential perspectives to a UH Regent.
- 2. Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion:** Lauren has a track record of serving on a variety of education, law, and health boards in the state. She is a life-long learner, seeking out professional development in these fields. This provides the broad view necessary for supporting the values of the University of Hawaii.
- 3. Community Engagement:** As an interim regent, I have witnessed Lauren engage our campus actively. She is frequently on site and always asking questions, eager to learn about our challenges. Further, Lauren's active involvement in community initiatives demonstrates her passion for public service. Her contributions to the many boards detailed in her resume showcase her dedication to the betterment of society, a quality that would undoubtedly benefit the University of Hawaii and its broader community.
- 4. Vision for the University:** In my conversations with Lauren, she articulates a vision for the University of Hawaii that reflects a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing higher education. Her strategic foresight and innovative thinking will be valuable in steering the university towards continued growth and excellence.
- 5. Educational Background:** Lauren Akitake's impressive educational background, including advanced degrees in Law, Applied Social Research, and Public Policy, reflects her commitment to academic excellence. Her solid foundation in law, public policy, and

community needs assessment/research equips her with the knowledge and insights necessary to navigate the complexities of higher education governance

In conclusion, I am confident that Lauren Akitake's appointment to the UH Board of Regents would be a tremendous asset. Her combination of educational achievements, professional experience, commitment to diversity, community engagement, and visionary leadership make her an outstanding candidate for this role.

I urge the Board of Regents Selection Committee to appoint Lauren Akitake, and I believe her contributions will significantly enhance the University of Hawaii's mission and impact.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Malama pono,

Emily "Emma" Harber White, JD, MA

67 Meheu Circle

Kahului, HI 96732



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 9:10:32 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth M Hafoka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write to express my support for the confirmation of Lauren M. Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. Lauren and I attended the University Of Kansas School Of Law together from 2004-2007. After graduation, she returned to Hawaii and I stayed in Lawrence, Kansas where I am currently the Supervising City Prosecutor.

An interesting coincidence that Lauren and I discovered in law school is that my husband, Tevita, who grew up in Maui, attended high school with Lauren at H.P Baldwin High School. Tevita's perception of Lauren in high school is the same as my perception of Lauren in law school. She is extremely smart, self-motivated, and her character is top notch. A few years ago, when we visited Maui, I was able to see Lauren. She, a loving mother of two energetic boys, was the same intelligent and kind Lauren that I learned to know in law school.

Lauren's contributions to the legal profession are apparent through her experiences working with various law offices, teaching, and sitting as a Per Diem Judge. Lauren's admiration for the Maui community is evident by her involvement with Ka Ipu Kukui Fellowship, the Self-Help Center, and Parents and Children Together (PACT). Lauren is an excellent choice for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents because of her integrity and professional background.

I trust that Lauren will succeed in her position as University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat, should you confirm her nomination.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hafoka

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 9:28:46 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terence Herndon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe Ms. Lauren Akitake to be a well qualified and highly competent attorney in the Maui community. I have known Ms. Akitake since she clerked for the Honorable Shackley Raffetto in 2007-2009. I have been an attorney on Maui since 2005.

I have known her to be an amiable, diligent, and highly motivated member of our legal community. I also have worked with Ms. Akitake on a semi-regular basis on a professional level when she represents her clients in various legal matters.

I believe she should continue to serve on the Board of Regents at the University of Hawaii. Thank you.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 9:30:37 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Whitney Hashimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Dr. Green & Senator Kim:

I'm honored to write this testimonial on behalf of my former colleague, Lauren M. Akitake. I have known of Lauren since childhood, as we attended the same public schools. I didn't know her personally at the time, but I knew who she was - the smart, confident girl who was one year ahead of me. I met Lauren officially over a decade ago at a mutual friend's wedding; she came up to me and introduced herself, and I recognized her former partner as a one-time lecturer at University of Hawai'i Maui College, where I taught from 2007-2023. Shortly after our wedding chat, Lauren was hired at UHMC as a Business Law lecturer, and her office was right down the hall from mine.

During the years we worked together at UHMC, Lauren and I often stopped by each other's offices to talk story...sometimes about our children, sometimes about our students, and most often about what we were doing in our respective classes. I was consistently impressed with Lauren's time management skills, as she was simultaneously balancing her full-time career as a lawyer with her part-time work as a BLAW instructor.

Also impressive was Lauren's unique learning materials and teaching activities. I distinctly remember her sharing with me a lesson in which she used a well-known-to-the-islands brand of cookie to teach her students about trademark and copyright. I very much enjoyed eating said cookie afterwards!

Finally, Lauren was a regular participant in the events I hosted as the chair of our Academic Senate's Social Committee, which is an ad-hoc committee that was created with the goal of facilitating networking and promoting collegiality at UHMC. The college recognizes that constructive peer relationships are important for a comfortable and productive work environment. Lauren attended a vast majority of our events, and I was very grateful for her support of the committee as well as her commitment to creating and maintaining positive relationships with her colleagues.

In this testimony, I have discussed my observations of Lauren's proactive nature, time-management skills, ingenuity, and collegiality. I have every confidence that this combination of characteristics makes her an excellent leader and therefore a strong candidate for the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Maui County Seat. I can honestly say that this is an unreservedly written testimony of support; Maui Nui will be well served by Lauren's skillset and persona.

Based on my observation and experiences, I can wholeheartedly advocate for the appointment of Lauren M. Akitake.

Sincerely,

Whitney I. H. Hashimoto

Former Assistant Professor of Communication

Humanities Department

University of Hawai'i Maui College

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 9:36:04 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Matson Kelley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Members of the Senate,

I am writing to express my unwavering support for Lauren Akitake’s nomination to serve on the University of Hawaii 's Board of Regents. Ms. Akitake’s extensive history of community service and her deep-rooted dedication to our community and the University of Hawaii uniquely position her as an exemplary candidate for this esteemed role.

I have known Ms. Akitake for more than fifteen years, both as a lawyer and as a colleague as a per diem judge. She has consistently demonstrated an unparalleled commitment to fostering educational excellence and community development throughout her career. Her involvement in various community service projects has not only improved the lives of many in our community but has also showcased her ability to lead with compassion, integrity, and an innovative spirit. These qualities are fundamental in guiding the University of Hawaii towards a future where it can continue to serve as a beacon of knowledge, research, and community engagement.

Ms. Akitake’s dedication to the University of Hawaii is evident in her active participation and leadership in alumni events, fundraising activities, and her advocacy for the university’s programs and students at numerous forums. Her efforts have significantly contributed to enhancing the University’s resources, expanding opportunities for students, and strengthening the university’s ties with the community at large.

Her vision for the University of Hawaii aligns with the institution’s goals of excellence in education, research, and public service. Ms. Akitake understands the unique challenges and opportunities facing higher education in Hawaii and comes prepared with innovative solutions and a collaborative approach to ensure that the university not only meets but exceeds these challenges.

In conclusion, Lauren Akitake’s proven track record of leadership, her unwavering dedication to our community, and her passionate commitment to the advancement of the University of Hawaii make her an outstanding candidate for the Board of Regents. I strongly urge the committee to approve her nomination, confident in her ability to contribute positively to the university’s mission and to the future of our community.

Sincerely,

Matson Kelley

Testimony of  
Joy Barua

Before:

The Senate Committee on Higher Education (HRE)  
The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, Senate President  
The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Committee Chair  
The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Committee Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 27, 2024

1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 229 & Via Videoconference

Re: **GM532**; Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Hawaii Senate President Kouchi, HRE Committee Chair Kim, HRE Committee Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on GM532, for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, LAUREN AKITAKE.

I fully **SUPPORT** Ms. Lauren Akitake's nomination to serve in this role. Ms. Akitake is a respected member of the community and is an experienced executive and professional. Ms. Akitake is currently employed with the Law Office of Lauren M. Akitake, LLC, and serves as a Per Diem Judge in the District Court of the Second Circuit. She is a graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law and was admitted to the Hawaii State Bar in 2007. In addition, Ms. Akitake's list of professional, civic and community engagements is extensive and diverse.

I have known Ms. Akitake for nearly a decade and in that time have come to know and respect her very much. Her intellect is keen, her breadth of knowledge impressive and her commitment to service deep. I cannot think of a better combination of qualities for this appointment.

Ms. Akitake will be a great addition to the Board of Regents. I fully support her appointment and humbly request your favorable consideration.

With respect, gratitude, and Aloha,



Joy Barua  
(808) 295-0190

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 9:56:30 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
hilton unemori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Hilton Unemori. I am submitting testimony in support of Lauren Akitake for the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii.

I have known Lauren through most of her life. Beginning with her father being a pediatrician for my children. And then her older brother Brad was my sons classmate through college. And was always close by.

I was also in her Rotary journey in the Ambassadorial Scholar to Scotland being a member of the Rotary Club of Wailuku who sponsored her in her application to become the Ambassadorial Scholar.

I also submitted a letter in support when she applied and was chosen as the interim Board of Regent almost a year ago.

Realizing that she has done very well in her roll as interim Board of Regent in the last several months, made me proud to be connected in this way to her accomplishments and life. When you are able to find persons who are skilled and driven to help make good decisions at the highest levels in any organization, that is special. When you find young persons who have the sincere interest coupled with the energy to make the organization better, that is really wonderful. Then when you find someone who is a milenial with her perspectives, you are blessed.

The Board of Regents have a LOT of hard work to do to provide Hawaii with a University that must prosper in the future, so that our children and grand children and beyond can be educated to tend to Hawaii's future, with so many challenges ahead. Allow Lauren Akitake to help UH do what it must.



DATE: February 26, 2024

TO: Senator Donna Mercado Kim  
Hawaii State Senator, District 14  
Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

FROM: Mark John A. Unemori

SUBJECT: Nomination of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat

To Senator Kim,

I am writing to submit STRONG SUPPORT of the nomination of Lauren Akitake to the Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat.

My name is Mark Unemori, and I am the President of ECM Inc, an Electrical Engineering firm on Maui that has been around for over 40 years, Partner and Technical Lead for NH Energy Ventures, a renewable energy group that developed the first windfarm on Maui and various solar projects, President of the Rotary Club of Wailuku, and Cubmaster for BSA Pack 49.

Lauren and I have known each other for over 28 years, as a family friend, having attended High School with her, and then as neighboring undergraduates in the Claremont College system. I am honored to have seen her grow both professionally and personally as a strong member of our community here on Maui.

I have always known her first and foremost as a dedicated mother and loyal friend, but I have been particularly impressed with her professional career. Her extensive and diverse professional educational journey at Pomona, abroad at the University of Stirling, and then at the University of Kansas, combined with experience teaching in the UH Maui system makes her a great fit for the position having worked in the educational system on a direct level. She has always been generous with her time, taking part in ways both big and small, from participation in various community organizations, to her willingness to speak with our Rotary Group of Wailuku on short notice.

Besides her personal character, she has a strong work ethic and dedication that she brings to all aspects of her life and would be an asset for the Hawaii Board of Regents. I respectfully urge you to confirm Lauren Akitake to the Maui County Seat of the Hawaii Board of Regents.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Mark John A. Unemori

*Mark John A Unemori*

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 10:06:22 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marc Takamori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 26, 2024

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

The Honorable Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

RE: **GM532** – Consideration and Confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai‘i, Gubernatorial Nominee, Lauren Akitake, for a term to expire 06-30-2028

Dear Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice-Chair Michelle N. Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am respectfully writing to **SUPPORT** GM532 to confirm Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai‘i for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

I have known Lauren since July 2019 when she applied and went through the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows program on Maui. The program develops young leaders in Maui County through a community-based program designed to address planning for Maui County’s future. As a board member for the program, I was able to see how invested and involved Lauren is with the Maui community. As a lifelong learner, she’s always looking for ways to help others either through work or through her public involvements.

I have found her to be very articulate, highly competent and committed in getting the job done. She’s an analytical leader who thinks outside of the box and will be an asset to the University of Hawai‘i, the State and the people of Hawai‘i.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that this Committee confirm Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit my letter of support and for your time and consideration.

Marc Takamori

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 10:07:36 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gabe Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am very pleased to support the UH Regent nomination of Lauren Akitake, an attorney and per diem District Court Judge for the Second Circuit Court, State of Hawaii.

Lauren and I serve on the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii where she is the Chair of the Audit Committee, Vice Chair of the Institutional Success (budget & finance, facilities) Committee, and a member of the Kulena (Native Hawaiian) committee.

Lauren's leadership as Chair of the Audit Committee, there is a renewed focus on student housing, as well as better monitoring and remediation of open findings.

Lauren is a listener and learner who excels in having the ability to communicate. She has a fair and conscientious thought process, and is dedicated and passionate, and a pleasure to work with.

Lauren should be congratulated for her leadership, innovated work and committed efforts in the law community and public service.

Sonya Toma  
Wailuku, Maui, Hawai'i  
sonyatoma@gmail.com

February 26, 2024

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Committee on Higher Education

Re: GM 532; Nomination of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the  
University of Hawai'i

Dear Committee on Higher Education:

This letter is being sent in support of Lauren Akitake for confirmation to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

Ms. Akitake is a close friend and colleague whom I have known for over 17 years. She has very strong ties to the Maui community and has dedicated much of her time to community service. She takes her role of Interim Regent (Maui Seat) very seriously. She is conscientious and diligent in her work and has been a great representative of our county since her appointment last year. I believe her law background and her former experience as an adjunct professor at Maui College make her especially suited for the position.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
/s/ Sonya Toma  
Sonya Toma

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 10:35:32 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lui Hokoana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 26, 2024

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee,

I am writing in support of Interim Regent Lauren Akitake to be appointed as a permanent member to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. Ms. Akitake's exceptional leadership qualities, dedication to education, and proven track record make her an outstanding candidate for this vital role.

Having known Lauren personally and professionally, I have witnessed her unwavering commitment to fostering excellence in education. Her strategic vision, combined with a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing higher education, positions her as a valuable asset to the Board of Regents.

Lauren's diverse background, including her experience as a per diem judge, equips her with a unique perspective that will contribute to the Board's ability to make well-informed decisions. Her collaborative approach and effective communication skills are crucial in addressing the complex issues that the University of Hawaii faces.

Furthermore, Lauren's passion for fostering inclusivity and diversity aligns seamlessly with the University's values. Her advocacy for creating an inclusive environment that supports the success of all students will undoubtedly strengthen the University's commitment to providing a high-quality education for everyone.

I wholeheartedly endorse Lauren Akitake for the position on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I am confident that her leadership, dedication, and expertise will make a positive impact on the university community and contribute to its continued success.

With warm regards,

Lui K Hokoana, EdD

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 10:59:48 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Judy Locke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Lauren M. Akitake for the Uniniversity of Hawaii Board of Regents. I am a retired school teacher and have known Ms. Akitake for many years. Although she has never been a student in my class, I have observed her strong sense of responsibility, honesty, open-mindedness, and compassion. As a teenager, Ms. Akitake was a member of the Wailuku Junior Tennis Club. while she was a dedicated athlete, her sense of fair play, and respectful sportsmanship set her apart from many other youth players in tournaments and training sessions.

As a classroom teacher I was impressed by Ms. Akitake's Junior Justice lesson presentations. As a Young Lawyer community volunteer Lauren demonstrated professionalism, patience, insight, and clarity in nurturing good decision making skills with my students. At the conclusion of her series of lessons, several students expressed an interest in becoming attorneys to help their community as well as sharing what they learned about making responsible daily life decisions.

Lauren Akitake has shared her talents and demonstrated her dedication to the University of Hawaii as an instructor, mentor, and interim member of the Board of Regents. Her ongoing involvement and extensive support of numerous community projects and non-profit organizations is remarkable. Ms. Akitake is a dedicated citizen and role model of our Maui and statewide community. I believe she would do a tremendous job in this position. Mahalo for allowing to share my recommendation.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:12:07 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathleen Pang, PhD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I lend my support to, and urge confirmation of Lauren Akitake to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. Ms Akitake has consistently demonstrated the ability to hear multiple viewpoints, facts, and concepts--then propose balanced and practical solutions. (Yes, time-management is also important in the life of a working mother of two boys). Ms Akitake has demonstrated both dedication and leadership, teaching classes at UH Maui, and by serving the Maui court system. Judge Akitake will be an asset, bringing balance, focus, and energy to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.



**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:12:36 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lila Lawrence	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of the confirmation of Lauren Akitake for the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Maui County seat.

I have known Lauren for several years and am greatly impressed by her dedication to our Maui community, not only through her work as an attorney and per diem judge but also through her involvement in many organizations.

She was recently selected to be Co-President of the American Association of University Women Maui, which has advocated for equal pay for women.

Through her volunteer work and involvement with community organizations, a pattern emerges of a leader who brings ideas and passion to try to improve the lives of our residents.

Her resume, including her participation in Ka Ipu Kukui Fellowship program and the National Institute for Trial Advocacy Women in Trial,

reflects her continuing pursuit of learning. She would continue to serve Maui County and the state well on the Board of Regents.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer

testimony.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:29:33 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caleb Patrick Rowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of the nomination of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents for the University of Hawaii. Ms. Akitake has held this position in an interim capacity since July of 2023, and I believe she has conducted herself in a manner that warrants appointment to a full term.

I have known Ms. Akitake personally as a friend since high school, and professionally as a fellow attorney on Maui. Throughout my relationship with Lauren, I have constantly been impressed with not only her intelligence and professionalism, but also her commitment to service. I hope you will give her the opportunity to continue her service to our community through her appointment to a full term.

With Aloha,

Caleb P. Rowe

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:31:32 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brandon Chu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This testimony is in support of the nomination and confirmation of Lauren Akitake to the UH Board of Regents. I know Lauren to be of outstanding character and upholding the highest levels of business ethics. She's demonstrated her passion for community through the numerous organizations she supports and work that she does for the betterment of others. Lauren's track record of professional excellence and success speaks for itself however its Lauren's personable approach with care, concern, and consideration to address complex issues is what distinguishes her from others. As an Alumni of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I'm proud to endorse Lauren for this role and believe we are lucky to have someone of her caliber.

Warmest Regards,

Brandon

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:32:38 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alicia Hetman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators:

I am writing today to provide my **Strong Support** of Judge Lauren Akitake for the permanent confirmation of her position on the UH Board of Regents. Let me introduce how and why I am making the support known to you today.

I am a 48 year member of the national organization, the American Association of University Member which was started in 1881. I live in California, but am a long time annual visitor to Maui and a member of the AAUW Maui Branch (60+members) and serve as the Public Policy Chair. I also serve on the AAUW Hawai'i Public Policy Committee. Judge Akitake is serving as our co/president now for the Maui Branch. My last position was as the Board Vice Chair for our National Board and I have been active at the local, state and national level for most of the years I've been a member. Our organization's Mission has always been about Gender Fairness for all Women and Girls. We support women's rights to a quality and equitable education and full access to Higher Education. As a matter of fact, AAUW was started by a group of 17 women in Boston who felt they deserved to use the library of the College/University when the men were present. I believe that Judge Akitake will be exactly what the UH Board of Regents needs at this time.

In addition, I am a retired educator and also worked at the CA Dept of Education as the Title IX/Gender Equity Compliance Officer for the CA Public Schools. In that position I was responsible for writing CA gender equity legislation for the CA Department of Education and worked closely with our legal staff. I know that Judge Akitake will provide a great voice to the work of the Regents and that she will give this position the needed time and her best effort always to continue the work of the Regents in moving the work forward for continued success for the schools and the students involved in the UH schools here in Hawai'i.

I do not need to present her education and work history as you do have her bio, but I'd like to point out her very strong qualifications for this permanent appointment as described in her bio. Judge Akitake was born and raised here on Maui and that gives her an excellent perspective about the Hawaiian educational system. She has an excellent history and strong bond with the community of Maui which demonstrates that she will continue to be an excellent voice for all people of Maui, in addition to all of the people of Hawai'i. As a lifelong educator, I look forward to Judge Akitake, my friend Lauren, and the ongoing provision of a fair and equal education for all attendees here in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your kind consideration for the upcoming confirmation of Judge Akitake,

Alicia A Hetman

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 12:01:13 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Levi K. Hookano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

I am writing in strong support of Ms. Lauren Akitake's nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. She is community focused, well educated, and well respected. She will be a tremendous asset to the University of Hawai'i system.

Ms. Akitake is an active participant in her community. She participates in many community projects, from legal organizations such as the Maui County Bar Association and the Hawai'i State Bar Association Leadership Institute, to school groups and women's groups like the Pomaikai Elementary School Community Council and Women Helping Women. Lauren is always willing to lend a helping hand to lift people up rather than put people down.

Lauren is well educated will put her knowledge of the law and policy to use as a member of the Board of Regents. As a lawyer, she is trained to apply the facts to law and policy that supports a logical conclusion. She will put her experience to use and advocate on behalf of the students, and put their interests ahead of her own.

Finally, I've known Lauren for many years. She is well respected in the legal community and is known as a person who is honest and trustworthy. I am supremely confident that she will say it like it is, be honest and straightforward in her decisions, and that she will be a reliable member of the Board of Regents.

Again, I fully support her nomination and urge this committee to forward this matter to the full Senate with a positive recommendation.

Mahalo,

Levi K. Hookano

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 12:28:52 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
William Grier Kepler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's my huge pleasure to recommend Lauren Akitaki as a University Regent. I have been a practicing pediatrician on Maui for 53 years, and I've had the pleasure of watching Ms. Akitaki grow up and develop into a brilliant lawyer with amazing education and experience. Her educational accomplishments are superior. She attended Maui's public schools, and graduated as valedictorian at Baldwin High School. She received a BS at Pomona College, Masters of Science at University of Stirling in Scotland, and her law degree at University of Kansas School of Law. She went on to practice law on Maui, and eventually became a per diem District Court Judge on Maui. She is currently an Interim Regent (Maui Seat) on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. She is president of the Maui branch of the American Association of University Women. She is on the board of Women Helping Women, she taught Business Law at University of Hawaii Maui College for six years, and she has been treasurer of the Maui County Bar Association. Ms. Akitaki has been an active athlete her whole life, winning the State Doubles Tennis Championship in high school. In addition to her professional activities Ms Akitaki contributes wonderfully to Maui's religious and social scene. And perhaps her proudest accomplishment: she is the proud mother of two young sons.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 12:43:29 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
MARGARET M MADRIAGA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the nomination of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

In the past year that I have interacted with Attorney Lauren Akitake, she has been very precise and punctual. Her attention to detail and clarity in communicating has been extremely helpful and I appreciate the services she has provided for our clients.

Lauren's passion to support her community is very inspiring.



# SHAN S. TSUTSUI

12<sup>th</sup> Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawaii

Testimony of  
Shan S. Tsutsui

Before the Senate Committee on  
HIGHER EDUCATION

Tuesday, February 27, 2024  
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Video Conference

**In Support of**  
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 532

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, Lauren Akitake, for a term to expire 06-30-2028

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education:

Today, I am privileged to offer my highest recommendation in support of Ms. Lauren M. Akitake's nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. I have known Ms. Akitake for over 25 years and have had the opportunity to observe her tremendous growth. Whether in the courtroom, on the Board of Regents, in her private legal practice, or on the tennis courts, where she was once a high school state champion, I have always known Ms. Akitake to be of high integrity and sound character.

As a former Hawaii State Senate President and having presided over numerous judicial and regent confirmations, I can report that Ms. Akitake possesses the temperament, integrity, solid work ethic, and necessary breadth of knowledge and competence to be an excellent regent. I believe her community service, current legal practice, and judicial service as a Per Diem District Court Judge, as well as her work since being appointed as an interim regent, clearly reflect that.

It is also essential to note that while we need more judges like Lauren, with a demonstrated commitment and record of supporting equal access to justice, we also need UH regents who are committed to ensuring equal access to higher education, pursuing evidence-based decision-making no matter where it leads, holding university leaders accountable, and ensuring that the university system remains committed to its statewide vision and purpose while educating and protecting our most valuable asset, the next generation of leaders. The University of Hawaii system is critical to the holistic well-being of our state and Asia-Pacific region.

Ms. Akitake is uniquely qualified to fill this vacancy, and there is no doubt that she will be an excellent addition to the board governing our state's only public system of post-secondary higher education.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to comment.

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 1:00:09 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brittany P Montilliano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting this testimony in support of Lauren Akitake's nomination and confirmation to the UH Board of Regents. As a past colleague of Lauren's, I have seen her commitment first hand to the betterment of the communities she's in. Through her work with the American Association of Women Helping Women, Lauren has been able to raise up the women of Wailuku and aid in the movement against domestic violence.

Due to her insightfulness and dedicaiton to Hawai'i's future, I believe that Lauren will be a valuable asset to the UH Board of Regents in the formulation of its policies, governance of its structure, and management.

Brittany Montilliano

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Committee on Higher Education

February 26, 2024

Re: Support for GM 532, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents, Gubernatorial Nominee, Lauren Akitake

Aloha e Senators,

My name is Shawna Pabingwit, a University of Hawai'i alumnus and employee. I strongly support GM 532, which would confirm Lauren Akitake as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, for a term to expire June 30, 2028.

I am testifying in favor of confirming Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents based on her legal expertise, credentials, and service to the community. She has had an extensive career in law, with over 15 years of legal experience. She is familiar with the University's culture as she previously served as Lecturer of Business Law and has been serving as an Interim Regent since July 1, 2023. In addition, she serves as the Co-President for the American Association of University Women Maui Branch.

Lauren Akitake is an asset to County of Maui and the State of Hawai'i. She can offer her neutral and objective perspective to the Board and her willingness and dedication to serve the community is unmatched. She is a well-respected member of the campus community and will serve the University of Hawai'i and the State well as a Regent.

I urge your favorable support of the confirmation of Lauren Akitake by the Senate. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Mahalo nui loa,



Shawna Pabingwit  
(808) 276-4233

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 2:45:23 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brian Nagami	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support the confirmation of Lauren Akitake as a nominee to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. Ms. Akitake's varied experience and dedication to the community make her an exceptional candidate for this vital role. Her commitment to fostering academic excellence and ensuring equitable opportunities for all students aligns perfectly with the mission of the University of Hawai'i. I am confident that Akitake will bring valuable insights and leadership to the Board, contributing significantly to the advancement of higher education in Hawai'i.

Brian Nagami  
Maui resident

**LATE**

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 4:05:11 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alexander J.W. McBarnet, Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Kim,

Thank you for your consideration of Lauren to represent Maui County on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. In my role as the Chairman of the Maui College Advisory Council over the last 5 years, I have seen the State's commitment to Chancellor Lui Hokoana in driving an excellent educational institution. Lauren was born, raised and educated on Maui and having returned to Maui to practice law and to be a part time judge, is the perfect person for this role. The Maui College is the most important institution on Maui giving all ages and educational levels an incredible lift in their economic opportunities which improves their family's and our community's ability to serve others.

Senator Kim, Lauren is one in a million that will move the University system to be relevant to today's citizens by driving stronger social and economic programs in the Hawaii community that serves all people. Lauren's resume is fantastic, however it really is Lauren's action and to do attitude that separates her from the other candidates. Lauren's success as a leader in driving successful programs and addressing pressing needs is what our University can really use at this time.

Senator Kim, I am honored as an older citizen to turn the decision making that is so important to both the present and future Hawaii over to such an accomplished individual as Lauren. I know she will make you proud and the State proud when you look back after your second term comes to an end -- you will see this as one of your best ten decisions.

Thank you,

Alec McBarnet, Owner, President & CEO of Maui Oil Company, Inc. and VP of Lanai Oil Company, Inc.



The Committee on Higher Education  
February 27, 2024  
1:00 PM  
Room 229

**LATE**

**RE: GM 532, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, Lauren Akitake, For a Term to Expire 06-30-2028**

Attention: Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Michelle Kidani and Members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) **supports GM 532**, to confirm the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

As an attorney, Ms. Akitake has extensive knowledge and experience on an array of legal issues, and has worked to assist those in her community through her work in private practice, as a professor business law at UH Maui College, and as a per diem judge. Since her appointment to the UH Board of Regents, it has been evident that Ms. Akitake will take the time to review, question, and investigate issues with the same dedication she applies in her professional career.

I have had the opportunity to meet with Ms. Akitake outside of the Board room, and appreciate her willingness to inquire and ask questions of UHPA. While Ms. Akitake may not have an extensive knowledge of faculty labor issues, she has been open to discussing and understanding faculty concerns and compliance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and we look forward to working with her in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of GM 532, to confirm the appointment of Lauren Akitake to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

**LATE**

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 6:25:53 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jane Tesoro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jane Tesoro, a retired public school librarian and lifelong resident of Maui County. I am pleased to submit this letter of recommendation for Lauren M. Akitake, a nominee for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents Maui County Seat.

Since I have known Lauren from the day she was born, I feel qualified to attest to her character. Her parents are very dear friends of mine; our children grew up together on Maui within a supportive group that valued strong family ties, higher education, community service and participation in church activities. During her early education, Lauren excelled in academics and leadership roles. This prepared her for college on the mainland as well as time spent studying abroad in Scotland as a Rotary Ambassador Scholar. It was no surprise to me that Lauren pursued a law degree. I was especially pleased to see her return to Maui, start her family and settle into a home that is located a few blocks from my own residence in Waikapū.

Lauren has demonstrated her commitment to our community in her legal practice and civic engagement. She is raising her sons to value the ‘aina and support people of all ages by encouraging them to join her in a myriad of activities. Lauren is adept in maintaining a balance between her personal and professional pursuits by investing quality time and effort. Should the need arise, I assure you that she will always have the support of her extended ‘ohana that includes myself.

On a personal note, my sons and I are all graduates of the University of Hawaii-Manoa. I have a 1971 bachelor’s degree in education and returned in 2003 to earn a master’s degree in Library and Information Science in 2005. My sons Jonathan and Kristopher received bachelor’s degrees in business in 2001 and 2003 respectively. Kristopher also acquired a master’s in public administration in 2006. As proud graduates of the UH system, we trust that the Board of Regents will act in the best interests of the university community. I have no doubt that Lauren will be resourceful when dealing with legal issues as a university regent. She has gained experience in her judicial career and maintains strength of resolve in her character. In other areas, Lauren has demonstrated leadership qualities while working collaboratively with others.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some insight into Lauren M. Akitake's character. I have no reservations in recommending her to you and wish you well in deliberating over the nominees.

Sincerely yours,

Jane Tesoro



**LATE**

February 26, 2024

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

I am writing in support of Lauren Akitake for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. As a member of the Hawaii State Bar Association and a former client of Ms. Akitake, I would like to share that Ms. Akitake has the qualifications and character to be an excellent and highly competent judge for our community. In all of my interactions with Ms. Akitake, she has carried herself with professionalism, expertise, and commitment.

I have also witnessed Ms. Akitake take on many leadership roles in our community. She is genuinely committed to improving the world around her and will not only serve a judge who will pay close attention to the law and facts, but also serve with a view toward societal impacts and justice.

For these reasons, I recommend Lauren Akitake for this position on the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,



Brittany Heyd

*Contact information:*

Brittany Heyd  
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808-938-0300  
brittany@manauphawaii.com

**LATE**

**GM-532**

Submitted on: 2/27/2024 8:26:00 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/27/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Buddy James Nobriga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of Larn Akitake nomination