

Honolulu, Hawaii

AUG 31 2017

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 40

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
First Special Session of 2017
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water and Land, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 40, submitting for study and consideration the nomination of:

DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

G.M. No. 40 ROBERT MASUDA,
 for a term to expire 12-03-2018,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by the nominee and finds Robert Masuda to possess the requisite qualifications to be nominated as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committee received testimony in support of Robert Masuda from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Department of Accounting and General Services; Department of Transportation; Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission; The Nature Conservancy; Hawaii Conservation Alliance Foundation; Aha Moku Advisory Committee group; and ten individuals. Your Committee received comments from one individual.

Robert K. Masuda served as the First Deputy Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources from May 2005 to May 2007. Mr. Masuda assisted the department with its responsibilities for the long-term sustainable management, maintenance, protection, and utilization of existing and potential ocean, land, natural, and cultural resources of the State of



Hawaii in an integrated manner and in partnership with others from the public and private sectors. Special assignments included oversight of divisions with challenging issues, department leadership with two critical natural disasters, along with general management assistance to the Chair of all eleven department divisions and offices. He was the department representative on the Aloha Tower Development Corporation, Agribusiness Development Corporation, Information Technology Governance Committee, Natural Area Reserve System Commission, and the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts. His personal areas of interest include environmental education, cultural and natural resource protection and relationships, and forestry and marine life sustainability. Mr. Masuda also served for one year as the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation for the City and County of Honolulu. Most recently, he was a senior advisor to the United States Department of Agriculture's Institute for Pacific Islands Forestry.

Mr. Masuda was very active for more than fifty-five years in the YMCA organization in Hawaii, the continental United States, and around the world. His experience includes complex international work requiring sensitive negotiations and troubleshooting, often through interpreters, in four continents, the Pacific, Middle East, and across the United States. Mr. Masuda installed strong budget controls; maintained community and government leader contacts; selected and developed personnel at all supervisory levels; initiated and managed contracts worth several millions of dollars annually; organized management teams at local, metropolitan, and national YMCA levels; and was active in the community as a board member of a variety of non-profit organizations. He continues his active leadership post retirement in guiding, promoting, and advocating for science research and the advancement of natural and cultural resources.

Your Committee notes the following from the nominee's written responses to questions posed by the Committee regarding the role and jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources:

My understanding of the role & jurisdiction of DLNR is to advance the Mission of DLNR, which is to "enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawai'i's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of the people of Hawai'i nei, and its visitors, in partnership with others from the public and private sectors." (Emphasis in original)



DLNR's role & jurisdiction includes administering the public lands and resources with respect to native Hawaiian issues and concerns, the public land trust obligations, and the recognition of native Hawaiian cultural values that are intrinsically tied to the 'aina.

The testimony of the Department of Land and Natural Resources indicates that Mr. Masuda is well-respected. He has extensive experience dealing with a variety of people and issues. During his prior term as the Deputy Director, he exhibited excellent leadership skills and brought a lot of positive energy to the department. His ability to listen and communicate is widely recognized. The Department is confident that Mr. Masuda will bring back those same leadership skills, energy, analytical skills, clear sense of purpose, and passion for natural and cultural resource protection and education.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water and Land that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominee, has found the nominee to be qualified for the position to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water and Land,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



