

Phil Fernandez

TESTIMONY for GM650
Confirmation of Philip H. Fernandez
For the position of
Commissioner, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
Before the Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts
Chair, Sen. Chris Lee
Vice-Chair, Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye
April 15, 2026

1. Why do you wish to serve on the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission?

After over 30 years of involvement in various levels of fisheries management becoming a Commissioner will be the culmination of my involvement in fisheries. I wish to use this knowledge and experience for the benefit of Hawaii's marine resources, the State's fisheries managers and the overall public.

2. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission?

The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission is a forum of fisheries and policy managers from Alaska, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and California. As such it is an excellent place to network with peers from the other states. Hawaii has much to learn from other fisheries agency personnel. To that end, I have connected with the Fisheries Department Directors from Idaho and Oregon. These connections have already proven valuable in helping Hawaii develop a rapid response plan for fisheries infective disease mitigation. Other high-value knowledge and experience can be gleaned from other managers. In addition to network contacts, my role includes negotiating with other states on matters common between states, such as endangered species policy or control of bio-invasive organisms that may be carried by ocean-going vessel ballast waters. Representing Hawaii's needs and protecting Hawaii's resources are important responsibilities.

My role and responsibilities include representing the State's marine resource users, not just fishermen, but all resource users. I will work with the staff of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and peers from other states to accomplish this.

3. Why do you believe you are qualified? Include a brief description of the skills, experience, expertise, or knowledge you bring to the Commission and how they would inform your decision-making.

I am a life-long fisherman and a strong advocate for the fishing community. I have been involved in fisheries management for over 30 years working with federal and Hawaii state fisheries managers. I am the past-president of the Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition (HFACT), and served as a member of the federal American Fisheries Advisory Committee (NOAA). I have also served

on the NOAA Main Hawaiian Islands Monk Seal Recovery Team and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Committee. Currently I serve on the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (as Hawaii interim commissioner) and the Division of Aquatic Resources Fishers Working Group. I was part of the founding hui of the Maunalua Bay Fisheries Management Area that the state approved and designated as a marine protected area in 2025. Recently I was elected to the Executive Committee of the Pacific Islands Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. I hold a MBA degree and a BS Economics degree from Oregon State University.

After receiving my degrees, I went to work as an econometric analyst at Portland General Electric, a regional electric utility company. Soon, I entered the electronics high technology industry starting as marketing analyst, then finance manager, director of marketing planning, and director of global marketing. My career in electronics started at Tektronix, then to General Electric's Industrial Electronics Business Group, then a Silicon Valley semiconductor start-up company (Weitek), then back at Tektronix. Leaving the electronics industry in 1987, I started my own company, Cascade Technical Staffing, an technical recruiting company for the electronics industry. The company was sold to Barrett Business Services, Inc. (NYSE: BBSI) in 1996.

From 1996 to 2005, I was a business development and a financial turnaround management consultant helping middle market companies in the manufacturing and food processing industries in Oregon. In this role, I worked for various companies and government agencies including Sequent Computer Systems and Maxtek Corporation in electronics, and the State of Oregon's Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department. A major accomplishment during this time included assisting the Coos Bay Trawlers Association and its members to adjust to a major reduction in fishing quotas and vessel fishing licenses and to rationalize the over-capitalization of the entire trawl fleet in Oregon. I retired in 2005.

My combined years of experience, accumulation of knowledge, and proven skills will be applied to informed decision-making.

4. If confirmed, what goals or priorities would you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

My primary goal is to assist DLNR Division of Aquatic Resources accomplish their goals. By working closely with Brian Neilson, Administrator, and David Sakoda, Fisheries Program Managers, I hope to further Hawaii's strategic marine resource management needs. Because Hawaii has only been a member of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission for two years, there is much to learn about the commission's capabilities and how those capabilities can be applied to help Hawaii. I plan to spend time working with the organization's staff to maximize benefits for Hawaii.

5. Do you think there is anything that could reasonably be perceived by the public as creating conflict of interest or otherwise raise question about your character, judgment or ability to serve impartially on the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. If so, explain.

No.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER, LAND, CULTURE, AND THE ARTS**

**Wednesday, April 15, 2026
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 650
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE PACIFIC
STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
PHILIP FERNANDEZ, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2029**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports Governor's Message 650 nominating Mr. Philip Fernandez to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) for a term to expire on June 30, 2029.

Pursuant to Act 216 (2024) and section 188C-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), on December 19, 2024, the Governor of Hawai'i executed a compact on behalf of the State to join the PSMFC. The PSMFC is an interstate compact agency that helps state resource management agencies and the fishing industry sustainably manage Pacific Ocean resources, particularly those that cross jurisdictional boundaries. The PSMFC's mission is to promote the better utilization of fisheries – marine, shell, and anadromous, which are of mutual concern, and to develop a joint program of protection and prevention of physical waste of such fisheries in all of those areas of the Pacific Ocean over which the compacting states jointly or separately now have or may hereafter acquire jurisdiction. This mission closely aligns with the mission of the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources to work with the people of Hawai'i to manage, conserve, and restore the state's unique aquatic resources and ecosystems for present and future generations.

Mr. Fernandez is a well-respected local small-boat fisherman with decades of leadership, policy engagement, and hands-on experience in fisheries advocacy and marine resource management across Hawai'i and the broader Pacific region. As the former president of the

Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Mr. Fernandez led a statewide fishermen's advocacy organization, coordinating across island communities and working directly with state and federal management agencies.

Mr. Fernandez has served on numerous advisory and decision-making bodies central to Hawai'i's ocean and coastal resource management framework, including the Department's informal Fishers Working Group, the Marine & Coastal Zone Advocacy Council under the State of Hawai'i Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, and the Maunalua Bay Fisheries Management Area Partnership. At the federal level, Mr. Fernandez has contributed to national and regional efforts, including service on the American Fisheries Advisory Committee, the Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Team, the Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Monument Reserve Advisory Council, and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council.

This breadth of experience reflects a deep understanding of fisheries governance across local, state, and federal jurisdictions, as well as the ability to navigate complex, multi-stakeholder environments. Importantly, the nominee has consistently demonstrated a commitment to ensuring that the perspectives of Hawai'i's fishing communities are meaningfully represented in policy discussions.

In addition to fisheries-specific expertise, Mr. Fernandez brings extensive executive and financial management experience, including leadership roles in the private sector and disaster response operations with the American Red Cross, where he oversaw large-scale financial operations and risk management for major national disasters. This background provides a strong foundation in organizational leadership, fiscal oversight, and strategic decision-making—skills that are directly relevant to the responsibilities of a Commissioner.

The Department recognizes the importance of appointing individuals who can effectively represent Hawai'i's unique marine ecosystems, cultural values, and community-based resource management practices at the interstate level. Mr. Fernandez's longstanding commitment to fisheries advocacy, combined with demonstrated leadership in both community and institutional settings, positions him to be a strong and effective voice for the State.

For these reasons, the Department respectfully urges the Committee to support the confirmation of Mr. Philip Fernandez to serve on the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

GM-650

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 5:40:11 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/15/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support