

Honolulu, Hawaii

NOV 14 2017

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 1, submitting for study and consideration the appointment of:

CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT, STATE OF HAWAII

G.M. No. 1            PAUL B. WONG,  
                          for a term to expire in ten years,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the resume and statements submitted by the appointee and finds Paul B. Wong to possess the requisite qualifications to be considered for appointment to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawaii.

Testimony in support of the appointment of Judge Wong was submitted by the Hawaii State Bar Association Board of Directors and eight individuals.

Judge Wong received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from the University of Southern California, from which he graduated *cum laude*. He later obtained his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Boston College Law School, where he served as president of the Asian Pacific American Law Students' Association and received the West Publishing Company Award for Significant Contribution to Law School.

Since 2012, Judge Wong has served as a Judge on the District Court of the First Circuit. On the bench, he has presided over numerous civil and criminal cases involving a wide variety of



legal issues, with the majority being traffic and criminal misdemeanor cases. For the first six months of 2016, Judge Wong was assigned to the Mental Health and Weed and Seed specialty courts, and he has also been temporarily assigned to cover vacancies in the Circuit Court of the First Circuit, where he presided over felony matters and jury trials. Notably, while on temporary assignment to the Circuit Court, he presided over a case in which he found a statutory section relating to the charge of unauthorized possession of confidential information unconstitutionally overbroad. The case was appealed and later progressed to the Supreme Court of the State of Hawaii, who held that portions of the statute were unconstitutionally vague and affirmed the decision in part and reversed it in part.

Prior to his appointment to the District Court bench, Judge Wong was a litigation partner for approximately seven years at the law firm of McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon LLP, after practicing as an associate at the firm between 2000 and 2005. At McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon LLP, he represented a broad array of clients in litigation matters spanning from commercial disputes, construction litigation, bodily injury litigation, and white-collar criminal defense cases, as well as served as a special deputy Attorney General for the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs from 2005 to 2009. Before that, he was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu from 1993 to 2000. Over the course of his career, Judge Wong tried many cases, including over forty criminal jury trials and over fifty criminal bench trials.

Judge Wong has been licensed to practice law in Hawaii since 1993, and has been licensed to practice in the United States Tax Court since 2011. He is also an active participant in the community. Judge Wong participated in the "Meet the Bench" program for the Hawaii State Bar Association Leadership Institute from 2014 to 2016, and served as a volunteer judge of the Hawaii State Bar Association Hawaii High School Mock Trial Competition from 2013 to 2017. Prior to his appointment as a District Court Judge, he served on the Advisory Board of the Sex Abuse Treatment Center and on the Board of Directors for Reach Out Pacific.

Testimony in support of Judge Wong's appointment indicates that he has a strong reputation for jurisprudential excellence. He is described as consistently diligent in his preparation for the numerous cases on his docket; thoughtful in his approach to those cases that he hears; and cordial, courteous, and respectful



of all who appear before him. He possesses excellent legal skills and a thorough understanding of the role that evidence, court rules, and case law play in the judicial process.

The Hawaii State Bar Association (HSBA) Board of Directors found the appointee to be qualified for the position of Circuit Court Judge, First Circuit, based on all categories of the HSBA's criteria that includes: integrity, diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and ability to fulfill the responsibilities and duties of the position.

Accordingly, your Committee finds that Judge Wong has the experience, temperament, judiciousness, and other competencies to be a Circuit Court Judge of the First Circuit.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the appointee, has found the appointee to be qualified for the position to which appointed and recommends that the Senate consent to the appointment.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Judiciary,

  
BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, Chair



The Senate  
 Twenty-Ninth Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Judiciary**  
**JDC**  
**Consent**

Gov. Msg./Jud. Com. No.:* <b>GM 1</b>	Committee Referral: <b>JDC</b>	Date: <b>11/14/2017</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent 2347 <span style="margin-left: 200px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Not Consent 2349</span>				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
TANIGUCHI, Brian T. (C)	✓			
RHOADS, Karl (VC)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike	✓			
KIM, Donna Mercado				✓
THIELEN, Laura H.	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Recommendation:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <span style="margin-left: 200px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted</span>				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>Karl Rhoads</i>				
<b>Distribution:</b> <span style="margin-left: 50px;">Original</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Yellow</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Pink</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Goldenrod</span> <span style="margin-left: 50px;">File with Committee Report</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Clerk's Office</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Drafting Agency</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Committee File Copy</span>				

\*Only one Message/Communication per Record of Votes