



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, MD
ADMINISTRATOR

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February 27, 2026

TO: THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair
And Honorable Members

FROM: John C (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA;
and Senior Advisor to Governor Green, MD on Healthcare Innovation

RE: **GM702 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Health Planning Council, West Oahu Subarea, Gubernatorial Nominee, MICHELE CHRISSY KUAHINE, for a term to expire 06-30-2030.**

HEARING: Monday, March 2, 2025 @ 1:00 pm, Room 225 & Videoconference

POSITION: The State Health Planning and Development Agency supports the nomination and confirmation of Ms. Michele Chrissy Kuahine to the Health Planning Council, West Oahu Subarea.

Testimony:

The purpose of this measure is the consideration and confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee, Michele Chrissy Kuahine, MPH, MIS, to the Statewide Subarea Health Planning Council. SHPDA supports Ms. Kuahine's confirmation.

Ms. Kuahine has more than 35 years of experience at Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, with a career focused on improving access to care through rural health planning, telehealth, digital access, health IT, and workforce development.

In her current role as Development Director, Ka Ike Ola Teaching and Learning Programs (Feb 2025–present), she leads telehealth and digital health initiatives, builds partnerships with Native Hawaiian-serving health centers and community organizations, and advances community Wi-Fi and digital literacy for kūpuna, families, and youth. She is also helping develop workforce programs, including the Waianae EMT City Academy launching in 2026.

Previously, she served as Director of Clinical and Patient Informatics (2021–2024), where she helped expand telehealth during COVID-19, enabling more than 2,600 visits in the first month. Before that, as Director of EHR (2003–2021), she led major EHR implementation and training for 500+ staff, strengthening data quality and operational planning.

Ms. Kuahine brings valued, community-grounded experience that fits the Council’s responsibility for statewide planning, coordination, and stewardship of health resources. We respectfully request supports her confirmation.

Mahalo for hearing this bill, and for the opportunity to testify.

- -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA

GM-702

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 3:29:23 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/2/2026 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Lapilio	Testifying for Waianae Moku Navigators	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 2, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services,

Wai‘anae Moku Navigators is a nonprofit planning and community development corporation established in 2014. Our mission is to serve as a sustainable community planning entity responsible for addressing the planning and development needs of the Wai‘anae Coast. We work with twenty-eight community organizations, agencies, and groups to identify community development priorities and address them through existing resources, collaborative partnerships, and, when necessary, new initiatives.

We respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Michele “Chrissy” Kuahine’s appointment to the West O‘ahu Subarea Health Planning Council.

Chrissy has devoted her entire adult life to improving health care access and outcomes for residents of the Wai‘anae Coast. She brings a deep understanding of how health planning decisions directly affect families in our community and consistently seeks innovative information, technologies, and systems to strengthen those decisions. Her work is always grounded in a commitment to the well-being of individuals and families on the coast.

Her extensive experience, integrity, and long-standing dedication to West O‘ahu make her exceptionally well qualified to serve on this council. We respectfully urge the Committee to confirm her appointment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Joseph Lapilio
Executive Director
Wai‘anae Moku Navigators



LATE

March 3, 2026

Dear Chair and Committee members

Molokai Community Health Center (MCHC) strongly supports Michele “Chrissy” Kuahine to serve on the West O’ahu Health Planning Council. MCHC limited resources requires that we collaborate with other health organizations, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center has Provided MCHC with support and Technical Assistance; Chrissy has been our partner at WCCHC in assisting to develop a plan towards Value Base Care transformation. Chrissy’s understanding of complex healthcare needs has helped MCHC with planning and implementation of a healthcare solution that will benefit patients and our community.

Through her work with AHARO, and accountable healthcare partnership that includes Hamakua-Kohala Health center, Hana Health, Waimanalo health center, Waianae Coast Comprehensive and Molokai Health Center, Chrissy has provided guidance and resources that will address the Medical/Behavioral health shortages using Telehealth services.

MCHC serves an island population of about 6,980 residents, of which 45% are individuals and families whose incomes are below 200% of the federal poverty guidance. For over 20 years MCHC has served a vital access point and classic safety net for affordable primary medical, dental, and behavioral health care for the uninsured and underinsured populations on Molokai.

By providing technical assistance, support, and guidance Chrissy has earned the respect of leadership and staff; her commitment to help underserved communities is demonstrated through her dedication to address inequities and provide solutions. Her integrity, experience and long standing commitment to families and her community assures Molokai Community Health Center that Michele “Chrissy” Kuahine is an excellent candidate and we wholeheartedly support her to serve on the West O’ahu Subarea Health Planning Council

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Milton Cortez", with the date "3/1/26" written to the right.

Milton Cortez
Chief Executive Officer
Molokai Community Health Center

Mission: To provide and promote accessible comprehensive individual and community health care to the people of Molokai with respect and aloha.

Visit us at <http://molokaichc.org/>

30 Oki Place, PO Box 2040 Kaunakakai, HI 96748 Phone: (808) 553-5038 Fax: (808) 553-3780

March 1, 2026

Committee on Health & Human Services
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha e Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

It is my kindest delight to submit this testimony pertaining to Michele “Chrissy” Kuahine. I have known and worked closely with Chrissy during the past three and a half years where she serves in a director’s role at the Wai’anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC). In this short period of time, I have come to know her quite well since we worked together on a project described below that required monthly, and often, weekly collaboration.

My name is Glenn Miyataki and I advise several organizations in Hawaii at the executive level to bring about change and improvements in Hawaii’s socio-economic development context. One of my advisory roles is to serve as a Board member and Executive Advisor to Edward Sun, CEO and Board Chair, of SunGlobal Super Wireless.

During the past three and a half years, community leaders of Wai’anae Moku, led by the Wai’anae Economic Development Council (WEDC), developed a strategic plan to install a super wireless WAI-FI Community Broadband System that will provide connectivity to everyone within the Wai’anae Moku. Since SunGlobal provides a super wireless system that is secure, clear, and resilient for Internet connectivity, especially in remote areas, WEDC invited SunGlobal to be its service provider for Wai’anae Moku.

In this initiative, Chrissy has been very instrumental in helping to develop the strategy due to her vast WCCHC experience in Native Hawaiian health services and community development. Her astute competency with data analytics as well as a skill for public messaging sets her apart as an inspiring leader in this sphere of focus.

She is strong in forging relationships among colleagues locally and nationally, and she is our “go to” spokesperson to explain the needs of the super wireless and the benefits to the users and community. As a member of the West O’ahu Subarea Health Planning Council, she will work tirelessly with others through her sincerity, integrity, and team spirit. She will be an asset to your Council through her experiences with in-depth health services and community engagement.

I GENUINELY RECOMMEND MICHELE KUAHINE WITHOUT ANY HESITATION!

Malama nui loa,



Glenn Miyataki, Ph.D.



**WAIANAЕ COAST
COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CENTER**

LATE

**Monday, March 2, 1:00 PM
Conference Room 225**

Committee on Health & Human Services

To: Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair

From: Rich Bettini
rbettini@wcchc.com | (808)697-3457

Leinaala Kanana
lkanana@wcchc.com | (808)697-3594

RE: Senate confirmation hearing for the West O'ahu Subarea Planning Council

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

We are writing in strong support of Michele "Chrissy" Kuahine's appointment to the West O'ahu Subarea Health Planning Council. Chrissy brings more than three decades of dedicated service to West O'ahu and a deep, lived understanding of how health planning decisions directly affect the families and communities we serve.

Throughout her career, Michele has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to improving healthcare access, advancing sound policy, and ensuring that community voices are reflected in system-level decisions.

In addition, Michele has been actively engaged in technology-focused innovation, recognizing the critical role that digital health, telehealth, and data-informed strategies play in improving access and quality of care—particularly in rural and geographically isolated communities like West O'ahu. Her ability to bridge traditional healthcare planning with forward-thinking innovation will be an asset to the Council as it considers long-term strategies for the region.

Michele has the full support of the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center given her long time experience in healthcare policy and service, and her understanding and active participation in tech focused innovation.

Her experience, integrity, and long-standing commitment to West O'ahu make her well suited to serve on this council. I respectfully ask that you confirm her appointment.

We respectfully urge confirmation of her appointment.

LATE

March 1, 2026

RE GM702 West O‘ahu Subarea Health Planning Council

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am Daniel Gomes, a lifetime resident of Wai`anae. I am writing to support Michele “Chrissy” Kuahine’s appointment to the West O‘ahu Subarea Health Planning Council.

Chrissy brings decades of service to West O‘ahu and a deep understanding of health planning and its impact on families in our community and the State of Hawaii.

I have known Chrissy her entire life and admire her passion for service, commitment to community, and the honesty and integrity she values in her work ethic. Anyone who knows Chrissy or has worked with her understands her value to our community.

Her experience, integrity, and long-standing commitment to our community make her well qualified to serve on this council.

I respectfully ask you to confirm her appointment.

Mahalo,

Daniel Gomes

President, Wai`anae Moku Navigators

808-292-2731