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John A. Burns School of Medicine
Office of the Dean

Testimony Presented before the
Senate Committee on Education

Friday, April 17, 2026 at 1:00 pm

By

T. Samuel Shomaker, MD, JD, MSM, Dean

**GM 666 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
HAWAII MEDICAL EDUCATION COUNCIL, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
MARTINA KAMAKA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2029.**

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Kidani and members of the committee:

My name is T. Samuel Shomaker, and I am the Dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) of the University of Hawai'i. I also serve as chair of the Hawai'i Medical Education Council (HMEC or Council).

I write in support of GM 666 which submits for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Medical Education Council Martina Kamaka for a term expiring on June 30, 2029. Dr. Kamaka will serve as a representative of the Health Professions Community as required by the HMEC Charter.

Dr. Kamaka is a board-certified physician in Family Medicine who currently supports the Hale Mohalu Hansen's Disease Branch working closely with the Hawai'i State Department of Health. She maintains active memberships with the American Academy of Family Physicians on the national and local levels, the National Council for Asian and Pacific Islander Physicians where she is the Vice Chair and sits on the Board of Directors, is a founding member and Council member on the Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors Congress Council, and was the former President and remains a current member of the Board of Directors for the 'Ahahui o na Kauka (Association of Native Hawaiian Physicians). She has served on a number of State Advisory Boards, including the Governing Body of the DOH, Hansen's Disease Branch for over 20 years. On the community service level, Dr. Kamaka also serves on the Board of Directors for the Ho'omana 'Ōiwi (Hawaiians serving Hawaiians) since 1995, where she has helped to organize community health screenings for several other organizations, including the Kamehameha Schools (KS) Ho'olaulea and KS reunions, supporting the overall health and well-being of the Native Hawaiian community.

She is a nationally and internationally recognized speaker on topics related to cultural competencies and health disparities, particularly among indigenous populations, presenting throughout the United States and in countries across the Pacific including New Zealand,

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Australia, Canada, Taiwan, and Malaysia. Her involvement in supporting scholarly work has resulted in over \$14 million dollars in grants, awards, and contracts, where she remains actively involved in future pursuits including a focus on community outreach and physician development. In her academic role, Dr. Kamaka has been with University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) as an Associate Professor in the Department of Native Hawaiian Health for over 24 years where she has also served as the Project Director for the Cultural Competency Curriculum Development Project since 2005. She continues to be actively involved in teaching medical students, including curriculum focused on immersion, population and community health, and learning communities. Additionally, she mentors students before

and during medical school, while providing ongoing training and development workshops to the Hawai'i State Department of Education on topics such as cultural competencies, Hawaiian philosophy and healthcare.

Her experiences in education, research, and community service informs her approaches to identifying best ways to support healthcare and medical education training in Hawai'i. Dr. Kamaka would bring a meaningful perspective addressing healthcare disparities throughout the state and will be strong advocate for the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations where she has built a strong reputation in our communities. Her knowledge and passion to advance health outcomes in Hawai'i through medical education would make her an asset and champion for the medical community to benefit the people of Hawai'i.

I strongly support the nomination of Martina Kamaka to serve on the Hawai'i Medical Education Council and urge your committee to recommend confirmation of her nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.