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STATE OF HAWAII

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

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August 26, 2011

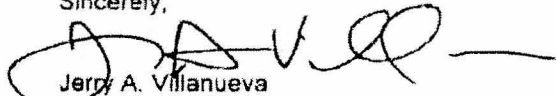
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuru, Vice Chair

Re: Letter of support for Karen Tooko Nakasone as Circuit Court judge

Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

I am writing in whole hearted support of Karen Tooko Nakasone to be confirmed as a Circuit Court Judge. Karen will be an excellent judge. I have known Karen since she became a fellow Deputy Public Defender in 1996. Karen has proven to be a very capable trial attorney. She is currently in the appeals division in the Office of the State Public Defender and is the person other attorneys seek out in helping to resolve complicated issues. Moreover, Karen always manages to maintain a calm demeanor even in the most trying of times. I believe Karen Tooko Nakasone will be a great addition to the Hawaii Bar. Please feel free to contact me at 586-2232 (office) or 542-1452 (cell) if you would like more information.

Sincerely,


Jerry A. Villanueva
Deputy Public Defender

STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

1130 N. NIMITZ HIGHWAY, SUITE A-254, HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96817
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-2080, FACSIMILE: (808) 586-2222

JOHN M. TONAKI
PUBLIC DEFENDER

JAMES S. TUBE
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

August 25, 2011

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
and Members of the Committee on
Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol
417 S. King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: GM-1 - Submitting for the consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of
the First Circuit, State of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee Karen T. Nakasone

Dear Chairman Hee and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I am submitting this written testimony to strongly support the nomination of Karen T. Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

I am an attorney with the Office of the Public Defender and I am currently Ms. Nakasone's supervisor in the Appellate Division. Having worked closely with Ms. Nakasone for over a decade as a colleague and as her supervisor, I can say without reservation that, if confirmed, Ms. Nakasone will be an outstanding jurist.

Ms. Nakasone is highly qualified to serve on the circuit court bench. She holds herself to high standards of preparation and performance. She possesses a strong work ethic, and her knowledge of the law is impressive. She has the intellect and the ability to grasp complex legal issues and communicate her ideas and arguments in a thoughtful, eloquent and persuasive manner. The attorneys in the office, including myself, routinely seek her counsel and judgment on legal matters, and she has always been generous with her time to assist others.

In addition to possessing the intellect and a strong work ethic, Ms. Nakasone has the temperament, character, and sensitivity to be a successful circuit court judge. I have no doubt that she will treat those who appear before her with dignity, patience, respect and compassion.

Ms. Nakasone is also well respected among her peers in the legal community for her insight, keen intellect, and leadership qualities. Her reputation as an attorney among prosecutors and judges is above reproach. She is also an active member in various prominent legal organizations, including but not limited to the Hawai'i Women Lawyers, the Japanese American Citizens League Honolulu Chapter, and the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association.

As long as I have known her, Ms. Nakasone has practiced law with competence, integrity and humility. She has demonstrated that she has the ability, the experience and the qualities to be a circuit court judge. Ms. Nakasone will certainly be an asset to the Hawai'i State Judiciary and I respectfully ask the committee to recommend confirmation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Tabe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James S. Tabe

August 25, 2011

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Email: JDL_Testimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

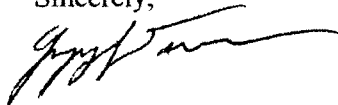
Re: GM 1
Monday, August 29, 2011, 12:00 pm

I hereby submit testimony on behalf of Gubernatorial Nominee, KAREN TOOKO NAKASONE for confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai'i.

I have known Ms. Nakasone since she started at the Office of the Public Defender. I have worked closely with her on several cases as the lead investigator. She has consistently demonstrated a calm perseverance for the truth. She diligently and thoroughly walks the client through the legalities of the criminal system. Her clients are very appreciative of her efforts on their behalf and I am in awe of their admiration of her.

Ms. Nakasone would be an asset to the Judicial Bench with her calm demeanor and strive for the law and application to its people. Ms. Nakasone is an outstanding citizen with the morals and characteristics needed at this time.

Sincerely,



Gregory J. Tavares
Chief Investigator
Office of the Public Defender

From: William.M.Bento@hawaii.gov
To: [JD Testimony](#)
Subject: Judicial nomination of Karen Nakasone.
Date: Friday, August 26, 2011 9:46:39 AM

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I would like to offer my support and recommendation to the nomination of Karen Nakasone to the First Circuit Court Bench. Over the years I have come to believe that trial judges need the following to be successful:

1. An innate sense of fairness, and an understanding that the law must be applied equally to all members of the community.
2. A command of the applicable law.
3. The respect of the legal community and the attorneys who practice in their courtroom.
4. Understanding, compassion and patience for those that come before them.
5. Firmness, decisiveness and confidence in their decisions, yet with a humbleness that leaves them open to reconsideration.

Having worked with Ms. Nakasone for a number of years, and been witness to her work ethic and intellectual capabilities, I can say that she possesses all of the above listed traits, and once on the bench she will continue to work diligently to maintain the highest of judicial standards.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,
William M. Bento
Deputy Public Defender and member of the bar since 1987

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII PAROLING AUTHORITY
1177 Alakea Street, First Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

BERT Y. MATSUOKA
CHAIR

MICHAEL A. TOWN
MEMBER

JOYCE K. MATSUMORI-HOSHIJO
MEMBER

TOMMY JOHNSON
ADMINISTRATOR

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 1
Consideration and Confirmation of Karen Tooko Nakasone
to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit

BY

Bert Y. Matsuoka, Chairman, Hawaii Paroling Authority
Michael A. Town, Parole Board Member
Joyce K. Matsumori-Hoshijo, Parole Board Member

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Monday, August 29, 2011, 12:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee:

We strongly support the nomination and confirmation of Ms. Karen Tooko Nakasone to become a Judge in the First Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

Ms. Nakasone clearly possesses the education, extensive experience, leadership, mature judgment, and judicial temperament desired of a person worthy of appointment to the bench.

Over the years, we have worked with Ms. Nakasone in various capacities and on a variety of issues. Whether representing clients in court, before the parole board or working along side each other as fellow Deputy Public Defenders, she has always demonstrated through her actions that she possesses the innate qualities and finely honed skills required of a judicial appointment. During her career as a Deputy Public

Defender, Ms. Nakasone has worked tirelessly for her clients and has always maintained the highest ethical and judicial standards. In doing so, she has gained the respect and admiration of her colleagues in the legal community, including defense attorneys, judges, and many other persons in the community. Ms. Nakasone has built a reputation as an extremely competent, fair, and experienced attorney that has always provided her clients with sound legal representation and advice. Her integrity is without question non-negotiable and her work ethic second to none.

Finally, we can state without reservation that Ms. Nakasone possesses the necessary skills, in-depth experience, integrity and fairness to be an outstanding judge. We strongly support her nomination and respectfully request that you advise and consent on this highly qualified, extremely capable, and dedicated public servant.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Nakasone's nomination.



August 26, 2011

*HWL
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Jennifer Rose

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Shan Wirt

Kristine Yoo

Via Email (JDLTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: GM1 -
Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge - In Support

Hawaii Women Lawyers (HWL) is a nonprofit business organization made up of over 300 female and male attorneys. HWL's purposes, as set forth in its Articles of Incorporation, are to (1) improve the status of women in the legal profession; (2) increase the number of women attorneys in positions of authority and responsibility; and (3) promote the advancement of all women. HWL recognizes that increasing opportunities for, and improving the visibility of, qualified women in the judiciary is extremely important. There are obvious benefits from working toward a balanced bench that reflects the composition of Hawaii's citizens.

The percentage of women judges in Hawaii has never been ideal, but since 2000, this percentage has steadily decreased. As of this date, there are 80 judges in the Hawaii State Judiciary, and of those 25 are women. See THE AMERICAN BENCH (annual editions); Hawaii State Judiciary Website. This committee is appropriately poised to ensure that the number of women on the bench adequately represents the number of women in the community and the women in the bar.

Ms. Nakasone's experience, academic and professional background, leadership qualities, and commitment demonstrate that she is very qualified for this position. Ms. Nakasone has served as a director on HWL's Board since 2009, and has an impressive history of involvement in community and civic affairs, in addition to her legal experience as a public defender since 1996. Ms. Nakasone is a Pacific Century Fellow and former President of the Japanese American Citizens League Honolulu Chapter. She recently received The Best Lawyers Under 40 Award from the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA).

NAPABA recognizes talented individuals in the Asian Pacific American legal community who have achieved prominence and distinction in their respective fields while demonstrating a strong commitment to the community.

Through HWL, Ms. Nakasone provides a community service as the co-chair of HWL's Program Committee. Her committee has organized a variety of different seminars of interest, including a series on trailblazing women who served, or are serving, in the Administrations of Governors Cayetano, Lingle, and Abercrombie, as well as "talk story" sessions with several of our Federal District Court judges. As a working attorney and mother to twin seven-year-old daughters, Ms. Nakasone's commitment to continuing the efforts to retain women in the legal profession, especially following motherhood, speaks volumes of her dedication to the well-being of our communities. There is no doubt that Ms. Nakasone would bring this experience, dedication, commitment, and responsibility to a judicial appointment to the First Circuit Court.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We urge you to favorably consider the appointment of KAREN NAKASONE to FIRST CIRCUIT COURT.

Very truly yours,

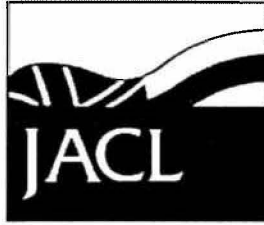
Hawaii Women Lawyers



Patsy Saiki
President



Emi Morita Kaimuloa
Judicial Equity Committee Co-Chair



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

HONOLULU CHAPTER

P.O. BOX 1291, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96807

PHONE: 523-8464 EMAIL: honolulu@jacl.org

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*Past President

August 26, 2011

Testimony in Support of GM 1: Nominating Karen Tooko Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of Karen Nakasone's nomination to the First Circuit Court of the First Judicial Circuit. It is with great honor and pride that we offer the following comments about Karen's history of service and commitment to Hawaii.

Principled Leader Grounded in Research and Love of the Law

Karen Nakasone led our chapter as president from 2004-06. Karen selflessly did what was principled and fair, what was urged by the law, and what was demanded by the organization's mission regardless of subject matter or her own personal convictions.

Throughout her tenure on the Board and as President, Karen consistently provided a strong voice of reason, grounded in deep reflection and analysis of relevant law. As President, Karen independently researched issues before the Board, broke down complex issues, invited members to do independent research, and facilitated fair and open discussion. Even when issues had the potential to be divisive or controversial, Karen remained levelheaded and kept the Board focused on the organization's mission. Regardless of personal belief, Karen unwaveringly represented the organization's position to the public.

Even after her service as President, Karen continued to lead in different ways. Rather than leave the organization or take a step back, Karen actively supported the three JACL presidents who succeeded her. Karen flawlessly balanced her duties as Past President by encouraging new leadership and organizational growth while also gently offering advice.

Dedicated Mentor Investing in Hawaii's Communities and Future

Karen's commitment to Hawaii and the next generation is steadfast. Karen lives a life of service to the Bar and to Hawaii through her work at the State Public Defender's Office, and her dedicated service with the Hawaii Women Lawyers, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, and the JACL. In addition to her service, Karen mentors younger advocates and attorneys. In every organization, Karen actively seeks to include new and young members.

At the JACL, she invested in young people's leadership and participation by outreaching to law students. Many of her mentees have served as leaders in our organization, including past president Shawn Benton, current Vice President Liann Ebesugawa, and myself. Karen remains invested in those she mentors; she welcomes questions, guides, and stays involved in their work and lives.

The JACL Honolulu's Board wholeheartedly supports Karen Tooko Nakasone's nomination to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

Sincerely,



Trisha Y. Nakamura, Esq.
President

The Japanese American Citizens League – Honolulu Chapter is a non-profit organization based in Hawaii that works to protect civil and human rights. Chartered in 1980, the JACL has a thirty year legacy of work in Hawaii to promote justice, including supporting redress for Japanese Americans who were unjustly interned. JACL is the nation's oldest and largest Asian Pacific American civil rights organization with over 20,000 members. For more information, visit www.jaclhonolulu.org or email jaclhon@gmail.com.

Testimony in strong support of GM 1
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
August 29, 2011
Hawai'i State Legislature, Room 016

To: Honorable Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair
Honorable Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair
Honorable Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee Members: Sen.
Mike Gabbard, Sen. Les Ihara, Sen. Sam Slom

Testimony submitted by
Faye Kennedy, co-chair Hawaii Friends of Civil Rights
P.O. Box 11946
Honolulu, Hawaii 96828

Measure Title: Karen T. Nakasone, First Circuit Court

I am writing on behalf of the Hawaii Friends of Civil Rights (HFCR). We are very pleased to support Karen Nakasone's nomination to be a Judge with the First Circuit. Ms. Nakasone has excellent training and extensive legal experience. I am grateful for her community service and leadership qualities (e.g. her work with the Access to Justice committee and JACL) and her integrity. I know she will be fair to all parties.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our strong support for Karen Nakasone.

From: [GLBT Caucus Chair](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Subject: GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone - letter in support
Date: Thursday, August 25, 2011 3:10:33 AM
Attachments: [top.letterhead](#)

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To: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair and
Members of the COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

From: Jo-Ann M. Adams
RE: GM1-Karen T. Nakasone, First Circuit Court
Monday, August 29, 2011, 12 noon Position: Support

The Caucus met on Saturday, August 20th and passed a motion that the Caucus will wholeheartedly support the appointment of Karen T. Nakasone. I write as Chair on behalf of the Caucus.

Karen T. Nakasone has been a supporter of the LGBT Caucus's efforts for many years as we worked to pass various bills extending equal treatment under the law to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. Karen is an active member of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL); in fact she is one of Past Presidents of the Honolulu Chapter. The JACL was the first mainstream civil rights organization to endorse same-sex marriage in the 1990s. Karen has been consistent in her support of our causes: she has appeared at press conferences and offered testimony in support of our bills. She actively supports those causes that extend justice and broaden equal protection.

The GLBT Caucus also is an ally of the Hawaii Democratic Women's Caucus, and we support their efforts to get more women appointed to the bench. Women are desperately underrepresented in the Judiciary, and a disproportionate number of men were appointed to the Judiciary under the previous administration. We will need a disproportionate number of women to be appointed to rectify the losses under the previous administration.

Karen Nakasone has a breadth of legal experience that will serve her well as a judge. She has both trial and appellate experience. She brings with her the perspective of serving as a criminal defense lawyer, including more than 15 years as a Deputy Public Defender. She has served as a law clerk to the Honorable Simeon Acoba, Jr. in the Intermediate Court of Appeals and an arbitrator with the Court Annexed Arbitration Program.

August 24, 2011

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
The Honorable Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Conference Room 016
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM #1, Karen T. Nakasone nomination to serve as a First Circuit Court Judge

Aloha Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support of GM #1 for Gubernatorial Nominee, Karen Nakasone to serve as a First Circuit Court Judge.

Karen listens well, not just to the words, but the intentions, perspectives, the environment, and history. As a public defender she has views of fairness and depth, which I believe, will serve Hawaii in a capacity beyond individual rulings. She has a backbone which is straight and a steady temperament. As a community, we are ma'a to the realities that we are finding ourselves and our home in extremely complex situations of conflict and resolution. They truly are multi faceted situations. To make proper and just decisions is to depend on research and observation, decisions must also be bound by the values which are the foundation of our home.

I am grateful for the Governor's appointment of Karen, she will serve us well. I ask for your consideration and support to confirm her to serve on the First Circuit Court of the State of Hawaii.

Please feel free to contact me directly should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Pono Shim
President & CEO
Enterprise Honolulu, Oahu Economic Development Board
808-521-3611
pshim@enterprisehonolulu.com



ENTERPRISE
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THE BUSINESS CLIMATE OF PARADISE

Governor's Message 1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support

TESTIMONY

Hearing Before the: SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR
The Honorable Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L.
Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary
and Labor"

Hearing Date: MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 2011, 12:00 PM
Conference Room 016
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

Regarding: Governor's Message No. 1
**KAREN T. NAKASONE FOR FIRST CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE –
IN SUPPORT**
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of the
First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, KAREN TOOKO
NAKASONE, for a term to expire in ten years.

Chairman Hee, Vice-Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee:

As President of Karen Nakasone's ancestral Okinawan organization, Yagaji Doshi Kai, I am honored to submit this letter of support regarding the appointment of Karen Tooko Nakasone as judge of the First Circuit Court in the State of Hawaii.

As a distant cousin in a large but very close knit family, I have known Karen her entire life. I have watched with pride in all of her academic success at Hawaii Baptist Academy, Bryn Mawr College, and at Boston University's School of Law. I am also in awe of her professional accomplishments which included a clerkship with Hawaii Appeals Court Judge Simeon Acoba and her distinguished career as a deputy public defender.

Another stop along Karen's legal career journey included an internship with the late Congresswoman Patsy Mink. That experience of working in her office, and having direct contact with one of the most fearless, principled, progressive pioneers in Hawaii's history, was one of the formative, defining experiences in her life. That experience contributed to an already formidable integrity that I am confident that Karen will bring to the First Circuit Court.

On a personal level, I have never known Karen to speak ill of anyone nor act in any way to bring dishonor to her family, state, or country. She is all of about what is right and what is fair. She is passionate about our state's laws and our nation's constitution, and I am confident that Karen will serve with honor, integrity, and with a sense to duty to the State of Hawaii.

I applaud you and thank you for the opportunity to support Governor's Message 1, for the appointment of Karen Nakasone for judgeship to Hawaii's First Circuit Court.

Sincerely,

Dale M. Nakasone

President, Yagaji Doshi Kai – a member club of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association

*Roy Catalani
P.O. Box 3288
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801-3288
Telephone No.: (808) 543-9409
E-Mail: rcatalani@htbyb.com*

Testimony of Roy Catalani
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

SENATOR CLAYTON HEE, CHAIR
SENATOR MAILE S.L. SHIMABUKURO, VICE CHAIR

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 1: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, KAREN TOOKO NAKASONE, for a term to expire in ten years

Submitted on August 18, 2011

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message 1 concerning the Governor's nomination of Karen Nakasone to to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii. **I submit this testimony in strong support of Ms. Nakasone's nomination.**

Although Ms. Nakasone is known for her work as a Deputy Public Defender, and in this capacity has demonstrated an important commitment to promoting broader access to justice, I have known her for her work with community organizations and initiation and leadership in community outreach activities on behalf of such organizations as the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (Hawaii Chapter), the Japanese American Citizens League of Hawaii, Honolulu Chapter (most recently as its President) and the Hawaii Women Lawyers (most recently as a Director). Ms. Nakasone's leadership in her professional roles is widely recognized in the community. For example, she was in the 2008 (10th) class of Pacific Century Fellows (which aims to identify, encourage and develop future Island leaders), honored in 2009 as one of the "Best Lawyers Under 40" by the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association and was a panelist at the 2010 Hawaii Access to Justice Conference.

Ms. Nakasone exemplifies the potential and best of our profession in fulfilling our obligation to public service. She has provided and continues to provide leadership by example in providing legal services and voice to those in our community who lack access to justice and by giving of her professional skills to address the problems of the disadvantaged.

For the reasons stated above, I give my unqualified strong support to Ms. Nakasone's nomination and would be proud to see her as a member of the bench.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Governor's Message 1.

From: [Steven Levinson](mailto:Steven_Levinson)
To: [JDI Testimony](#)
Subject: Re: GM1 -- Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge -- In Support
Date: Thursday, August 25, 2011 12:37:42 PM

On Thu, Aug 25, 2011 at 12:34 PM, Steven Levinson <stevenhlevinson@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

I write in strong support of the confirmation of the nomination of Karen T. Nakasone, Esq. to serve as a Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai`i. As an Associate Justice of the Hawai`i Supreme Court from 1992 through 2008, I had the opportunity to read, study, and learn from the many appellate briefs that Karen Nakasone filed with our court on behalf of numerous clients of the Office of the Public Defender and to observe and question her during the several oral arguments that she presented on her clients' behalf as a preliminary aid to our court's decision-making process.

Ms. Nakasone's work product, both written and oral, was scholarly, thoroughly researched, tightly organized, on point, and persuasive and usually resulted in favorable outcomes for her clients. Her characterizations of the trial records with which she dealt were always completely accurate and never overreaching. She was always respectful to and forthcoming with the Court. Her presentations were always clear and coherently organized. She never attempted to unfairly minimize the potential weaknesses of her position, and she always persuasively emphasized the strengths of her position. In my opinion, she is a first-rate attorney and will serve with distinction as a circuit court judge. I believe that the State of Hawai`i will benefit from Ms. Nakasone's service on the circuit court bench, which I am certain will mirror the distinction with which she has practiced law up to this point.

Very truly yours,

Steven H. Levinson
Associate Justice (Retired), Hawai`i Supreme Court
(cell) [808-780-8845](tel:808-780-8845)
stevenhlevinson@gmail.com

--

Steven H. Levinson
cell [808-780-8845](tel:808-780-8845)
stevenhlevinson@gmail.com (Lycos is having problems; please use this gmail address)

--

Steven H. Levinson
cell [808-780-8845](tel:808-780-8845)
stevenhlevinson@gmail.com (Lycos is having problems; please use this gmail

From: [Jim Lyon](#)
To: [JPL Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony for GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge - In Support
Date: Thursday, August 25, 2011 8:57:57 AM

Dear Senators Clayton Hee, Chair, & Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I have personally known Karen for three years and have always found her to be very informed, extremely sharp, and dedicated to her work.

One trait I noticed with her is the integrity with which she carries herself and believe will make a phenomenal Judge.

Hawaii will be fortunate to be able to have Karen as a Judge and I humbly ask for your support in this important position.

Mahalo,

Jim Lyon, P.E., LEED AP
President
Lyon Associates, Inc.
45 N. King Street; Suite 501
Honolulu, HI 96817
ph. 808-536-6621
cl. 808-216-3124
fx. 808-523-1738
www.lyonassociates.com

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**Testimony of Timothy Ho, Chief Deputy Public Defender
State of Hawaii to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor**

August 29, 2011, 12:00 P.m.

RE: GM 1: Nomination of Karen Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit

Chair Hee and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to recommend that Karen Nakasone be confirmed as the next judge of the Circuit Court, First Circuit, State of Hawaii. I have had the opportunity to work closely with Karen as her supervisor in the District Court Section of our office. Karen's intelligence, common sense and proficiency as a trial attorney stood out among her peers. Karen is currently a senior appellate attorney, where her knowledge of Hawaii case law and writing skills has earned her the respect of the legal community.

Karen has excelled outside of our office as well. She has served as a Pacific Century Fellow and as a board member of Hawaii Women Lawyers, Bar Examiners and the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (Hawaii Chapter). Although Karen has been a career public defender, she does have civil experience as an arbitrator with the Court Annexed Arbitration Program. Karen has also taken numerous Continuing Legal Education (CLE) courses that have been offered by the Hawaii State Bar Association for civil practitioners.

Finally, I believe that Karen will balance her knowledge of the law with her life experiences and background to arrive at fair and just decisions. She comes from humble beginnings, as her parents immigrated to Hawaii from Okinawa, and operated a small business until their retirement. I am honored support Karen's nomination to the Circuit Court Bench.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

From: [Gail Nakatani](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Subject: Confirmation of Karen Tooko Nakasone
Date: Friday, August 26, 2011 10:33:25 AM

I submit this testimony in recommendation of the confirmation of Karen Tooko Nakasone as Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit.

I had the distinct please of presiding over criminal cases from 1982-1992 when Ms. Nakasone appeared as a Deputy Public Defender. She was always prepared, diligent, skilled, and professional in her representation of her clients, with a genuine interest in providing the best representation possible. From a judge's perspective, Ms. Nakasone's appearance was always a pleasure because she was efficient, competent, confident, and prepared. She was always courteous and collegial to the court and opposing counsel.

The Judiciary would be fortunate to have a judge of Ms. Nakasone's ability and capability. I recommend her confirmation without any reservations.

From: [Tom Coffman](#)
To: [JDI Testimony](#)
Subject: Attached, also stripped in below
Date: Wednesday, August 24, 2011 2:24:44 PM
Attachments: [GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone](#)

Tom Coffman
Writer/Producer
44-114 Bayview Haven Place
Kane'ohe, Hawai'i 96744

August 24, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee,
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor"

Dear Chairman Clayton Hee and Members of the Committee:

Regarding GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support

Perhaps the fact that I am writing as a member of the Japanese American Citizens' League tells a little of her story. Through Karen, I and my wife attended JAACL events and realized that although ethnic in origin JAACL has become a multiethnic, multicultural and transgender organization. Thanks partly to Karen's leadership, it extracted the essence of her particular ethnic group's struggle with hardship and injustice and translated it to one of universally applicable principles. It is the aloha spirit in motion. She consistently projected a belief in the inherent equality of all.

Karen was always crisp and articulate but democratic and respectful. Her attitude and demeanor will enhance the rule of law that is indispensable to justice in the courts.

Sincerely
Tom Coffman
Writer/Producer

Russell A. Suzuki
94-1190 Noheaiki Street
Waipahu, Hawai'i 96797

August 24, 2011

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Room 002
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and members of the Committee:

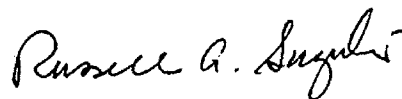
Re: GMI, Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Judge – In Support

I would like to take this opportunity to support the confirmation of Karen Nakasone to the first circuit court.

I have known Karen since the early nineteen nineties when she clerked with the Administration Division of the Attorney General's office. I had the opportunity to review her legal research and writing skills and interact with her in one-to-one and group situations. Karen stood out as intelligent, confident, and clearly someone who showed a love and respect for Hawai'i and its culture. I know of Karen's dedication to public service by her many years with the Public Defender's office. I believe that Karen will use the insights that she gained representing the indigent and interpret and apply the law with fairness and compassion. I know Karen to be a person of the highest ethical standards.

Thank you for allowing me this moment to tell you about Karen Nakasone.

Very truly yours,



Russell A. Suzuki

HAWK SING IGNACIO WATERS
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

1130 N. Nimitz Hwy., Ste. B-299
Honolulu HI 96817
t (808) 532-3800
f (808) 532-3804

August 26, 2011

Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Room 016
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Confirmation of Karen Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First
Circuit, August 29, 2011 at 12:00 p.m.

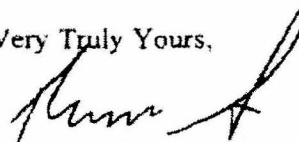
Dear Chairmen Hee and Members of the Committee:

Please accept this letter as an expression of the unconditional support of our law firm in the confirmation of Ms. Karen Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. Our firm concentrates in the defense of those accused of crimes. For the past 8 years we have worked with Ms. Nakasone in her capacity as a Deputy Public Defender.

We have found Ms. Nakasone to be a fair, diligent, and tremendously talented advocate. We believe her to be an attorney of the highest caliber with sound judgment that will serve her and our community well on the bench. After many years of working in the criminal justice system with Ms. Nakasone, it is our collective personal and professional opinion that she is a person of uncompromising integrity and scrupulous honesty.

We unconditionally support this nomination and look forward to seeing Ms. Nakasone on the bench. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at 532-3800.

Very Truly Yours,



Richard Sing
Managing Partner

MARR JONES & WANG

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

Labor and Employment Law

August 25, 2011

Via Email: JDLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Chairman Sen. Clayton Hee
Vice Chairman Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St., Room 407
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support
Hearing Date: August 29, 2011
Hearing Time: 12:00 p.m.

Dear Senators Hee and Shimabukuro:

Please consider this letter my testimony in support of Karen T. Nakasone's confirmation as a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

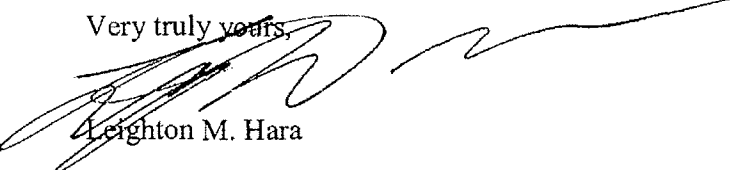
I have been a licensed attorney since 2002 and worked in private practice as an attorney specializing in litigation. Since 2009, my practice has focused almost exclusively on employment litigation with the Marr Jones & Wang law firm. For the past several years, I have had the pleasure of serving with Ms. Nakasone as a member of various community organizations and clubs, including the Hawaii Supreme Court Board of Bar Examiners and as a member of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association ("NAPABA"). As a member of the Board of Bar Examiners, I was fortunate enough to participate in several grading sessions with Ms. Nakasone where she demonstrated her expertise in criminal law and procedure. As a member of NAPABA, I attended several functions which Ms. Nakasone helped to organize, where various community members were honored for their roles in assisting the Asian and Pacific American communities in Hawaii.

Ms. Nakasone has always been hard working, fair, civic minded, and compassionate. As a senior deputy public defender, Ms. Nakasone has spent her career assisting people who could not afford legal representation. She has also tried numerous jury trials to verdict and has successfully argued before Hawaii's appellate courts. Ms. Nakasone's experience, personality, and demeanor will serve the public well and are qualities which will make for an excellent Judge.

Chairman Sen. Clayton Hee
Vice Chairman Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
August 25, 2011
Page 2

It is with great pleasure that I submit this testimony in support of Ms. Nakasone. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,



Leighton M. Hara

August 23, 2011

To: The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

From: Scott Nakasone

Subject: GM 1 - Consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii,
Gubernatorial Nominee, KAREN TOOKO NAKASONE

Position: In strong support

I am writing in strong support for the consideration and confirmation of Karen Tooko Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii. Karen is my cousin, is passionate on the subject of law and its application, on doing what is right and fair for all people, and being an active and contributing member in the community. I am confident with Karen presiding over the court that the people of the State of Hawaii will receive a proper and fair court proceeding and ruling, and receive the level of commitment to service that this legislature, and the general public, believes comes with such an honorable appointment.

Testimony in strong support of GM 1
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
August 29, 2011
Hawai'i State Legislature, Room 016

To: Honorable Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair
Honorable Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair
Honorable Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee Members: Sen.
Mike Gabbard, Sen. Les Ihara, Sen. Sam Slom

From: Amy Agbayani, Hawaii Women's Political Caucus (HWPC)
Measure Title: Karen T. Nakasone, First Circuit Court

My name is Amy Agbayani, I am submitting testimony on behalf of Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus, in strong support of Karen T. Nakasone to the First Circuit Court. HWPC is committed to supporting qualified women to elected and appointed public offices.

Over the years, Karen Nakasone has demonstrated her legal competence and her deep appreciation of the history of our state. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her leadership and service to our community. We are confident that she will continue to articulate and decide critical issues fairly.

Amy Agbayani

3432 B-1 Kalihi St.

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819

From: [Marcia Wong](#)
To: [JD Testimony](#)
Subject: GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge -In Support
Date: Wednesday, August 24, 2011 1:56:00 PM

To: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: GM1 Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge -In Support

Hearing Date: Monday, August 29, 2011, at 12:00 pm in Conference Room 016

I am writing to express my heartfelt support for Karen T. Nakasone's appointment to the judicial vacancy on the First Circuit Court. I have known Karen for approximately a number of years, primarily during her tenure as Board President of the Japanese American Citizens League, Honolulu (JACL).

Karen is an outstanding administrator and demonstrates an ability to think deeply and nuance-fully while considering the context in which any given issue exists. She consistently maintains allegiance to the mission of the organization and leads with unerring integrity and objectivity as well as with intellectual passion. I admire her composure, quick grasp of issues and ability to convey information concisely and lucidly. During Karen's presidency the board was able to accomplish much due to her diligence and decisiveness.

I found Karen to be a wise and collaborative leader who guided by facilitation rather than by imposition. She will be a superb judge and I recommend her highly.

Currently I serve as Affiliate Graduate Faculty for the University of Hawai`i, Manoa's Department of Theatre and Dance. I have previously served for over ten years on the Board of the Hawai`i Arts Alliance, and as a volunteer mediator with the Mediation Center of the Pacific.

Sincerely,
Marcia Sakamoto Wong
531-2522

From: jadamsesq@aol.com
To: [JD Testimony](#)
Subject: GM1 - In Support of Karen T. Nakasone for appointment to First Circuit Court
Date: Thursday, August 25, 2011 2:41:36 AM

To: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair and
Members of the COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND LABOR

From: Jo-Ann M. Adams
RE: GM1-Karen T. Nakasone, First Circuit Court
Monday, August 29, 2011, 12 noon Position: Support

I write this letter as an individual, not in any official capacity. I have known Karen T. Nakasone for many years while working on various civil rights causes. I met her because she was an active member of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL); in fact she is one of Past Presidents of the Honolulu Chapter. The JACL was the first mainstream civil rights organization to endorse same-sex marriage in the 1990s.

I am delighted that the Governor has appointed someone from the Public Defender's Office. There is an overwhelming bias to appoint prosecutors to the judiciary. It is nice to have appointment that will provide the bench with the perspective and experience of a defender. She has litigated at both the trial and appellate level as well as clerked for a judge. All of this experience makes her a well-rounded candidate.

Since much of what a judge does in the courtroom is enforce the Evidence Code, I think it is important to appoint persons with litigation experience so they can control the evidence being admitted.

Since settlement is such a part of litigation, it is important to have someone with mediation/arbitration skills. Karen has served as a CAAP arbitrator. Her s temperament and even-handedness will serve her well.

Karen is a woman of incredible personal integrity and conviction. Karen replaces Justice McKenna, and we need more women on the bench. Women are desperately underrepresented in the Judiciary, and we suffered great losses under the previous administration.

I wholeheartedly endorse Karen T. Nakasone to the First Circuit Court and ask that you confirm her nomination.

Jo-Ann M. Adams, Esq.
LAW OFFICES OF JO-ANN M. ADAMS, LLLC
Seven Waterfront Plaza, Suite 400 Honolulu, Hawaii
Mailing Address: PO BOX 75472, Honolulu, HI 96836
Telephone: (808) 528-2100 Fax: (866) 370-0259

Karen Nakasone serves on the boards of Hawaii Women Lawyers, the Board of Bar Examiners and the Hawai'i Chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA). She was recognized by the national NAPABA as one of its 2009 Best Lawyers Under 40, and was a 2008 Pacific Century Fellow.

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Caucus supports the confirmation of Karen T. Nakasone to the First Circuit Court.

Aloha,

Jo-Ann Adams, Chair

GLBT Caucus of the
Democratic Party of Hawaii

From: [Hornfeck, Lane](#)
To: [JD Testimony](#)
Subject: GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge - In Support
Date: Wednesday, August 24, 2011 7:52:51 AM

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Conference Room 016
State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senators:

I am respectfully writing in support of the judicial nomination and confirmation of Karen T. Nakasone as a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit of the State of Hawaii.

I am a former litigation partner with the local law firm of Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher, and a former board member of Hawaii Women Lawyers and Chair of HWL's Judicial Equity Committee.

While serving on the HWL board with Ms. Nakasone for several years, I got to know her very well. In my experience and time working with Ms. Nakasone, she has devoted a significant amount of her time to projects that help the Hawaii community in general and the legal community specifically. She has always acted with wisdom and grace and handled very challenging issues and people in a dignified and respectful manner. While I have not had the opportunity to work with her (as I have not practiced criminal law), she quickly gained my respect for her smart and practical way of handling issues on the board.

Ms. Nakasone is also a devoted mother and supportive friend to others. Her intelligence, practicality and compassion will serve her and the Hawaii community very well on the Circuit Court. In my opinion, she will be a truly great addition to the bench. Please vote to confirm her nomination.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Best Regards,

Lane Hornfeck
Vice President & General Counsel
American Mechanical Services
13300 Mid Atlantic Blvd.
Laurel, MD 20708
Phone: 301.206.5070
Cell: 240.565.2220
Email: lhornfeck@amsosusa.com
Fax: 240.965.1066

**Testimony of John M. Tonaki,
State Public Defender to the Senate Committee on Judiciary
and Labor**

August 29, 2011

GM1: Nomination of Karen T. Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit

Chair Hee and Committee Members:

It is a privilege for me to support Karen T. Nakasone's nomination to be a judge in the First Circuit Court. She is an exceptional nominee who has demonstrated her qualities as a leader both in the community and among her colleagues in the legal profession. Karen has served as a Deputy Public Defender since 1996. During this period, she has distinguished herself by trying cases of a complex and difficult nature in both the trial courts as well as the appeals courts. She has argued cases before juries as well as before the Hawaii Supreme Court and the Hawaii Intermediate Court of Appeals.

Karen has shown exceptional compassion for the indigent clients we serve and has been a tireless advocate for justice on behalf of every person she has represented. She is always well-prepared and extensively researches every legal argument before it is presented in court. She is forceful and passionate in her courtroom presentations and is a talented litigator.

Karen has also been a community leader as shown by her active participation in the Japanese Americans Citizens League (JACL), the Hawaii Women Lawyers and a number of other organizations. She serves as an examiner on the Hawaii Supreme Court's Board of Bar Examiners. Her leadership qualities are proven by her service as Director, Vice-President and President of the JACL. She has exhibited a "take-charge" attitude by taking the initiative in important issues in our office. For example, Karen was one of the driving forces in resurrecting weekly "brainstorming" sessions. These sessions contribute tremendously to the over-all quality of our office's representation.

Another example of her resolve is her willingness to volunteer for difficult and time-consuming assignments, that nonetheless, impact our criminal justice laws on every level. For example, Karen argued and briefed a number of cases which led to recent important Hawai'i Supreme Court decisions, including State v. Hinton (March 2009) (reinforcing the authority of trial judges); State v. Maugaotega (October 2007) (requiring extended term sentencing to be determined by juries); and State v. Maainaupo (March 2008) (requiring courts to instruct juries on a mistake-of-fact defense in auto theft cases when evidence warranting such instruction was produced). These cases will be studied by law students in their criminal justice classes, and cited by attorneys and judges for years to come.

Karen was raised by parents who come from humble backgrounds. Her mother emigrated from Japan and her father was born and raised on a Kauai plantation. They instilled in her the qualities of perseverance and hard work from a very young age as the family struggled to successfully run a small retail business in downtown Honolulu. Karen spent many hours of her childhood and adolescent years assisting in the family

business and continued to help out in this way on weekends and in the evenings even after beginning her career as a public defender. In Karen Nakasone, the judiciary will be receiving a very fine lawyer and an outstanding person. I am honored to fully support her nomination.

Support of retired judge Marie Milks

On August 24, 2011, I was contacted by retired circuit judge Marie Milks who was traveling on the East Coast of the United States. She informed me that she knew about Karen Nakasone's confirmation hearing but did not have easy access to email. She asked me to convey to the Senate Judiciary committee her full support of the nominee and to express her opinion that Ms. Nakasone will be an excellent circuit court judge.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this matter.

WILLIAM D. HOSHIJO
Email Bhoshijo@aol.com

August 29, 2011
Rm. 016, 12:00 p.m.

To: The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

From: William D. Hoshijo

Re: GM1, Judicial Nominee Karen T. Nakasone

This testimony is offered in support of judicial nominee Karen T. Nakasone. Ms. Nakasone is an emerging leader who has the qualities needed to be a good judge. She is bright, courageous, and committed to justice. She is hard working and diligent, and steps forward when there are things to be done. She will make a fine judge, much to the benefit of the legal profession and the broader community.

I have served as the Executive Director of the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) since 1997, but submit this letter of support as an individual rather than in any official capacity. Prior to my tenure at the HCRC, I served for thirteen years as the Executive Director of Na Loio, a nonprofit public interest law organization that provided access to services and representation for the immigrant poor.

I have known Ms. Nakasone since the mid-1990s. In her tenure at the Office of the Public Defender, she has extensive trial experience in both jury and bench trials, as well as appellate advocacy, the kind of litigation experience that should be a prerequisite for appointment to the bench. She does good legal work and is a strong and effective writer and advocate.

Ms. Nakasone's record of accomplishment, community service and advocacy as an officer of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) Honolulu Chapter over the past decade is extraordinary. She is a leader who exhibits principled commitment and courage, speaking out for justice for even unpopular minorities. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of her leadership is that she does so much more than just speak out. Ms. Nakasone is a hard worker who has consistently stepped forward to organize and plan the real work of the JACL – the kind of leader who gets things done. As a circuit court judge, she will no doubt contribute to efforts to improve the judiciary, carrying her own load and then more.

I support Karen T. Nakasone's nomination to be a circuit court judge.

Thank you for your consideration.

August 26, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair

Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support

This letter is to recommend Karen T. Nakasone, Esq. to you for the position of First Circuit Court Judge, without reservations. I have known Ms. Nakasone for over 15 years on a professional and personal basis throughout her legal career. My particular knowledge of Ms. Nakasone is of her character and temperament that is foundational for judgeship. Because of the person that she is, it is my belief that Ms. Nakasone will greatly enhance the standing of the Judiciary and legal profession in Hawaii.

Ms. Nakasone is first and foremost, a person of integrity, in her personal as well as her professional life. She is guided by a clear sense of justice, fairness, and rigorous application of the law. She brings a passion about the law, yet is necessarily dispassionate and clear-headed in sorting through complex and emotion laden situations. I have observed time and again her measured and deeply thoughtful approach to problem solving over the years, and her calmness in the face of intensity around her. Her grounding in family, community and friends will lend a healthy and stable outlook to her work.

I recommend her highly.

Sincerely,

Josephine L. Chang, Esq., Retired

305 Moomuku Pl.

Honolulu, HI 96821

(808) 383-2111

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawai'i State Legislature
JDCTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

August 24, 2011

Re: Letter in Support
GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge

Dear Senator Hee and Senator Shimabukuro:

I am writing to give First Circuit Court Judge nominee Karen T. Nakasone a truly outstanding recommendation and most strongly urge her confirmation.

Over the last dozen years I have worked closely with Karen Nakasone. I am a professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law specializing in civil and human rights justice issues. In her capacity as a Public Defender I have consulted with Ms. Nakasone on pending legislation and court procedures. In her capacity as part of the leadership of the Japanese American Citizens League – Honolulu Chapter (including past President), I have worked with her on the Chapter's participation as amici in several amicus briefs to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (including the Kamehameha School's admissions policy case) and to the United States Supreme Court (including the recent Office of Hawaiian Affairs ceded lands appeal).

Through these interactions I have come to appreciate Ms. Nakasone as a person of powerful intellect, excellent judgment (especially in handling difficult issues) and great integrity. As a lawyer, she productively advanced her clients' interests in an ethical, forthright manner – constantly working to assure that the system of justice functions fairly for all. As a leader of a community organization, she demonstrated tremendous insight and administrative skill. In a way that engenders respect, she carefully assesses and then guides the situation at hand. She is an excellent writer who is able to conceptualize difficult issues and to communicate lucidly and cogently. Perhaps most important, because of her insight, low-key patience and ability to listen, bolstered by assertiveness when it matters, she has the perfect temperament for leading an organization – and for the bench.

For all of these reasons, I am certain that Ms. Nakasone will be a truly outstanding jurist. I most strongly urge her confirmation.

Sincerely,

Eric K. Yamamoto
Professor of Law
William S. Richardson School of Law
eric@hawaii.edu

The Law Office of
JACK SCHWEIGERT
A Professional Law Corporation

550 Halekauwila Street, Room 309
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
jackschweigert@hotmail.com

Phone: (808) 533-7491
Fax: (808) 533-7490
www.JackSchweigert.com

August 24, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

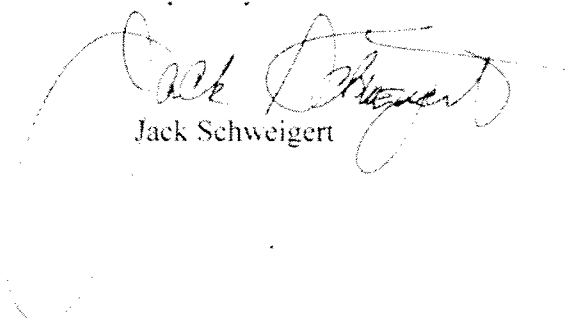
DATE: Monday 8/29/2011
TIME: 12:00 p.m.
PLACE: State Capitol Conference room 016

Dear Chairman Hee and Committee Members:

I give judicial nominee for the First Circuit Court, Ms. Karen Nakasone, top marks in both integrity and smarts. For example, in State v. Maugaotega, 115 Haw.432 (2007), Ms. Nakasone was able to have Hawaii's law regarding extended terms of imprisonment found unconstitutional. Further in Alston v Read, 678 F.Supp.2d 1061,1072n8 (D. Haw.2010), she is mentioned as gaining the release of an inmate named Alston who had been wrongfully kept in jail 157 days past his maximum term.

It has been my experience in dealing with Ms. Nakasone on a professional level that she is truly the right person for the job.

Very Truly Yours.


Jack Schweigert

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

College of Arts and Humanities
Department of American Studies

August 24, 2011

TO: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

RE: GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support

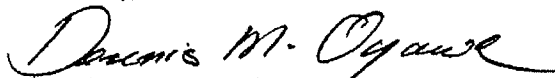
I want to write this letter to support Karen Nakasone. For over 42 years I have been a professor at the University of Hawaii and have been fortunate to work with many students. Ms. Nakasone stands out as among the top 5% of all students who have enrolled in my American Studies courses.

Ms. Nakasone is intelligent and works hard to gain a command of the subject matter. She consistently wrote papers of high quality and in discussions with fellow classmates and with me during my office hours demonstrated a keen ability to synthesize complex issues into well supported, coherent arguments.

Above all, what caught my attention was when she made her remarks, her demeanor was always sincere and her thoughts respectfully conveyed. Moreover, though serious and inquiring, she always made an effort to listen first.

Without reservation, I support Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge. She will be a genuine asset to our judiciary system.

Sincerely,



Dennis M. Ogawa, Ph.D.

Professor

American Studies Department

Jennifer D.K. Ng, Esq.
c/o 1130 North Nimitz Highway Suite A-254
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

August 25, 2011

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 016
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815
via email JDLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

**Re: GM 1
KAREN TOOKO NAKASONE, Gubernatorial Nominee for the Circuit Court
of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii
Confirmation Hearing on Monday, August 29, 2011 at 12:00 PM**

Dear Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of KAREN TOOKO NAKASONE'S nomination for judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I have known Ms. Nakasone as a colleague at the Office of the Public Defender, State of Hawaii since 2001. I can say with all confidence that Ms. Nakasone has the intellect, character, and temperament necessary to be a valuable member of the bench.

As an attorney, Ms. Nakasone is the consummate professional. She is hard working and dedicated to defending the rights of indigent defendants. While at the Office of the Public Defender, Ms. Nakasone has excelled not only in the courtroom but also in authoring complicated legal memoranda submitted for review by the appellate courts.

Ms. Nakasone is someone whose character is beyond reproach. Ms. Nakasone actively participates in many extra-curricular activities because she firmly believes in giving back to her community. Further, Ms. Nakasone (along with her husband) works to instill her twin daughters with the strong values and morals that she herself exhibits.

As an attorney that has appeared in court often, I believe that it is critical for a judge to be respect to all who appear before them, regardless of their socio-economic status or what crime they are alleged to have committed. I am certain that Ms. Nakasone can be trusted with the burdensome obligation to handle all litigants from our community with the proper balance of respect, compassion and adherence to the law.

It is without reservation or hesitation that I offer this letter in support of Ms. Nakasone's nomination for judge of the First Circuit Court. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely yours,
/s/
Jennifer D.K. Ng, Esq.

cc: Karen Tooko Nakasone, Esq.

Catherine Souza
c/o Office of Public Defender
1130 N. Nimitz Hwy. Ste. A-254
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

August 24, 2011

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

RE: Gubernatorial Nominee, Karen Tooko Nakasone

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of Ms. Nakasone's nomination. I have known her for over ten years on a professional and personal level. Ms. Nakasone is intelligent, creative, caring, responsible, hard-working, resourceful, engaging, and personable. Having worked with her, I know she is proficient in bringing people together and solving problems. I am confident that she will fulfill her role as a judge with the highest level of commitment and professionalism.

I strongly support Ms. Nakasone's judicial nomination. She will be a great asset to the judiciary.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Souza

The Honorable Clayton Hee
Chairman, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge

IN SUPPORT

Aloha Senators,

My name is Barbara J. Tanabe, a resident of Hawaii since 1974, owner of a public affairs company and volunteer with numerous community organizations in Hawaii.

I have known Karen Nakasone for nearly 10 years, but had heard about her commitment and dedication to social justice for several years before we met.

As a former member of the American Judicature Society Hawaii Chapter Special Committee on Public Knowledge and Understanding of the American Judicial System, I am acutely aware of the need to improve access to the courts. The cutback of civic studies in our public schools, and the recent debate on efforts to drop social studies as a requirement for graduation, highlight the lack of resources to improve acceptance of our civic responsibilities. This results in low voter turnout at important elections, and the passivity of the public to participate in discussion to resolve critical issues affecting our society.

These times require individuals in the judiciary with experience and knowledge of programs to serve all members of our society, not just those with the ability or resources to pursue a particular agenda.

Karen's professional experience, through her work in the Office of the Public Defender, and her involvement with organizations such as the Japanese-American Citizens League, demonstrates a commitment to serve the greater public.

We need judges who understand the law and the way it affects people. I hope you will support Karen Nakasone's nomination to the Circuit Court.

Aloha,

Barbara J. Tanabe
Submitted August 26, 2011
Be email to JDLTestimony@Capitaol.hawaii.gov

Business address:
500 Ala Moana Boulevard #7-400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: 543-8377

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OUR REFERENCE NO.:
000901-00030

August 26, 2011

VIA EMAIL JDLTESTIMONY@CAPITOL.HAWAII.GOV

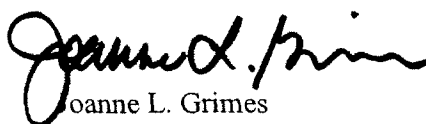
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge - In Support

Dear Senators Hee and Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

This letter is written in strong support for the appointment of Karen Nakasone to the First Circuit Court. I am a past-president of Hawaii Women Lawyers (HWL), and have known Ms. Nakasone since she joined the HWL Board of Directors. As a Director and member, she is an active and involved participant in HWL's activities and a strong promoter of HWL's mission. Ms. Nakasone has an impressive history of involvement in community and civic affairs, in addition to her legal experience as a State of Hawaii public defender since 1996. Among her many accomplishments, Ms. Nakasone is a Pacific Century Fellow and former President of the Japanese American Citizens League Honolulu Chapter. She received The Best Lawyers Under 40 Award from the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA). NAPABA recognizes talented individuals in the Asian Pacific American legal community who are under age 40 and have achieved prominence and distinction in their respective fields while demonstrating a strong commitment to the community. In addition to Ms. Nakasone's professional capabilities, our State would benefit greatly from the special qualities that women bring to public service positions. In the First Circuit, the proportion of women jurists remains disproportionately and disappointingly low. The current vacancy provides an appropriate opportunity to address this disparity. I urge you to favorably consider the appointment of Karen Nakasone to fill the vacancy on the First Circuit Court.

Very truly yours,


Joanne L. Grimes

HONOLULU

HILO

KONA

MAUI

GUAM

SAIPAN

LOS ANGELES

TESTIMONY
RELATING TO CONFIRMATION OF KAREN T. NAKASONE
AS JUDGE OF FIRST CIRCUIT COURT

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chairman
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Monday, August 29, 2011, Noon
Hawaii State Capital, Room 016

Chairman Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Committee Members:

This testimony is being provided in full support of nominee Karen T. Nakasone for the judgeship for the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I am currently the Division Administrator of the Intake Service Center with the Department of Public Safety but worked for the Hawaii Paroling Authority for over twenty years prior to my present position. I first met Ms. Nakasone when she began her career as a deputy with the Office of the Public Defender and was assigned to represent inmates/parolees before the Hawaii Paroling Authority. Even as a rookie deputy, she provided sound legal representation for her clients and was not afraid to tackle adversarial issues if she had reason to believe that her client's rights may have been compromised.

While I am no longer employed with the Hawaii Paroling Authority, the agency was required to make changes to practices due to Ms. Nakasone's diligence and knowledge of the law. It is my belief that the agency benefited from legal encounters with Ms. Nakasone and was able to apply these encounters in establishing better policies, procedures and practices.

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony and request that you support the nomination of Ms. Nakasone.

Sincerely,

Max Otani

Connie Y. Chang
1288 Kapiolani Blvd. #3701
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

August 26, 2011

State of Hawai'i Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge - In Support

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

I write to voice my support for Karen Tooko Nakasone to serve as Judge of the State of Hawai'i First Circuit Court.

I have known Ms. Nakasone for more than 20 years. We met in high school and we both became lawyers. Therefore, it is not only as a longtime friend, but as an attorney, that I enthusiastically endorse Ms. Nakasone.

In my 11 years practicing law at a national law firm, two Fortune 200 companies on the mainland, and most recently at Hawaiian Electric Industries, Inc., I have had the opportunity to work with some of the most highly regarded attorneys in Hawaii and the nation.

Based on this experience and my personal knowledge of Ms. Nakasone, here are some of the traits that I believe would make Ms. Nakasone an excellent judge:

- Integrity and diligence - In my two decades of knowing Ms. Nakasone, I have never encountered any situation where I felt she was not acting with the utmost integrity. Ms. Nakasone has also always been one of the most consistently hard-working people I know, ever since high school. I believe this reliably tireless work ethic stems, first and foremost, from the value of hard work that has been instilled in her by participating in the success of her family's small business, where the fruits of her family's labor directly correlated to her future opportunities. Ms. Nakasone's unflinching work ethic also stems from her genuine interest in the law, even during non-working hours, when I know she has chosen in numerous instances to spend her "free" time keeping up with the most recent court cases.
- Legal knowledge and ability - I believe Ms. Nakasone has the academic training, trial experience, strong writing and public speaking skills, and personal presence to be an effective judge.
- Public service - Ms. Nakasone has steadfastly chosen to devote her career to government work. I believe this demonstrates her commitment to public service.

I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have about Ms. Nakasone.

Very truly yours,


Connie Chang

From: [Craig Jerome](#)
To: [JDJ Testimony](#)
Subject: RE: Nomination of Karen Tooko Nakasone, Monday, August 29, 2011, 12:00 p.m.
Date: Friday, August 26, 2011 9:53:19 AM

Aloha Committee Members:

I am writing to express my strongest support for the nomination of Karen Tooko Nakasone. I have become familiar with Ms. Nakasone through my employment at the Office of the Public Defender and through various community organizations.

Throughout the time I have known her, I have seen Ms. Nakasone employ the highest standards of diligence, professionalism, and conscientiousness as an attorney and community leader. She has worked tirelessly for the benefit of her clients and the people of Hawai'i. I recommend her confirmation wholeheartedly and without reservation. I am certain that she will be an exceptional member of the judiciary of the State of Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Craig W. Jerome
1424 Ward Avenue #303
Honolulu, HI 96822

1130 N. Nimitz Hwy., Suite A-254
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

August 26, 2011

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol, Room 407
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: August 29, 2011 Hearing on Gubernatorial Nominee Karen T. Nakasone
for position of Judge of the First Circuit Court

Honorable Committee Members:

I write in wholehearted support of nominee Karen T. Nakasone as a Judge of the First Circuit Court. I chose to submit testimony to assist informing those who may not know her well, particularly the civil bar. I met Karen when she joined the public defender's office in 1996 and came to know her as she worked her way up, handling misdemeanor and later felony cases. She garnered a well-deserved reputation for being extremely well-prepared, due in part to her ability to foresee potentially problematic evidentiary issues, to research the applicable law, and then formulate a cogent argument with respect to the issue. Since 2004, she has been my colleague in our appellate section; as one of five senior appellate attorneys, we clearly know each other well, as we interact daily.

Karen has a very strong work ethic. She has no problem spending the time and energy to research an area or issue until she is confident that she understands "the lay of the land." I am confident that this diligence will serve her well in familiarizing herself with civil law and procedure in order to make well-reasoned decisions. For example, she has made it her practice for at least the last few years to read every case, civil and criminal, issued by the appellate courts.

Her strong legal research skills, together with her writing abilities, have made her an excellent appellate attorney whose contributions will be sorely missed by our office, should her nomination be confirmed. Although she has enjoyed her tenure in appeals, I believe Karen has missed being in the courtroom, which challenges participants to think on their feet. I am certain that she is ready for that challenge in the role of a judge, rather than an advocate.

As to judicial temperament, I have no doubt that Karen will treat all parties and colleagues respectfully. She and I have had numerous discussions over the years

Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: August 29, 2011 Hearing on Karen T. Nakasone for Judge
of the First Circuit Court

Page Two

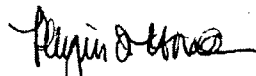
about the attitudes of and comments by judges, attorneys, witnesses and defendants, both good and bad, respectful and disrespectful, proper and improper, as well as the gray areas in between. We have also discussed the effects of courtroom behavior on jurors, family and friends of the participants, and the general public. Karen has always been extremely proper with respect to ethics and professional conduct. I have no doubt that she will maintain her professionalism both on and off the Bench. That professionalism, together with her integrity, will undoubtedly take precedence in her rulings; I have no hesitation in dismissing any concerns that her background as a public defender would make her more sympathetic to the defense in a criminal case.

Karen is also practical. She will not take reckless short cuts, but will look for ways to do something more efficiently without compromising the end result. These traits again speak to her integrity. She is an honest person, of good moral character, who would, without doubt, be an asset to the Judiciary.

Karen has also been a model of public service over the years, including being a Bar examination grader for several years and volunteering as a mock trial judge for law students. She has been extremely involved with the Japanese American Citizens' League, including a term as president. She also participated in the exclusive Pacific Century Fellows program in 2008. She enjoys a fully-involved life and is able to organize and prioritize well, as she seamlessly incorporates her extensive volunteer activities with her work life and her home life (husband Roman Amaguin, Esq. and well-rounded twin girls, Abbie and Ellie.)

Thank you for considering my comments in your decision.

Sincerely,



Phyllis J. Hironaka, Esq.

From: [Nancy Tolentino](#)
To: [JDL Testimony](#)
Subject: RE: GM1 Karen Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge - In Support, August 29, 2011, 12:00 PM
Date: Wednesday, August 24, 2011 6:16:50 PM

RE: GM1 Karen Nakasone For First Circuit Court Judge - In Support, August 29, 2011, 12:00 PM hearing

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

I am writing in support of Karen T. Nakasone, who is a Nominee for judgeship. Karen is my older sister, and was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. We both grew up in a two parent household along with our paternal grandparents who helped raised both of us. In an effort to provide for both of her daughters, my mother, an immigrant from Okinawa, decided to open a florist. Through her preteen, teenage, and early college years, Karen worked daily after school at the shop, and eventually managed the shop. As I grew up, I took over those tasks as Karen went on to mainland college and law school. We kept the family business open 364 days a year; our mother only closed the shop doors on New Year's Day. Our parents ingrained in us a strong work ethic, which I feel has shaped both of us in our career paths. It was because of our parents' sacrifice that we were able to achieve and succeed in our lives. Much of Karen's, and my personal and professional successes are due to our parents' and grandparents' sacrifices, teachings, and values.

Karen presently works as a Public Defender. I have a social work background and worked in Family Court for 10 years. For the past two years, I've been employed as a probation officer. We are both proud to work for the Judiciary and feel that the work that we do is fulfilling and serves an important role in our community. We chose these careers because we want to serve others, especially those who may not be able to advocate for themselves.

Karen will serve the judicial system well, with integrity, honesty, and fairness. She works hard, and possesses the skills, knowledge, and tenacity to serve as a judge.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nancy Nakasone Tolentino

Salina Kanai Althof
c/o Office of the Federal Defender
300 Ala Moana Boulevard
Suite 7104
Honolulu, HI 96850

August 24, 2011

via email: JDLTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and Members,
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

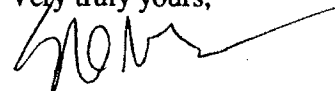
I write this letter in strong support of Karen T. Nakasone for consideration and confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai'i.

I first met Karen ten years ago, when I was a law student interning at the Office of the Public Defender. At that time, she was already a seasoned trial attorney, and I was fortunate enough to work on one of her cases that was on appeal. Several years later, I joined the office as a Deputy Public Defender and was privileged to work with Karen as a colleague. By that time, Karen was an attorney in the appellate section of the Public Defender's. As our offices were located right next to each other, I was able to frequently seek out her advice and expertise on my own cases. I was always impressed by Karen's knowledge of the law, her even temperament, and her ability to hone in on and cleanly analyze legal issues.

I have no doubt that Karen has the background, the legal skills, and the temperament needed to be an excellent judge. Should she become a judge, it would be a great loss to the Office of the Public Defender, but a huge gain for the judiciary and the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Salina Kanai Althof

To: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Re: GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge-In Support
August 29, 2011
12:00 p.m. Conference room 016
State Capitol

My name is Dane Oda and as a former Hawai'i Paroling Authority Board member from August 2003 to June 2010 (a period of seven years), I have had the opportunity to observe and interact with Ms. Nakasone in her capacity as a public defender. She is well-versed in courtroom proceedings and is very cognizant of the law and its ramifications as it applies to her clients.

As a public defender, she fully understood the duties and obligations she had towards her clients and was also aware that her clients' actions had a detrimental impact on their victims. She worked diligently to ensure there was a balance between protection of her clients' rights and the safety and general welfare of the larger public community.

I am confident that Ms. Nakasone will fulfill her duties as a First Circuit Court Judge in a professional manner and will preserve the tenets of the land. She will be an asset to the State of Hawai'i's judicial system

Mahalo for considering Karen T. Nakasone for the First Circuit Court Judge position.

Dane K. Oda
PO Box 3053
Lihue, HI 96766-6053

August 24, 2011

TO: The Honorable Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
The Honorable Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

RE: GM1 - Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – in support

Dear Senate Committee members:

I am writing in support of Ms. Karen Nakasone who is being considered for the position as a First Circuit Court judge.

My family has been very close neighbor with the Nakasones in the early 1970's. I have known Ms. Nakasone since her grade school days.

Ms. Nakasone is most diligent and honest, and very focused in her endeavors. For several years, she trained in Kendo at the Kenshikan Kendo Club at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii (previously at the Young Buddhist Association Dojo). Kendo is a traditional Japanese art of self-discipline through mastery of sword fighting; students learn honesty, integrity, and courage through Kendo. She endured the extremely rigorous training until she was able to earn the black belt rank, which is not easily accomplished.

My colleagues in Kendo who are also in the legal profession often comment on her outstanding professional integrity. I have no doubt that Ms. Nakasone will be an excellent judge.

I am very happy to support Ms. Karen Nakasone for this honorable position of judge in the First Circuit Court.

Sincerely,



Dick Y. Teshima, MPH, MT(ASCP)
Associate Professor and Chair
University of Hawaii at Manoa
John A. Burns School of Medicine
Department of Medical Technology
1960 East-West Road, Biomed C206
Honolulu, HI 96822
dick@hawaii.edu

Via Email JDLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

August 25, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Committee Members:

Re: Recommendation of Karen T. Nakasone to the Circuit Court of the
First Circuit

My name is Wendy Lee and I am writing this letter to support the nomination of Karen T. Nakasone for judgeship. I sincerely believe that Karen will be an excellent judge.

First of all, a little bit about myself so you can evaluate my recommendation. I am 57 years old, born and raised on Oahu. I graduated from Kaimuki High School and attended college for 3 years. My mother is from the Honolulu. My father is deceased, but was born and raised on Oahu. He was a 442 veteran. My mother has since remarried and her current husband is also a 442 veteran. I have two sisters, one is a retired teacher from Aiea Intermediate School and the other is a legal secretary for a local law firm. I am a legal secretary for the Office of the Public Defender on Oahu and have been with the office for 34 years. My husband of 33 years is an attorney in Honolulu. I have two grown children, of whom I am very proud. My daughter is a physician in L.A. and my son is teaching in Japan.

What I have to say about Karen is based upon my own personal experience and observation. I was Karen's secretary for more than six years and, although I am no longer assigned as her secretary, I still see her daily and have come to know her very well.

Karen will be an excellent judge because she is honest, hardworking, very ethical, intelligent, fair, considerate, respectful, and dependable. She is mature and has good common sense.

During my years at the Public Defenders Office, I have worked with many, many attorneys. Some were good and others not as good. Karen is definitely one of the best attorneys I have had the pleasure of working with. She is a real team player and I have seen her volunteer often to help her colleagues and to share her advice

and experience with younger and less experienced attorneys. I am impressed with her thoroughness and the fact that she will research and dig for the right answer rather than guess or assume the correct answer. She is organized and judicious in her work. Thus, rather than engage in a “shot gun” motions practice, I notice that she only files motions that are relevant and necessary. As a secretary, I appreciate this because it saves time and resources. Her high intelligence is reflected in the high quality of her work. It made me feel proud to be a part of her work.

Karen is friendly and gets along well with everyone in the office. She is well liked and respected by the staff and her colleagues. This is not surprising since she is considerate and respectful of others. It is obvious that people look up to her. Despite her amicable personality, she can be very independent and strong willed when necessary. I have often seen her stand her ground when she believes she’s right, even when she is in the minority or when her views are not popular.

I honestly believe that Karen will make an excellent judge who will serve and represent the judiciary extremely well

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me, if you have any questions or if I can be of any help.

Very truly yours,
Wendy L.N. Lee
1176 Lunahaneli Place
Kailua, HI 96734
Home: 263-4690

August 24, 2011

TO: Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

RE: Confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee, Karen Tooko Nakasone, as Judge
of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit
Date of Hearing: Monday, August 29, 2011
Time of Hearing: 12:00 P.M.

Dear Senator Clayton Hee, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro and Committee Members:

I met Ms. Nakasone approximately 15 years ago when she joined the Office of the Public Defender. Having worked with her all these years, I can say that she is a very intelligent and considerate person.

Ms. Nakasone's professional experience as a trial attorney and as an appellate attorney greatly supports her application to be a Circuit Court judge. As a trial attorney, she learned the law, procedures and courtroom etiquette. She interacts with people extremely well. Her excellent skills in and out of the courtroom are matched by her excellent research, writing and communication skills. I have consulted with her many times as to issues involving cases that were assigned to me. She has the rare ability to quickly grasp the issues, do research and provide the answers.

Ms. Nakasone is a very diligent and hard working individual who loves challenges. It amazes me to see that she has so much energy in that she has been able to efficiently and effectively, balance work, community activities and family life. She is a leader.

It is important for a judge to be fair and compassionate. A person in this position must be able to listen to both sides and allow the parties to fully argue their respective positions. Ms. Nakasone has those attributes. She carefully listens to what people have to say and is willing to change her views if she is convinced that her original position was incorrect.

Ms. Nakasone has an excellent reputation in the legal community as to honesty, trustworthiness, character, and integrity. I personally agree with those characterizations of her.

In closing, I would like to say that Ms. Nakasone possesses all the necessary knowledge, character, temperament, wisdom, compassion and skills to be an excellent Circuit Court judge.

Sincerely,

Tyrus S. Buyama
1130 N. Nimitz Highway
Suite A-254
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Dear Senator Hee, Senator Shimabukuro and Members of the Committee

Aug. 24, 2011

I am writing in strong support of Karen T. Nakasone, a nominee for First Circuit Court judge.

My name is Katsumi Yamada and I am the general manager and Kendo instructor at Kenshikan Kendo Club at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii.

In 2001 my son, Jack Yamada, was being tried for a felony offense. Karen was my son's defender. At the time she was an attorney in the Felony Trials Division at the office of the Public Defender. I believe that due in large part to Karen's professional skills and compassion as a human being, the judge rendered a warm-hearted decision of five years probation, along with permission to work and practice Kendo in Japan. Now, ten years later, Jack has a new life and continues to make me very proud every time I visit him in Japan. He is making a positive contribution to society; this would not have been possible without Karen's professional knowledge, courage, confidence and faith.

Kendo is a Japanese bushido martial art which we primarily practice with the intent to develop self-discipline and a sense of dignity. Karen hold ni-dan in kendo, which is equivalent to second degree black belt. Perhaps there is a connection between the many years of difficult training and self-transformation she has undertaken in Kendo and her ability to see the latent potential in others when taking positions of power and responsibility, this is an essential and humanizing attribute to hold.

For this reason and others, once again I would like to state my strong support of Karen T. Nakasone for a nominee for First Circuit Court judge.

Yours truly,

Katsumi Yamada
Tel. (808) 225-7745

Monday, August 29, 2011, 12:00 pm, Conference Room #016

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

From: Susan H. Kitsu

Re: GM1 – KAREN T. NAKASONE FOR FIRST CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

IN SUPPORT

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro & Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony in strong support of Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge. I have known Karen for many years in various capacities. I first met Karen when we were students at Hawaii Baptist Academy. We later met again when we both volunteered and served as officers on the Japanese American Citizens League, Honolulu Chapter. Karen was instrumental in planning the 75th National Convention of the JAACL, which was held here in Hawaii, with over 800 attendees. Karen has also been an incredible lawyer and advocate for those who would not otherwise have access to justice. She has volunteered for many organizations and has balanced her volunteer work with her responsibilities to her family and friends. She has outstanding analytical and writing skills; she has great compassion for people; she has incredible sensitivity for cultural diversity and respects differing opinions; she has the right temperament to deal with challenging and often controversial issues; but above all, she has the right heart to administer the law in a fair and respectful manner. I can think of no one better than Karen T. Nakasone for Circuit Court Judge. I unequivocally support her for the First Circuit Court Judge position.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

MARR JONES & WANG

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

Labor and Employment Law

August 25, 2011

Via Email: JDLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Chairman Sen. Clayton Hee
Vice Chairman Sen. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St., Room 407
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: GM1 – Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support
Hearing Date: August 29, 2011
Hearing Time: 12:00 p.m.

Dear Senators Hee and Shimabukuro:

Please consider this letter my testimony in support of Karen T. Nakasone's confirmation as a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

I have been a licensed attorney since 2002 and worked in private practice as an attorney specializing in litigation. Since 2009, my practice has focused almost exclusively on employment litigation with the Marr Jones & Wang law firm. For the past several years, I have had the pleasure of serving with Ms. Nakasone as a member of various community organizations and clubs, including the Hawaii Supreme Court Board of Bar Examiners and as a member of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association ("NAPABA"). As a member of the Board of Bar Examiners, I was fortunate enough to participate in several grading sessions with Ms. Nakasone where she demonstrated her expertise in criminal law and procedure. As a member of NAPABA, I attended several functions which Ms. Nakasone helped to organize, where various community members were honored for their roles in assisting the Asian and Pacific American communities in Hawaii.

Ms. Nakasone has always been hard working, fair, civic minded, and compassionate. As a senior deputy public defender, Ms. Nakasone has spent her career assisting people who could not afford legal representation. She has also tried numerous jury trials to verdict and has successfully argued before Hawaii's appellate courts. Ms. Nakasone's experience, personality, and demeanor will serve the public well and are qualities which will make for an excellent Judge.

GM1—Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge—In Support
Senate confirmation hearing: Monday August 29, 2011, 12:00 pm

August 24, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Dear Senators:

I write to commend Karen Nakasone as a candidate for a judgeship on the First Circuit Court. She was my world history student at Hawaii Baptist Academy, and I have followed her subsequent accomplishments with admiration. Because I am a faculty sponsor for Mock Trial, I spend many hours in courtrooms observing judges. I have also had the opportunity to hear Karen make oral arguments before the Supreme Court.

Her legal skills, compassion, breadth of interests, integrity and, above all, her passion for justice make her an ideal nominee.

Respectfully,

Maurine King
2475 Pali Highway
Honolulu, HI 96817

Douglas Chin
2423 Lanai Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Attn: Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

August 26, 2011

Subject: Confirmation hearing of **Karen T. Nakasone** to the First Circuit Court

Dear Committee Members:

I write this letter in support of Karen Nakasone's nomination to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I first met Ms. Nakasone over 19 years ago in 1992 when we both served as summer law clerks at the Attorney General's office for the State of Hawai'i. I then worked with her closely – from the opposite side of the courtroom – from 1998 to 2008 while I was employed at the Honolulu prosecutor's office and she was a deputy public defender. Ms. Nakasone and I were opposing counsel in several jury and non-jury criminal trials.

Ms. Nakasone is a thoughtful, hard-working and professional attorney. Based on my experience with her in court, I believe Ms. Nakasone possesses the temperament, knowledge, qualities and skills that would make her an excellent addition to the First Circuit and an outstanding jurist in our community.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,


Douglas S. Chin, Esq.



DAPHNE E. BARBEE

ATTORNEY AT LAW

1188 BISHOP STREET, SUITE 1909, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE (808) 533-0275

August 25, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee, Senate Chair
Senator Maile Shimabukuro
Vice Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Labor
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Karen T. Nakasone, Judicial candidate

Dear Senator Hee and Senator Shimabukuro:

It is my pleasure to recommend Karen T. Nakasone be confirmed as a Judge to the vacant position for First Circuit Court. Karen T. Nakasone has shown her commitment to civil rights and justice in the State. She has volunteered her time as President for the Japanese-Americans citizens league. In addition to her volunteering, she has carried a heavy caseload as a public defender representing indigents who cannot afford attorneys. She has the necessary integrity and personality to be a judge. She is very polite and listens to arguments before taking sides. She served on the Board of Bar Examiners. She has integrity and diligence, and perfect judicial temperament. She has also given much to public service. Please confirm her as a Judge, First Circuit Court. She will bring respect and dignity to the Court.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Barbee-Wooten".

Daphne Barbee-Wooten
Attorney at Law

August 26, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Committee On Judiciary And Labor

Re: GM1 – Consideration and Confirmation to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, Karen Tooko Nakasone.

Hearing Date: Monday, August 29, 2011, at 12:00 p.m.

Chairman Hee and Members of the Senate:

I urge you to confirm the nomination of Karen Nakasone as the next Circuit Court Judge for Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

My name is Edward K. Harada. I have been a Deputy Public Defender for over 27 years, and I had the privilege and honor of working with Karen Nakasone for all of her career as a Deputy Public Defender. Karen is an outstanding candidate to become a circuit court judge because she has impeccable moral character, excellent judicial temperament, an immense capacity for hard work, and broad experience as both a trial, and appellate, lawyer.

Karen Nakasone has participated actively and extensively in the world outside the courtroom and has contributed meaningfully to many causes and organizations dedicated to bettering the lives of those in need of social justice. I ask you to support her with a confirmation of her nomination to bench, so that she can now provide legal justice to the people of Hawai'i.

Respectfully Submitted,



Edward K. Harada
Deputy Public Defender

August 25, 2011

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South King Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: GM 1 -- Karen T. Nakasone for First Circuit Court Judge -- In Support

I am writing in support of Karen T. Nakasone for the vacancy on the Circuit Court of the First Circuit. I have known Karen for over 6 years since we both became involved in the Life-Work Effectiveness seminar that is hosted at the William S. Richardson School of Law every year, and I have continued to work closely with her on the Board of Hawaii Women Lawyers.

Karen is a very dedicated attorney, committed to serving the citizens of the State through her position in the Public Defender's Office. Karen is well-respected among her peers, and has received numerous awards and recognitions for her work, which are outlined on her resume/application.

Karen's public service goes far beyond her work as a Public Defense attorney. She also spends countless hours serving the community through her roles on various nonprofit boards. On the nonprofit boards that I have served with her, she takes an active leadership role in shaping the organization and ensuring that it is run consistently with its mission. She is very thoughtful in her comments and meaningfully contributes to every important decision.

For these reasons, Karen serves as a role model and mentor for many young women attorneys. Her work ethic and public service make her an excellent candidate for the Circuit Court judgeship. I respectfully ask that you appoint Karen Nakasone as a Circuit Court Judge.

Sincerely,



Emi Morita Kaimulua, Esq.