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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 670 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE  
HAWAII MEDICAL EDUCATION COUNCIL, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,  
RUSSELL WOO, 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 670 which submits for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Medical Education Council Russell Woo, for a term to expire on June 30, 2029. Dr. Woo will represent a hospital where accredited graduate medical education programs are conducted, as required by the HMEC Charter.

Dr. Woo has been a practicing pediatric surgeon at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children in Honolulu, Hawaii, since 2009, where he currently serves as the Medical Director of Children's Surgery and the Vice Chief of Staff. He is an active faculty member of the Department of Surgery at the University of Hawai'i, John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), where he serves as a Professor of Surgery and the Division Chief for Pediatric Surgery. In addition to his clinical practice and faculty roles, Dr. Woo holds current leadership positions, serving as the Chief Academic Officer for the Hawaii Pacific Health Medical Group and the Associate Dean for Clinical Programs at HPH at JABSOM.

His years of experience navigating the intricacies of healthcare systems would be beneficial to the Council as it addresses the expansion of graduate medical education across the state. His clinical interests, ranging across surgical anomalies, lend to active research and teaching programs aimed at developing new technologies to improve the delivery of surgical care. This highlights his keen sense of innovation and improvement, as he works to enhance the practice of medicine to better support community needs.

As an educator, clinical supervisor, practicing physician, and health systems leader, Dr. Woo continues to support and

651 Ilalo Street, Honolulu, HI 96813  
Telephone: (808) 692-0886 Fax: (808) 692-1247  
Website: <https://jabsom.hawaii.edu>

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advocate for Graduate Medical Education and will be a valuable asset to the Council, lending his systems and innovation approaches to healthcare.

I strongly support the nomination of Russell Woo to serve on the Hawai'i Medical Education Council and urge your committee to recommend confirmation of his nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

April 13, 2026

**To:** Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair, Committee on Education  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair, Committee on Education

**Hearing:** Friday, April 17, 2026, 1:00 PM  
Conference Room 229

**Re:** GM 670 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i  
Medical Education Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL WOO,  
for a term to expire 06-30-2029

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

I am pleased to write in **strong support** for the nomination of Dr. Russell Woo to the Hawaii Medical Education Council.

Dr. Woo has a deep personal commitment to our local community. He is widely respected not only for his professional accomplishments, but the integrity, humility, and steadiness that he brings to every role. He is a thoughtful listener and collaborative problem-solver who consistently puts the needs of patients, families and the community first. His leadership style is calm, fair, and grounded – qualities that would make him a trusted voice in discussions about medical education and workforce development. He brings not only medical expertise, but the kind of integrity and community-mindedness that would strengthen public institutions like the Hawaii Medical Education Council.

For these reasons, I am in strong support of the nomination and respectfully urge the Committee to confirm Dr. Woo.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Yajima