

exclusive: integrity, diligence, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, temperament, financial responsibility, public service, health, and ability to fulfill the responsibilities and duties required of the position for which the applicant has been appointed. Upon review of the established criteria, the HSBA Board found the appointee to be qualified for the position of Judge of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit.

John M. Tonaki received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and later obtained his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Hastings College of Law at the University of California. He currently serves as the Hawaii State Public Defender and Head Administrator of the Office of the Public Defender, where he oversees approximately one hundred thirty-four attorneys, clerical staff, and investigative personnel statewide.

Prior to his current position, John M. Tonaki was Supervising Deputy Public Defender. He has served in the Office of the Public Defender for over thirty years. For several years, he also taught classes on Contemporary Issues in Law Enforcement as a faculty member at Hawaii Pacific University.

John M. Tonaki has been active in the legal community throughout his career. He currently serves as a Director of the Hawaii State Bar Association and Director of the American Judicature Society. He has served on numerous committees and task forces, including the Judiciary's Standing Committees on the Rules of Evidence and Criminal Jury Instructions, Task Force relating to disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system, and the Hawaii Judicial Council's Committee to Conduct a Comprehensive Review of the Hawaii Penal Code. He also served as a co-collaborator on a number of projects, including the establishment of the Veteran's Treatment Court, Mental Health Court, Hawai'i Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (H.O.P.E.) program, and Environmental Court.

Testimony submitted in support of John M. Tonaki's appointment commends his even-keeled and practical demeanor, high level of integrity, compassion, and commitment to excellence. Additionally, he has a reputation for his excellent courtroom skills, legal knowledge and analysis, and dedication to the fair and just application of the law. Testifiers also commented on



Mr. Tonaki's leadership and ability to work well with others, including opposing counsel.

Your Committee finds that, based on the testimony submitted on his behalf, John M. Tonaki has the experience, temperament, judiciousness, and requisite competencies to be a Judge of the Circuit Court 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,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



