

# LATE

# GM 1

Submitting for consideration and  
confirmation to the Circuit Court of the  
First Circuit, State of Hawaii,  
Gubernatorial Nominee  
SHIRLEY KAWAMURA, for a term  
to expire in ten years.

TRISHA Y. NAKAMURA, ESQ.  
PO Box 61619  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96839

TO: The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
The Honorable Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
The Honorable Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

RE: **Strong Support for GM 1** (Hearing: November 3, 2015 at 9 a.m., Conf Rm 325)  
**Shirley Kawamura**, Nominee to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit

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**Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment in strong support of Gubernatorial Nominee to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, Shirley Kawamura.**

As a Deputy Public Defender for almost four years, I have had the opportunity to appear numerous times before Judge Kawamura in the District Court of the First Circuit. Judge Kawamura's experiences as a District Court Judge, in addition to her varied roles as an attorney prior to becoming a District Court Judge, will combine to make her an excellent Circuit Court Judge.

COMMITMENT TO FAIRNESS

Judge Kawamura has sought fairness—both for my clients, who are indigent and facing numerous disadvantages in addition to standing criminally charged, and for those who have filed criminal offenses against defendants. Even on the busiest days of court, Judge Kawamura works hard to ensure all defendants make sure they understand their rights and are heard by the Court. Judge will allow all parties to make clear their positions and assert their positions prior to making decisions.

LEGAL ACUMEN, COMMON SENSE, AND SMART MANAGEMENT

Judge Kawamura has a deep understanding and appreciation of the law. Perhaps equally important is Judge Kawamura's sense of practicality and attention to the unique facts of each case that is before her. And it is this common sense that make parties who appear before her appreciate her handling of court matters. While Judge Kawamura does not discuss with attorneys how she prepares for court, it is clear to me that she is up-to-date regarding appellate decisions/case law and new policies/statutes from the State Legislature and City Council.

Judge Kawamura also seeks to work smartly by addressing cases swiftly, seeking to make the Court and its calendar run more efficiently, and by working hard in Chambers to be prepared for court.

To summarize, Judge Kawamura manages her cases with a view towards judicial economy and fairness for those who come before the Court, as well as understanding of the law and individual case.

**I urge you to send her nomination to the Senate Floor for confirmation.**

**Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Shirley Kawamura.**

**From:** Rachelle Iopa  
**To:** JDLTestimony  
**Subject:** GM1- Shirley M. Kawamura for First Circuit Court Judge  
**Date:** Monday, November 02, 2015 10:49:29 PM

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Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary Labor

Re: GM1, November 3, 2015, 9:00 a.m.

Dear Senator Keith-Agaran, Senator Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary Labor,

It is with great honor to strongly support the nomination of Ms. Shirley M. Kawamura for the position of Judge in the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

I have known Ms. Kawamura on a personal level for a number of years and she exemplifies characteristics befitting a Judge. She is honest and fair while being compassionate, thoughtful, and caring.

She is respectful while being well respected by everyone she encounters. She is dedicated and hardworking with both work and family life.

Although I have not had the pleasure to work with Ms. Kawamura on a professional basis, I know her personality, work ethic, and characteristics stated above will be essential in our court system.

I respectfully ask to please confirm Ms. Kawamura's nomination--our State of Hawaii will be lucky to have someone like Shirley M. Kawamura to serve as First Circuit Court Judge. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Rachelle M.S.B. Iopa  
President,  
Kaimuki Care, Inc.

TO: Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members of Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

RE: **SUPPORTING**

GM1 – Shirley M. Kawamura for First Circuit Court Judge  
GM1, November 3, 2015, 9:00am

FR: Kristine Yoo

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Dear Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor:

I write this letter in full support of confirmation of Shirley M. Kawamura for First Circuit Court Judge. I am very excited to see a very capable, efficient, and smart female nominated to be the next circuit court judge.

I have appeared in front of Judge Kawamura in the First Circuit Court since she had to fill in for various circuit court vacancies. Judge Kawamura was always courteous, conscientious, and efficient. Although she had inherited a very heavy caseload in a certain courtroom, she took the initiative to clear much of the caseload even

though she was only filling in. Some of the cases were over four (4) years old!

Judge Kawamura is involved with the community. I've had the pleasure of being part of the Aloha Inns of Court with Judge Kawamura. She is an active participant with great advice for the law student members.

Judge Kawamura also volunteers as a judge for the high school mock trial competition sponsored by HSBA YLD. Not only does she give up an evening for the high school students, but she gives very detailed, thoughtful, and constructive feedback to the students. I was very impressed with her ability to connect with the students from our team.

I am confident that she will make an excellent circuit court judge and look forward to appearing in front of her in her own courtroom (rather than just filling in).

Thank-you for reading and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kristine Yoo

November 3, 2015

**Via Email (JDLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)**

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair,  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Writer's Direct Dial: (808) 540-4503  
Writer's Email: jyamamoto@ychawaii.com

Re: GM1 – Shirley M. Kawamura for First Circuit Court Judge – In Support

Dear Senators:

My name is Jodi Yamamoto, and I am currently an attorney with Yamamoto Caliboso, which practices in the areas of finance, real estate, and energy law. I have been a practicing attorney for over 19 years. It is with great pleasure that I submit my enthusiastic support for Shirley Kawamura to serve as a full time First Circuit Court Judge.

I have known Shirley for over 28 years as we attended Iolani School and Brown University together, and I have always known Shirley to be a bright, hard-working, and caring individual with exceptional integrity and moral fortitude. With her strong educational background and performance, including a law degree from Stanford University, Shirley could have practiced anywhere and been paid handsomely to do so. Instead, after clerking for Judge Del Rosario, she accepted a deputy position with the Public Defender's office in order to serve the public and to make a difference. At the Public Defender's office, Shirley worked tirelessly for her clients, often under difficult conditions. Still, she persisted and thrived.

After many years of public service, Shirley joined the private practice ranks and continued to work for her clients in complex civil matters. However, she could not stray from public service for long and soon became a per diem District Court Judge, and subsequently a full time District Court Judge. Shirley has the benefit of being proficient at both civil and criminal law, as well as being comfortable with serving as an arbiter of disputes. In short, she would be a great asset to the bench, and I whole-heartedly support her nomination to be a Circuit Court Judge. If you have any questions or would like me to expound further, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Very truly yours,



Jodi S. Yamamoto

for

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A Limited Liability Law Company

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November 2, 2015

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice-Chair  
Members – Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor  
Hawaii State Capital  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM1- Shirley M. Kawamura for First Circuit Court Judge – IN SUPPORT

Dear Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of Shirley M. Kawamura. I have known Ms. Kawamura for approximately 16 years. We worked together as Deputy Public Defenders and I have appeared before her numerous times in the District Court of the First Circuit.

On a professional level, Ms. Kawamura is intelligent, hard-working, and committed to providing justice to the litigants and parties that appear before her in court. On a personal level, I have known her to be thoughtful, considerate, and a very family-oriented person.

I am very confident that as a Judge in the Circuit Court, Ms. Kawamura will serve with distinction, as she has extensive experience and knowledge in both civil and criminal litigation.

If you have any questions, please call me at 536-2900. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

/s/

Kenneth Shimozoneo  
Attorney at Law