STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1

Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: JUD. COM. NO. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa President of the Senate Twenty-Fifth State Legislature First Special Session of 2010 State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations, to which was referred Judiciary Communication No. 1, submitting for study and consideration the appointment of:

DISTRICT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT, STATE OF HAWAII

begs leave to report as follows:

Testimony in support of the appointee was submitted by Representative Glenn Wakai, State House of Representatives; the Public Defender; the Department of the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney; Hawaii Women Lawyers; and fifty individuals. Comments were submitted by the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

Written testimony presented to your Committee may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

The Hawaii State Bar Association Board of Directors (HSBA Board) found the appointee to be qualified for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit, based upon a modified version of the American Bar Association Guidelines for Reviewing Qualifications of Candidates for State Judicial Office. These Guidelines include the following criteria: integrity, legal knowledge and ability, professional experience, judicial temperament, diligence, financial responsibility, and public service, collegiality, and writing ability. The HSBA Board rating system includes the categories of "qualified" and "not qualified."

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Sherri-Ann L. Iha received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Hawaii, William S. Richardson School of Law. Ms. Iha has worked with the Honolulu Department of the Prosecuting Attorney from 1992 until the present, being promoted to increasingly challenging positions. According to testimony submitted on her behalf, Ms. Iha has been a valued part of the Department, successfully handling a variety of cases and gaining extensive trial and legal experience in district and circuit court. Cases handled by Ms. Iha have included murder, assault, robbery, and burglary cases. For the past three years, Ms. Iha has served as the Misdemeanor Jury Demand supervisor, which requires her to mentor and oversee deputy prosecutors who are learning to try cases before a jury.

Ms. The has also been extensively involved in community activities, including serving on the 'Iolani Alumni Association Board of Directors, serving as an ex-officio member of the 'Iolani School Board of Governors for the past two years, on various capacities with the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, and assisting other organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Special Olympics, and the Kaelepulu Elementary School Parent Teacher Student Association.

Testimony in support of Ms. Tha's appointment indicates that she is highly qualified to serve as a District Court judge. She has a universal reputation as intelligent, thorough, professional, dedicated, and skilled. Her decisions are well-analyzed and well-researched, and she is always prepared. Testifiers related that she has an even and reasonable temperament, and that she remains calm and cheerful even when inundated with her caseload. Your Committee received testimony praising her integrity and fairness. As a supervisor, she is respectful and is a role model within the Department. Additionally, testimony indicates that Ms. Tha values the judicial process and is dedicated to maintaining the integrity of the judicial system.

Your Committee finds that, based on the testimony submitted on her behalf, Sherri-Ann L. Iha has the experience, temperament, judiciousness, and other competencies to be a District Court judge, and has a good sense of where the equities, rights, and responsibilities lie in a case, which is essential for a District Court judge.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations 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 and Government Operations,

BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, Chair

The Senate Twenty-Fifth Legislature State of Hawaii

Record of Votes Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations JGO Consent

Gov. Msg./Jud. Comm. No.:* JC No. 1	Committee Referral: JGO			Date: 8/5/10		
The Committee is reconsidering its decision						
The Recommendation is:						
Consent Not Consent 2347						
Members		Aye	Aye (WR)		Nay	Excused
TANIGUCHI, Brian T. (C)		V				
TAKAMINE, Dwight Y. (VC)	V					
GABBARD, Mike						
NISHIHARA, Clarence K		V/_				
SLOM, Sam		V			and the second s	
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TOTAL		5				
Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted						
Chair's or Designee's Signature:						
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy						

^{*}Only one Judiciary Communication per Record of Votes