

# GM 550

## Testimony –

**Measure Title:** Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for a term to expire 6-30-2017.

**Report Title:** Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii

**Description:**

**Companion:**

**Package:**

**Current Referral:** HEA

**Introducer(s):**

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [lputnam45@yahoo.com](mailto:lputnam45@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for GM550 on Apr 15, 2015 13:30PM  
**Date:** Monday, April 13, 2015 6:39:26 AM

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**GM550**

Submitted on: 4/13/2015

Testimony for HEA on Apr 15, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lee Putnam	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Judge Simeon Acoba brings a distinguished reputation to the Board of Regents and has clearly demonstrated why he is deserving of distinction. His comments and questions have helped the Board take action on a number of complex issues. His high ethical standards are especially noteworthy and set an example for all of us. It has been my honor to serve on the Board with Judge Acoba and I know that he will continue to be an outstanding Regent.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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April 14, 2015

TO: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair, Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair, Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

FROM: Aviam Soifer, Dean and Professor, William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawai'i

HEARING DATE/TIME: Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Conf. Room 211

MEASURE NUMBER: GM 550 - Testimony in Support of the Confirmation of Simeon Acoba, Jr.

First, I want to make it very clear that it is only in my individual capacity that I offer testimony in enthusiastic support of the confirmation of Justice (ret.) Simeon Acoba to be a member of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. I do not speak for the William S. Richardson School of Law or for anyone else.

I am pleased to be able to provide a few details to underscore my certainty that, if confirmed, Justice Acoba will prove to be an exceptionally good choice to serve for a full term on the Board of Regents. Based on my close observation of his leadership role as the first chairperson of the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, for example, I can say that Justice Acoba has proved that it is not only on the judicial bench that he is dedicated to helping those in our society who most need the opportunities that public institutions such as the University of Hawai'i can provide. Though he is no longer the chairperson of the Commission, Justice Acoba is the kind of person who, characteristically, continues to serve and to lead quietly without concern for garnering attention.

A further example is that, without any fanfare, Justice Acoba has begun to teach in the Law School's Evening Part-Time Program, though he refuses any compensation. While he served as a judge on several levels of our judicial system, Justice Acoba earned a reputation as a judge who was unafraid to think for himself and who repeatedly demonstrated great analytic ability in impressive combination with concern for the human dimension of the cases before him. He became legendary for his hard work, but also for his willingness to dissent when he thought it necessary to do so. I have known Justice Acoba for over a decade and he stands out not only for his work as a judge, but also as an exceptional human being.

Early in his career, Simeon Acoba served the University of Hawai'i in several different ways, including as a teacher at our Law School. It thus seems entirely fitting and most appropriate that he is now willing to return to the classroom and to share his unparalleled breadth of knowledge about Hawai'i criminal law, but also that he is enthusiastic about further serving our university and our state as a member of the Board of Regents.

Justice Acoba is unusually self-effacing and humble for someone who has accomplished so much. No one should be misled, however. He is an outstanding and very thoughtful person who is the kind of quiet leader we most need now in service to our very diverse, challenging university community.

In summary, I am pleased to urge the confirmation of Simeon Acoba to a full term on the UH Board of Regents and I do so unequivocally. I would, of course, be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE ARTS  
SENATOR BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR

HEARING DATE: April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 – SIMEON ACOBA JR.  
NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: REYNALDO D. GRAULTY, RETIRED CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is my pleasure to submit this testimony in full support of retired Justice Simeon Acoba's nomination to the UH Board of Regents.

In nominating Simeon Acoba, the Governor has appointed an exemplary member of our community – an outstanding product of our public schools and a distinguished alumnus of the University of Hawaii. In addition, Simeon's career in Hawaii as a lawyer and a jurist should serve as a model for many aspiring young people in our state.

Sim was known not just for his sharp intellect, but for his ability to work long hours, whether as a trial judge, an appellate judge or a justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court when he was on the bench. No one in the Judiciary worked longer hours than Sim. Never afraid to take a contrary position when the issue called for it, I know Sim will bring the same passion, devotion and commitment to his tenure on the Board of Regents.

His appointment if confirmed by the Committee and the State Senate will be an inspiration not only to the young people of our state, but to all those who care deeply about the University of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of his nomination.

# The Honorable E. John McConnell (Ret.)

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33 N. Market Street, Suite 200  
Wailuku, Maui, Hawai'i 96793  
Maui Phone: (808) 244-6531  
Email: [judgetmcconnell@msn.com](mailto:judgetmcconnell@msn.com)

VIA FACSIMILE 808-586-6461

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Hawaii State Senate

RE: Testimony in support of GM 550: Simeon Acoba, Jr., Nomination to the UH Board of Regents

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I submit this testimony in support of confirmation of the nomination of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

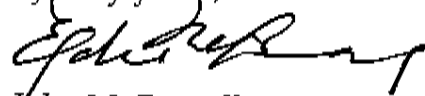
I have known Justice Acoba for 44 years, having served with him as a Deputy Attorney General and as fellow member of the Judiciary.

Testimony of this nature is, I am sure you know, often filled with glowing platitudes regarding the applicant's character, ability and dedication. My concern here is that I may not adequately express just how exceptional Justice Acoba's qualities are.

I have personally witnessed his strict adherence to ethical standards when he refused to even mention issues before the Court in our private conversations. His long record as a trial and appellate judge and as a Supreme Court Justice is there for all to examine. I submit that it reflects a steadfast commitment to the principle that our institutions are places where the least can stand side by side with the most powerful and be treated equally under the law. I believe that the University will be well served if those values are reflected by his service on the Board of Regents.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for Justice Acoba's nomination.

Very truly yours,



E. John McConnell

**HAWAII JUSTICE FOUNDATION**

P. O. Box 1230

Honolulu, Hawaii 96807-1230

(tel) 808•537-3886 (fax) 808•528-1974

E-Mail: [hjfhawaii.rr.com](mailto:hjf@hawaii.rr.com) Website: [www.hawaiijustice.org](http://www.hawaiijustice.org)

April 9, 2015

TESTIMONY FROM: Robert J. LeClair, Executive Director, Hawaii Justice Foundation  
(Note: Robert LeClair will not be testifying in person.)

TO: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

HEARING DATE/TIME: Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m.  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Hawaii State Capitol, location to be announced

MEASURE NUMBER: **TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF**  
GM550 Simeon Acoba, Jr. Nomination to the UH Board of Regents

SUBMITTED BY E-MAIL THROUGH INTERNET TESTIMONY SYSTEM

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts:

**The Hawaii Justice Foundation (HJF) has worked closely with Simeon Acoba for many years, and his work has been exemplary. He has served as the representative for the Hawaii State Judiciary on the HJF Board, and he also served as the first Chair of the Hawaii Access to Justice Commission.** After his retirement, the Board of HJF was so impressed with his work that HJF was able to secure his services as one of our Board members, all of whom serve without any compensation.

Simeon Acoba is a very dedicated worker, and he has excellent judgment. If he makes a commitment, he keeps it. He has a keen sense of judgment and works well with others.

Your Committee would be hard-pressed to find a more suitable candidate to serve on the UH Board of Regents. The Hawaii Justice Foundation stands **IN STRONG SUPPORT** of your approval of his nomination.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2015

THE SENATE

Committee on Higher Education and The Arts

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Wednesday, April 15, 2015; 1:30 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON G.M. 550  
SIMEON ACOBA, JR.  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII BOARD OF REGENTS**

The ILWU Local 142 supports G.M. 550, for the nomination of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Justice Acoba is a retired Associate Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court and eminently qualified to serve on the Board of Regents. A graduate of Farrington High School and the University of Hawaii, Justice Acoba served as vice president of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii (ASUH) in 1964 and was appointed to the UH Board of Regents in 2014. Justice Acoba is currently on the faculty of the UH School of Law.

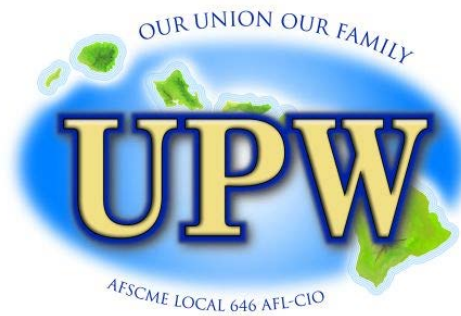
Justice Acoba is currently serving on the Board of Regents, having been appointed last fall. We believe that Justice Acoba should continue to serve. That he was appointed by the previous administration in no way diminishes his stature, the qualifications he brings to the position, or the contributions he has made and will make to the University.

Following a distinguished career as an attorney and on every level of the judiciary, Justice Acoba retired from the Hawaii Supreme Court at the mandatory retirement age of 70. Justice Acoba is intelligent, articulate, and a clear thinker. He will be a major asset to the Board of Regents as it struggles to restore its fiscal stability and regain its reputation as a premier institution of higher learning.

Justice Acoba and his wife Carolyn recently endowed a scholarship to the University of Hawaii law school. Justice Acoba received his own law degree from Northwestern University School of Law but clerked with Chief Justice William S. Richardson, for whom the UH law school is named. As UH President David Lassner said, Justice Acoba is “paying it forward by investing in UH and our students.”

The ILWU urges the confirmation of Justice Simeon Acoba for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. Thank you for considering our testimony.





THE HAWAII STATE SENATE  
The Twenty-Seventh Legislature  
Regular Session of 2015

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

The Honorable Senator, Brian T. Taniguchi Chair  
The Honorable Senator, Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

DATE OF HEARING: Wednesday, April 15, 2015  
TIME OF HEARING: 1:30 p.m.,  
PLACE OF HEARING: Conference Room 211  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONY ON GM550 FOR THE NOMINATION OF SIMEON ACOBA TO THE BOARD  
OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

By DAYTON M. NAKANELUA,  
State Director of the United Public Workers,  
AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO ("UPW")

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua and I am the State Director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO (UPW). The UPW is the exclusive representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which include blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. The UPW also represents about 1,500 members of the private sector.

The UPW supports the nomination of Judge Simeon Acoba to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. In addition to time he has already spent as a Regent, Judge Acoba also brings decades of experience as a judge to the position.

We ask for the consideration of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts in approving this nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



April 10, 2015

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi  
Chair  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
State Capitol, Room 219  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: **Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii-Nomination of  
The Honorable Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.**

Dear Chair Taniguchi:

I write this letter in unequivocal support of Governor David Ige's nomination of Justice Simeon R. Acoba's (ret.) to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I serve as President of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers ("SHOPO"), which is the public sector union that represents all of our county police officers serving throughout the 50<sup>th</sup> State.

Although we are a police union and our primary focus is undoubtedly on law enforcement, we also have a keen interest in our community and our academic institutions, as our higher educational system is where many of our future officers will come from. We also have an interest in athletics and have been a strong supporter of high school sports through our sponsorship on OC-16, so athletics at the university level is also of great interest to us.

During these somewhat turbulent times at the university, we can think of no better qualified candidate to be serving on the Board of Regents than Justice Acoba. We are familiar with Justice Acoba through his many years of service as a Circuit Court judge and more recently as a justice on the Hawaii Supreme Court. We have followed his career and have been impressed with his achievements at every level. Although we may not have agreed with all of his judicial decisions, we respected him for his well reasoned opinions that consistently exhibited a deliberate and careful thought process and analysis. He is without question a scholarly individual, but at the same time he has a genuine humbleness about him.

We voice our strong support for Justice Acoba who we believe is exceptionally qualified to serve on the board. As the largest public law enforcement labor organization in Hawaii, we support and endorse Justice Acoba to this distinguished position. Based on our experiences, we can tell you that Justice Acoba clearly possesses and displays a sharp intellect, shows the utmost respect to others and is a justice who always worked hard to get it right. He is known for his even handed approach to matters, a well balanced judicial temperament and exhibits compassion.

Main Office & Honolulu Chapter  
1717 Hoe Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-3125  
Ph: (808) 847-4676 "84 SHOPO"  
(800) 590-4676 Toll Free  
Fax: (808) 841-4818

Hawai'i Chapter Office  
688 Kino'ole Street, Room 220 B  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720  
Ph: (808) 934-8405  
Fax: (808) 934-8210

Maui Chapter Office  
1887 Wili Pa Loop, Suite #2  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793  
Ph: (808) 242-6129  
Fax: (808) 242-9519

Kaua'i Chapter Office  
4264 Rice Street, Lihue  
Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 1708  
Lihue, Hawaii 96766  
Ph: (808) 246-8911

Chair Brian Taniguchi

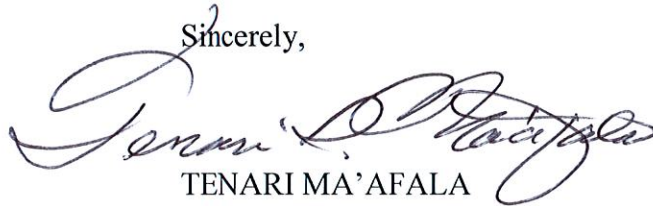
4/10/15

Page 2

As police officers, we strive for the highest levels of integrity and ethics and take great comfort in knowing that Justice Acoba is of a like mind and practice. Based on our observations, it is clear that Justice Acoba's starting point is one of fundamental fairness and an even playing field for all. Combining his sense of fairness with his analytic mind, expansive legal knowledge and experience and a balanced temperament, he is without question well qualified for the position. He enjoys a well earned reputation for having an incredible work ethic and is of impeccable character and integrity. He is certainly by all measures one of the brightest and most balanced judges that have come through the judiciary.

We fully support Justice Acoba's nomination and believe he has everything it takes to be a productive and outstanding regent. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this nomination and we sincerely hope Justice Acoba will receive your committee's favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tenari Ma'afala", written in a cursive style.

TENARI MA'AFALA  
SHOPO PRESIDENT



# Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President  
P. O. Box 270126 ★ Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 550

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair; and Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Senate Members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
From: Jake Manegdeg, President, Filipino American Citizens League

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for a term to expire 6-30-2017.

My name is Jake Manegdeg. As president of the Filipino American Citizens League, I am proud to submit our full support of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i. The Filipino American Citizens League was formed over ten years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

The Coalition supports Mr. Acoba, because as a retired judge, he has knowledge of the law, and experience in applying the law fairly to complex cases. This type of expertise is critical to address education disparities, while at the same time ensuring student achievement for all students.

The achievements and contributions of Filipinos in Hawai'i since 1906 have been well documented. But with 108 years of Filipinos in Hawai'i, Filipinos as a whole still fall short of attaining parity in society. Our Coalition is concerned about the disproportionate number of Filipino students who are under-achieving and struggling in our public schools and state colleges and university. The consequences are dire. Filipinos are under-represented in executive positions, and over-represented in low-paying entry level positions with no job security in the visitor, service, food, and agricultural industries. This segment of Filipinos in Hawai'i's workforce can never afford the cost of middle class comforts and the privilege of stability for themselves and their families because of income inequality, no matter how many part-time jobs they squeeze into 24 hours, often, at the expense of not seeing their children.

While this is the trend for Filipinos, other groups such as Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, people who are houseless, veterans re-entering society, single parents, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender individuals, and more also have much to contribute to society, but are the least likely to apply nor be admitted into higher education. The Coalition believes that is why we taxpayers should be investing in, not divesting from education for our vulnerable students in the University of Hawai'i statewide system. We look to Mr. Acoba to ensure rigorous discourse at the BOR to ensure that Hawai'i produces leadership, scholarship and stewardship that will transform our struggling students in low achieving schools to civic-minded, productive leaders in our communities and families.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer the Coalition's support of Mr. Acoba's confirmation.

Very Sincerely,

Jake Manegdeg, President, Filipino American Citizens League

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 550**

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair; and Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Senate Members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

From: Maria Etrata, President, United Filipino Council of Hawaii

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for a term to expire 6-30-2017.

My name is Maria Etrata, president of the United Filipino Council of Hawaii, an umbrella organization with member organizations from six islands. UFCH membership is comprised of nearly 5,000 individual members.

UFCH strongly supports Governor David Ige's nominee, retired judge Simeon Acoba, Jr., for consideration and confirmation to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. His years of judicial experience will be an asset to the BOR, because his skill sets and temperament can provide the rigor and balance necessary to deliberate on complex, legal issues and contracts that require costly litigious solutions.

UFCH is confident that Mr. Acoba is the right person to do right by the people of Hawai'i.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to offer our testimony in strong support of Mr. Acoba. Thank you for your kind consideration to approve his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Maria Etrata  
President  
United Filipino Council of Hawaii

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 550**

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair; and Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Senate Members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

From: Alex Vergara, President, Oahu Filipino Community Council

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for a term to expire 6-30-2017.

My name is Alex Vergara, president of the Oahu Filipino Community Council, which is an umbrella organization that represents a network of more than 35 civic groups with a vision to improve the lives of Filipino communities on the island of Oahu.

Oahu Filipino Community Council is very proud to support the confirmation of retired judge Simeon Acoba, Jr. His excellent service in Hawai'i's judicial system has shown him to be impartial, astute and equitable in the discernment and application of the law. We in the Filipino community look up to him as an elder statesman.

OFCC holds Mr. Acoba in the highest esteem. We entrust him to add a critical voice of reason and sensitivity to diversity in the important discourse of stewardship for the wisest use of limited resources for higher education, not only for those who can afford it, but also for those who are sorely underrepresented on our Hawai'i college and university campuses.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to offer our testimony for Mr. Acoba, and for your consideration to support his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Alex Vergara  
President  
Oahu Filipino Community Council

# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Pamantasan Executive Council

DATE: April 13, 2015

TO: Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

FROM: Christine Quemuel  
University of Hawai'i Pamantasan Executive Council

RE: **Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 550 Simeon Acoba Jr. Nomination to the UH Board of Regents**  
**Hearing date: Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 1:30pm**

We respectfully submit testimony for the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts Hearing on Wednesday, April 15, 2015, in strong support for GM 550 Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. nomination to the UH Board of Regents. This does not represent official University of Hawai'i testimony.

The Pamantasan Executive Council has representatives from all of the University of Hawai'i campuses throughout the system. This statewide organization is concerned with the status of Filipino students, staff, and faculty in the University of Hawai'i System, and is writing in strong support for the nomination of retired Hawai'i Supreme Court Associate Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. to the UH Board of Regents. Justice Acoba is currently a lecturer at the UH Mānoa William S. Richardson School of law, which reflects his commitment to higher education and supporting future generations of Hawai'i students.

Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, Simeon Acoba, Jr. has had a distinguished career that began as a law clerk for Chief Justice William Richardson, before serving as special assistant to UH President Harlan Cleveland. He was an associate judge on the Intermediate Court of Appeals, a Circuit Court Judge, and a District Court Judge. He is the founding chair of the Hawai'i Access to Justice Commission, and serves as the chair of the Judiciary's Strategic Planning Committee. He is also the co-chair of the Hawai'i State Bar Association's Judicial Administration Committee, and director of the Hawai'i Justice Foundation and the Mediation Center of the Pacific.

We believe that Simeon Acoba, Jr. has a long and distinguished career serving the people of Hawai'i, and he has the experience to provide the leadership and fairness needed to serve on the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents. The University of Hawai'i Pamantasan Council strongly supports his nomination.



# THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

94-428 Mokuola St., Suite 302 . Waipahu, Hawai'i 96797. Phone: 680-0451 .Fax: 680-7510 . [www.filcom.org](http://www.filcom.org)

*Our Mission is to develop, own and operate a community center that provides social, economic and education services, and to promote and perpetuate Filipino culture and customs in the State of Hawai'i.*

April 11, 2015

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Honorable Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. (Ret.) Retention on University of Hawaii Board of Regents

Dear Honorable Taniguchi,

Throughout Justice Acoba's humble career, he has been a vocal leader in the community ensuring that his concerns, beliefs, and ideals were heard and a staunch jurist having his views and concerns documented when rendering decisions. An active public servant, Justice Acoba simply does not passively listen and follow, but rather diligently and meticulously addresses each issue to ensure that ambiguities are not permitted to remain unresolved. This is precisely the need of a Board Regent with the University of Hawaii.

His undergraduate studies occurred at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Upon his completion of law school at the Northwestern University School of Law in 1969, he immediately returned to Hawaii to begin his legal career. His passion for the law elevated him to the bench. After reaching the mandatory retirement age for the Hawaii Supreme Court in 2014, Justice Acoba chose not to retire into the sunset. He continues to serve as a member, chair, or director on various commissions throughout the State of Hawaii. His continued involvement with education and its supporting institutions is well-established. His experience as an adjunct professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law and his devotion to providing the most externships while on the bench are definitive examples. In furtherance of his public service, Justice Acoba went on to develop and found the Commission for the Hawaii Access to Justice and was its Chair from 2008-2010.

His experience, expertise, and accomplishments are supported with numerous laurels and accolades yet his humility and passion supersedes each one of them. His support of the community at large is cemented in his volunteerism as well as in his various contributions. Justice Acoba continues his support of The Filipino Community Center, Inc. in Waipahu, Hawaii having recently been honored in 2014 for his established legacy. It is with neither hesitation nor reservation, that we strongly support Justice Acoba's continued service and retention on the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents. The State of Hawaii and the University of Hawaii should continue to reap the benefits of this public servant. Thank you for considering our letter of recommendation and praise of Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.

Respectfully,  
THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

Edmund C. Aczon  
Chairman of the Board of Directors



**From:** [A Asano](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOPA JR. NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
**Date:** Sunday, April 12, 2015 1:56:38 PM

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Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

HEARING DATE April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Aletta Asano

I am writing in support of the nomination of Simeon R. Acoba Jr. to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Mr. Acoba has had a most distinguished public service career as a former judge and justice in the Hawaii Circuit Court, Intermediate Court of Appeals and Supreme Court. He has received numerous national and local awards and commendations attesting to his judicial excellence and public service.

Simeon Acoba Jr., an alumnus of the University of Hawaii, has been serving as an interim regent for the past few months and is already familiar and involved with the numerous challenges facing the University. There is no doubt that with his breadth of experience and knowledge, he can facilitate the resolution of these issues and help to shape the future of the University.

Please consider the nomination of Simeon Acoba Jr. to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Aloha and mahalo.



**LAW OFFICES OF ALFREDO EVANGELISTA**  
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW COMPANY

April 13, 2015

**Via Electronic Mail to HEAtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov**

The Hon. Brian Taniguchi  
and Hon. Members of the Senate Higher Education and the Arts Committee  
State Capitol  
417 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM 550  
Appointment of Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. to University of Hawaii Board of Regents

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Dear Senator Taniguchi and members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of the confirmation of Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. as a member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.


I have known Retired Justice Acoba for over thirty years when I began practicing law and appearing before his court. In later years, I would socialize with him about twice a month.

During my long association with Justice Acoba, I always found him to be highly principled, hard working, and dedicated. He is proud of his alma mater and sincere about making a difference at the University of Hawaii. And he is not afraid to speak his mind—as evidenced by his dissenting opinions on the Supreme Court of Hawaii. I believe he is a very inclusive person as shown by his involvement in access to justice issues. Simply put, Justice Acoba believes in doing the right thing for the University and the entire State of Hawaii. He is an asset to the University and his continuation on the Board of Regents is necessary to ensure the University moves forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,

**LAW OFFICES OF ALFREDO EVANGELISTA**  
**A Limited Liability Law Company**

  
**Alfredo G. Evangelista**



**Testimony in support of GM 550: Simeon Acoba Jr. for the Board of Regents**

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

April 15, 2015 @ 1:30pm

Hawai'i State Legislature, Room 211

To: Honorable Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Honorable Senator Lorraine Inouye, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Committee Members

From: Amy Agbayani  
3432 B-1 Kalihi St. Honolulu, HI 96819  
amy\_agbayani@yahoo.com

My name is Amy Agbayani, I am the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Diversity at UH Manoa but do not represent UH. I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in strong support of Governor Ige's nomination of Mr. Simeon Acoba Jr. as a Regent of the University of Hawai'i. Mr. Acoba has integrity, a track record of competence and support of UH.

I have known Mr. Acoba for five decades. I first met Mr. Acoba when he was an undergraduate political science major and an active ASUH student leader at UH Manoa in Fall 1964. At the time, I was a new graduate student with the East West Center and we were classmates in a political theory class taught by the iconic professor Allan Saunders. Over the years, I have observed his academic success, his intellectual and legal analysis, his competent and fair judgments as a member of the judiciary and his service to the community. He has had a very long relationship with UH, first as an undergraduate, as a deputy AG advising the President and the board, lecturer and mentor of many UH law students, interim Regent and proud father of a JABSOM medical graduate. Mr. Acoba and his wife Carolyn continue to share their appreciation of their alma mater by their recent donation for a scholarship program. UH in turn has acknowledged his contributions to our state and the University by awarding him the UH Foundation Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award for 2015.

As part of my responsibilities at UH and my community service, I have had the honor to observe and work with Mr. Acoba on community events relating to civil rights and diversity. I was very pleased that his work was recently recognized by the Japanese American Citizen's League, one of the leading civil rights groups in Hawaii and the nation. UH efforts to improve access for under-served groups and under-represented groups continue to benefit from workshops and policy recommendations of the Access to Justice Commission, which was founded by Mr. Acoba when he was an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

Although I am familiar with Mr. Acoba's public service which impacts many policy areas and all ethnic groups in our state, I will focus my comments on his impact and importance to the Filipino community as a role model for Filipinos and our multicultural community. I believe it is important for the private sector, the state and the university to meet goals for inclusion and affirmative action to increase representation and success of Filipinos, other ethnic groups and women who are under-represented in public and private sector management and policy making boards. I believe representation and diversity in state government is important and results in better policies for our community. There are seventeen state departments and Governor David Ige has to date appointed one Filipino cabinet member (DBED director Luis Salaveria) and two deputy directors (DHERD Randy Baldomero and DOT Jade Butay). Mr. Acoba will add ethnic diversity and his competence and experience to serve the state of Hawai'i and the University. Mr. Acoba will be the second Filipino on the 15 member board, the other Filipino Regent is the student Regent, Michelle Tagorda.

This brief quote from a legislative committee report provides some background and context for the need to increase the participation of Filipinos at UH: "The Filipino community has grown since the first immigrants came to Hawai'i in 1906. According to the 2010 United States Census, people of Filipino ancestry are the second largest ethnic group in Hawai'i, with fifteen per cent of residents identifying themselves as Filipino alone and twenty five per cent of residents identifying themselves as Filipino and another race. Students of Filipino ancestry are also the second largest ethnic group in the department of education and represent more than half of the student population at Farrington high school, Waipahu high school, and Lanai high and elementary school.

The legislature also finds that, despite their high representation in the general population and schools within the department of education, students of Filipino ancestry are underrepresented in the University of Hawaii system. Filipino students comprise only twelve per cent of the entire University of Hawaii system student population. Six per cent of the community colleges faculty and two and a half per cent of the University of Hawaii at Manoa faculty are of Filipino ancestry. The fifteen per cent postsecondary degree rate held by Filipinos is the lowest among all ethnic groups in Hawaii. "

During his career, Mr. Acoba has demonstrated his leadership, competence, integrity, community engagement and strong positive ties to the UH. I am confident that he will continue to be a responsible member of the Board of Regents. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank him for being a mentor many young professionals and for his significant role to improve access to justice and equal opportunity. He has a deep appreciation of the history of UH and our state. I am confident that he will make a positive contribution to the UH and its future. I respectfully ask you to confirm his nomination as a Regent.

***ANTHONY H. YUSI***

ATTORNEY AT LAW

A Law Corporation

DILLINGHAM TRANSPORTATION BUILDING

SUITE 417, 735 BISHOP STREET

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

TELEPHONE: (808) 531-8121

FAX: (808) 531-8121

**FAX TRANSMITTAL**

DATE: April 13, 2015

Time: appr. 1:15 pm

Fax No.: (808) 586-6461

TO:

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Members of the Committee

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

State Capitol

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Hard copy:

( ) Follows

(XXX) Won't Follow

FROM: ANTHONY H. YUSI

Re: Testimony in support of GM 550 Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.

Nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

This transmittal consists of (2) page(s), including this page. It is intended only for the person to whom it is addressed. If that person is our client, this is CONFIDENTIAL attorney-client communications. IF YOU ARE NOT THE ADDRESSEE: (a) we sent this fax to you by mistake; (b) you are strictly prohibited from examining, reproducing or transmitting this message or any items transmitted with this message; (c) please call us immediately (we will reimburse any long-distance telephone charges), and we will instruct you as to what to do with this fax.

Document(s) transmitted: Testimony in support of Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.'s nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

Comments:

Fax operator: AHY.

**ANTHONY H. YUSI**

ATTORNEY AT LAW  
A Law Corporation

DILLINGHAM TRANSPORTATION BUILDING  
735 BISHOP STREET, SUITE 417  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 531-8121  
FAX: (808) 531-8121

Faxed Mailed: (808) 586-6461

April 13, 2015

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Members of the Committee  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: Testimony in support of GM 550 Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.  
Nomination to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents

Dear Senator Taniguchi and Committee Members:

I am a 1974 graduate of the University of Hawai'i and a life-long resident of Hawai'i.  
I have been practicing law in Hawai'i since 1977.

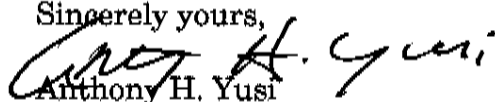
I am writing to urge the continued appointment of Retired Justice Simeon R. Acoba as  
a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i.

Justice Acoba brings unique talents and insights which would be invaluable to the  
Board of Regents and the University. As a result of his lengthy service as a Circuit  
Court Judge and as an Associate Justice of the Hawai'i Supreme Court, Justice Acoba  
has many years of hands on experience in adjudicating issues that affect the young  
adults of Hawai'i. He is committed to providing a quality educational experience for  
these young adults and helping them become successful and productive members of  
our community.

Justice Acoba's integrity is unimpeachable and he has never been one to go along to  
get along. This is very refreshing. Justice Acoba's is an independent thinker with  
outstanding intellectual and analytical abilities that are demonstrated in his many  
principled decisions that he authored while serving as an Associate Justice of the  
Hawai'i Supreme Court.

Thank you for letting me express these thoughts on a very worthy person and urge his  
appointment as a member of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

Sincerely yours,

  
Anthony H. Yusi



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Bryan P. Andaya  
Chief Operating Officer and Vice President

April 13, 2015

Testimony in **Strong Support of GM550 Simeon Acoba, Jr.** - HEA 4/15/15 12 noon  
Rm 211

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the entire L & L 'Ohana, our 190 franchisees, and our co-founder Eddie Flores, Jr., I am proud to submit testimony in **strong support of GM550 appointing Ret. Hawaii Supreme Court Justice Simeon Acoba, Jr.** (Justice Acoba) to the Board of Regents, University of Hawai'i.

Although I have been acquainted with Justice Acoba for approximately ten years, he has been a huge role model of mine ever since I decided to become a lawyer over 25 years ago. As a child of immigrants from the Philippines, I had very few role models in the legal profession because Filipinos have long been underrepresented in the legal profession and on the bench. Justice Acoba, however, stood out as a shining star.

Even today, I can recite by memory his legal career starting from where he went to law school, his time in practice, and his career as a judge and eventually as a Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court. Even today, although I no longer practice law on a full-time basis, I consider Justice Acoba a role model who has inspired me to be the best I can be and to give back to the community.

Justice Acoba's intellect, legal acumen, and masterful writing skills are clearly evident and need no explication, but these skills along with his tenacity, penchant for hard work, and dedication towards anything to which he commits are qualities that cannot be undervalued as a regent of the University system. I can only imagine the immense challenges that one must face as a regent, but I know Justice Acoba has what it takes to solve the complex problems faced by University and to establish sound policy for one of Hawaii's most important institutions.

Through perhaps thousands of cases Justice Acoba has handled, he has ability to analyze and make sense of a multitude of very complex problem and has the foresight and experiences necessary. In addition, a lifetime of public service indicates Justice Acoba's willingness to continue his admirable dedication to the people of the State of Hawaii.

Finally, Justice Acoba brings much-needed diversity and balance to the Board of Regents. Filipinos comprise over 20% of Hawaii's population and perhaps a similar percentage of the students in the University system, but so few Filipinos are in policy-making and leadership positions like the Board of Regents. I believe a diverse board is necessary to adequately address the needs of diverse stakeholders.

For these reasons, we **strongly support** Justice Acoba's nomination.

Very truly yours,  
Bryan Andaya

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April 9, 2015

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

HEARING DATE: April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR. NOMINATION TO  
THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Carol K. Muranaka

I am writing in strong support of the continuation of former Supreme Court Associate Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. to serve on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Justice Acoba possesses the qualities to be an outstanding member of the Board of Regents. He served as the Chair of the Hawaii Access to Justice Commission from its inception in 2008 to 2010. He enthusiastically led the Commission on its mission to substantially increase access to justice in civil legal matters for low- and moderate-income residents of Hawaii. He continues his volunteer service with the Commission as Chair of the Commission's Administration Committee and Pro Bono Initiatives Task Force and other lead roles in bar committees.

Justice Acoba began his judicial career as a district court judge in 1979. He was subsequently appointed to the Circuit Court of the First Circuit (Honolulu) in 1980.

In 1994, Justice Acoba was confirmed as an appellate judge on the Hawaii Intermediate Court Appeals. On May 19, 2000, Justice Acoba was sworn in as an Associate Justice on the Hawaii Supreme Court. When Justice Acoba was being considered for confirmation to the Hawaii Supreme Court, many in the Filipino community praised him as a role model.

He is a role model for all.

As Co-Chair of the Committee on Judicial Administration of the Hawaii State Bar Association ("HSBA"), Justice Acoba and his Co-Chair, James Kawashima, an experienced trial lawyer, gathered together a group of energetic individuals who were representative of the bar's diversity to comprise the committee. A successful Bench-Bar Conference in September 2012 was the culmination of months of organization and planning. That Bench-Bar Conference led to a momentum of innovative changes to the judicial process.



Although Justice Acoba is no longer the Chair of the Commission, he is still fully engaged in its work as Chair of the Administration Committee. This committee assists the Chair of the Commission in developing the agenda for each Commission meeting and in arranging for presenters and for written or electronic materials in support of the agenda items; assists in developing a budget for the Commission, including identifying sources of funding, and providing reports on the status of operations relative to the budget, and assists in providing administrative and logistical assistance to the Commission and its committees and task forces.

He cares not about accolades, but cares about the final “product.” He cares about reaching excellence and going above and beyond the normal expectations. Justice Acoba demonstrates and has demonstrated throughout his judicial career the qualities that make him stand out. He is a principled man who is courageous in his ideals. He is bright, fair, honest, kind, humble, and conscientious.

Justice Acoba is an excellent asset to the Board of Regents, and he will continue to be one of those rare individuals who is willing to share his intellect and wisdom in improving the system.

# TSUGAWA BIEHL LAU & MUZZI

A Hawaii Limited Liability Law Company

Michael L. Biehl  
Tedson H. Koja  
Alan K. Lau  
Christopher J. Muzzi  
Leila M. Rothwell Sullivan  
Eric H. Tsugawa

BISHOP PLACE  
1132 BISHOP STREET, SUITE 2400  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

TELEPHONE: 808.531.0490  
FACSIMILE: 808.534.0202  
WEBSITE: <http://hilaw.us>

April 14, 2015

Of Counsel:  
Frank T. Kanemitsu  
Attorney At Law  
A Law Corporation

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

HEARING DATE: April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR. NOMINATION TO THE  
UH BOARD OF REGENTS

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Christopher J. Muzzi

Dear Committee:

I would like to express my strong support for the nomination of Simeon Acoba to serve on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

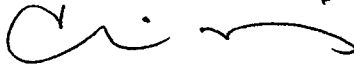
Simeon served as an Interim Regent and I am sure you are familiar with his impressive credentials and I will not repeat his accomplishments here. However, I would like to convey to you my personal knowledge of certain important characteristics that Simeon possesses that more than qualify him to serve as a Regent.

I have known Simeon for about eighteen years (since 1997). My career as an attorney started when Simeon hired me as one of his law clerks while he served on the Intermediate Court of Appeals. During my yearlong clerkship, I got to know Simeon quite well and have continued my friendship with him since then. From my almost two decades of knowing Simeon, I can attest that: Simeon is very smart and makes well-reasoned decisions, as evidenced by his numerous written opinions as an appellate judge and justice; His work ethic is Herculean: he always gives 100%; He has the courage to do the right thing, even if the right thing may be unpopular; and He cares deeply about the State of Hawaii and its people and seeks to improve everybody's life through public service.

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
April 14, 2015  
Page 2

Simeon was a perfect choice for selection as an interim Regent. I strongly support Simeon's continued service as a Regent. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have or provide more information in support of Simeon. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Muzzi", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher J. Muzzi

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
HEARING DATE April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD  
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR.  
NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Clarence Liu, Retired Hospice Chaplain

It is said that at the end of Lao Tzu's life he was asked to reflect upon his life and to commit these truths to writing, that posterity would benefit from his unparalleled wisdom. Today we know this testimony as the *I Ching*, the path of virtue, to which people in every age have turned for guidance and wisdom.

The *I Ching* declares that leadership and governance, in great measure, depend upon the *quality* or character of the individual. If the wrong man uses good means, wrongness prevails; if the right man uses wrong means, goodness prevails. I support the nomination of Simeon Acoba Jr. to the UH Board of Regents because of his character, i.e., his credibility, integrity and judgment.

He rose from humble beginnings in Kalihi to sit upon the highest court of the State. His history on the Bench is one of being incorruptible, fair-minded and just. He has never forgotten his roots and has a great love for Hawaii and her people. His integrity is above reproach; his judgments are value-based, especially extending to the "widow and orphan," the standard by which a truly just society is judged.

In a time when the UH is being rocked by so much *pilikia*, how refreshing to have a candidate of this caliber and stature on the Board of Regents. We could do worse than heeding the wisdom of the *I Ching*.

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, President,  
And Members of the Senate  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: Testimony for Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, term to expire 6-30-2017.

Dear Senate President Kim and Members of the Senate:

I am writing to support Gubernatorial nominee, Simeon Acoba, Jr., for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

It is widely known and appreciated that Justice Acoba has been a staunch leader in the community ensuring that his concerns, beliefs, and ideals were heard and a candid jurist having his views and concerns documented when rendering decisions. Justice Acoba simply does not passively listen and follow but, rather, meticulously and openly addresses each issue to ensure that ambiguities are not permitted to remain unresolved. This diligence is precisely needed for a Board Regent with the University of Hawaii.

Justice Acoba obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, completed his law degree at the Northwestern University School of Law in 1969 and immediately returned to Hawaii to begin a stellar legal career. He served on the Hawaii Supreme Court until 2014, after which he has continued to serve as a member, chair, or director on various commissions throughout the State of Hawaii. His involvement with education and its supporting institutions is well-established. Not only has Justice Acoba served as an adjunct professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law, he has also provided the most externships while on the bench. In furtherance of his public service, Justice Acoba went on to develop and found the Commission for the Hawaii Access to Justice and served as its Chair from 2008-2010.

An educated citizenry is the foundation for every artistic, cultural, economic, political and social advancement a society can ever hope to attain. In a democratic republic, this education must be formed and provided in an efficient and, more significantly, equitable manner to all its citizens, regardless class, gender or national origins. To manage and oversee this provision at society's highest level requires a full yet nuance understanding of society and its historical underpinnings. Justice Acoba's notable experience, expertise and accomplishments should be applied as a member of the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents. Thank you for considering my letter of recommendation and praise of Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.

Respectfully,

Clement C. Bautista  
Director, UHM Office of Multicultural Student Services

Administrator, eFIL: Filipino Digital Archives of Hawaii

Past Commander, Knights of Rizal, Hawaii Chapter

Past President, Japanese American Citizen's League, Honolulu Chapter

**Colbert Matsumoto**  
**1132 Bishop Street, Suite 2450**  
**Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Committee on Higher Education  
Hawaii State Senate  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: GM 550 - UH Board of Regents - SIMEON ACOBA

Dear Chair Taniguchi:

This is to express my hope that you and the members of your committee will confirm Governor Ige's appointment of Retired Justice SIMEON ACOBA as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I have known Justice Acoba for over 35 years and have always respected him for his intellect and integrity. While I have disagreed with some of his rulings as a judge, I have always found his decisions to have been based upon the merits and the evidence before him. He is not one to be moved by personal considerations or any political agenda. He has a proven capacity to look at decisions on a policy level. That perspective has enabled him to make tough choices that were sometimes unpopular and not viewed as expedient. It is based on that knowledge that I am confident that he will serve the University of Hawaii and the citizens of Hawaii well in the leadership role a regent plays in overseeing that institution and helping shape its future.

For these reasons I encourage you to give favorable consideration to nominating Justice Acoba as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Colbert Matsumoto

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 550**

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair; and Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Senate Members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

From: Deanna Espinas, Board Member, Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for a term to expire 6-30-2017.

My name is Deanna Espinas. As a board member of the Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum, we support the confirmation of gubernatorial nominee Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the UH Board of Regents. We believe that education of Hawai'i's rich multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and labor history should never be forgotten, because historical lessons learned can serve as a social justice compass to understand and resolve persistent inequalities in striving for a civil and just society.

We believe that Mr. Acoba possesses the life experiences and socio-cultural heritage and background of living in Hawai'i that can enrich the perspectives in deliberating policies and resolving difficult issues that continue to overshadow the real work of increasing access to a quality education for all students, including those who are under-represented, low-income and first to go to college in their generation.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to offer our testimony for Mr. Acoba, and for your consideration to support his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Deanna Espinas

**From:** [Dawn Danielson](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** RE: U.H. Board of Regents  
**Date:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 3:09:18 PM

---

Via Email: [HEAtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HEAtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Committee on Higher  
Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair,  
Re: Confirmation Hearing of April 15, 2015

RE: Appointment of Simoen Acoba, Jr. To the U.H. Board of Regents

To the Honorable Committee and Senator Taniguchi:

I am submitting this written testimony to support the appointment of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the U.H. Board of Regents. I have known Justice Acoba for more than 40 years, have practiced law and worked on cases with him, and am familiar with many of the opinions he has written during his years as an Appellate Judge and Associate Supreme Court Justice dealing with many of the most momentous and important issues in both civil and criminal law that our State has faced with over the last 25 years. I unequivocally support Justice Acoba's appointment to the Board of Regents because he is a man of unsurpassed integrity and top notch intellect who will always make the welfare of the State of Hawaii, and specifically the University of Hawaii, his top priority regardless of what extraneous or political issues may be involved. I would be happy to provide additional information or answer further questions if asked to do so. Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony to the Committee.

Very truly yours,

*Dennis W. Potts /s/*

DENNIS W. POTTS  
DWP/dmd

--

Dawn M. Danielson, Paralegal to Dennis W. Potts, 841 Bishop St., Suite 1628, Honolulu, HI 96813, Phone: 808-537-4575, Fax: 808-537-4576, Email: [dawnmdanielson@gmail.com](mailto:dawnmdanielson@gmail.com)



**From:** [Derek Wong](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [Derek Wong \(derekw\\_hawaii@yahoo.com\)](mailto:derekw_hawaii@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR. NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
**Date:** Monday, April 13, 2015 9:52:43 AM

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TO: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

HEARING DATE April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR. NOMINATION TO THE  
UH BOARD OF REGENTS

**This email is written in support of Simeon Acoba, Jr.'s confirmation as a University of Hawaii regent.**

**I am a UH Alumnus as are my sister and brother, all of which used UH as a springboard to advanced degrees/certifications. As a UH Alumnus and a father of a 6 year old daughter, the future of UH as a affordable, viable and competent educational institution is personal. I want my daughter to attend not an ordinary university, but an outstanding one. I am hopeful that she might stay in Hawaii for her undergraduate or at least that UH will be an option, but like many others, seriously doubt where UH will be in the coming years.**

**Justice Acoba is renown for his integrity, intellectual honesty, wisdom and commitment to community service. As a former Attorney General, private practitioner, Hawaii District and Circuit court judge and Hawaii Supreme Court Associate Justice, Justice Acoba's appointment to the UH Board of Regents was and is deserved and meritorious. As a former Associate Justice and judge, he is experienced in analyzing and resolving complex issues and possesses the wisdom and foresight to make the difficult but right decisions. Justice Acoba is also kama'aina—Farrington High and UH graduate —vested in Hawaii. His skillset, experience and inherent attributes will undoubtedly translate into a capable and outstanding regent.**

**I urge you to confirm the nomination of Justice Simeon Acoba Jr. for the Board of Regents. I know that UH will definitely be in a better hands and confident that UH will be headed in the right direction with Simeon Acoba Jr. as one of its regents.**

**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Derek Wong, Esq.**

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM 550**

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair; and Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Senate Members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

From: Domingo Los Banos, Board Member, Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum

Subject: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i, Gubernatorial Nominee, SIMEON ACOBA, JR., for a term to expire 6-30-2017.

My name is Domingo Los Banos. I strongly support Governor David Ige's nominee, retired judge Simeon Acoba, Jr., for consideration and confirmation to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

I serve as a board member of the Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum. I also retired many years ago as an educator and Leeward District Superintendent of the Hawai'i State Department of Education. Since then, I have produced a documentary to educate the public about the role of Filipino World War II veterans called "Unsung Heroes".

During my whole career as an educator, Filipinos, Native Hawaiians, and many disenfranchised groups of children are more likely than other groups to come from struggling public schools where more than three-fourths of the students qualify for federally funded school lunches. I know that these are the students who are now grandparents, and even parents, whose children need a champion like Mr. Acoba to "arm wrestle" those folks on the Board of Regents to ensure that

In closing, I am grateful to Governor David Ige for nominating a candidate with the highest integrity in Mr. William M. Domingo. Thank you for your kind consideration to approve his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Domingo Los Banos  
Member, Board of Directors  
Hawai'i Plantation Village Museum

LAW OFFICE OF  
DOUGLAS A. CROSIER, LLC

Attorney at Law  
Office in Century Square

1188 Bishop Street, Suite 707, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813/ Tel. (808) 599-7677/ Fax (808) 599-7679  
E-mail: douglascrosier@gmail.com

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April 13, 2015

VIA FACSIMILE 808-586-6461

EMAIL ATTACHMENT TO:  
HEAtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

HEARING DATE APRIL 15, 2015, 1:30 P.M.  
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA, JR.  
NOMINATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII BOARD OF  
REGENTS

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: In strong support of the Honorable Simeon R. Acoba (ret.)  
Nomination for the appointment as Regent to the Board  
of Regents, University of Hawaii

Dear Senator Taniguchi and Committee Senators:

I am writing to you in strong support of and to express my unequivocal endorsement of Justice Simeon R. Acoba (ret.) for your favorable consideration for the appointment to position as a Regent of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I am an attorney in good standing licensed for over 33 years in the

State of Hawaii. In the course of practicing law for the past three decades and in the course of my activities as the 2003 president of the Hawaii State Bar Association ("HSBA"), I have had several opportunities to observe and on some occasions to work directly with Justice Acoba in various matters including when Justice Acoba was an active committee member of the HSBA Standing Committee on Judicial Administration. Justice Acoba was the Judiciary's representative on this lawyers' committee. From my experience, I find Justice Acoba as one of the finest public leaders I have ever had the pleasure and honor of knowing.

If there is one trait among several that Justice Acoba has that would benefit the University of Hawaii, it is his credibility and patience. In addition, Justice Acoba has the unique combination of legal expertise and knowledge, and compassion for those less fortunate. He has demonstrated all of these qualities as the founding chair of the Supreme Court of Hawaii's Access to Justice Commission ("Commission") which was formed by the Hawaii Supreme Court in 2008. Justice Acoba was pivotal as the Commission's first chair in having the Commission attain the credibility and support of the legal community and the public which was needed in order to galvanize interest and commitment by lawyers to volunteer their services to those who cannot afford legal representation. As a result of his leadership the Commission's work in 7 short years have evolved to national prominence. Recently, the National Center for Access to Justice released its Justice Index Findings and named Hawaii as one of the top states in the country for best practices of ensuring access to the civil and criminal justice systems. The report measured how accessible the justice system is in four categories: attorney access for low-income litigants; support for self-represented litigants; support for litigants with limited language proficiency; and support for people with disabilities. Justice Acoba's pioneer leadership of the Commission set the framework and foundation for the Commission which eventually evolved to its current respected status as a leader in providing volunteer legal services to those who



are unable to afford lawyers.

Justice Acoba's continued presence on the Board of Regents will be of tremendous value to our university community and the public in that he possesses the ingenuity, intelligence, and skills that are needed to address the myriad of issues facing our university. His presence will bring a measure of credibility for the Board which is critical for public and financial support for the University of Hawaii to maintain respect as a top quality university.

I sincerely hope you will approve the nomination of Justice Simeon A. Acoba as Regent for the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

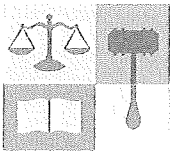
Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Doug Crosier', written in a cursive style.

DOUGLAS A. CROSIER

DAC:cn

Cc Justice Simeon R. Acoba (ret.)



LAW OFFICES OF FRANZ D. JUAN LLC

P.O. Box 110

Pearl City, HI 96782

Tel. No.: (808) 488-5660 email: donjuaesq@yahoo.com

Franz D. Juan, CPA  
*Attorney at Law*

April 11, 2015

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Honorable Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate, State of Hawaii  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR. NOMINATION TO  
THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS

Dear Honorable Taniguchi,

Justice Simeon R. Acoba has been a vocal leader in the community ensuring that his concerns, beliefs, and ideals were heard and a steadfast jurist having his views and concerns documented when rendering decisions. Justice Acoba represents the precise type of individual that the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents needs. His methodical approach to addressing issues removes any uncertainty.

Justice Acoba's ties to the university go back to his undergraduate studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. His continued involvement with education and its supporting institutions is well-established including his experience as an adjunct professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law.

His experience, expertise, and accomplishments are supported with numerous laurels and accolades yet his humility and passion supersedes each one of them. His support of the community at large is cemented in his volunteerism as well as in his various contributions.

It is with neither hesitation nor reservation that I strongly support Justice Acoba's continued service and retention on the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents. The State of Hawaii and the University of Hawaii should continue to reap the benefits of this public servant. Thank you for considering my letter of recommendation and praise of Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.

Respectfully,  
LAW OFFICES OF FRANZ D. JUAN LLC

Franz D. Juan

**Testimony of  
Gary M. Slovin / Mihoko E. Ito**

DATE: April 13, 2015

TO: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi  
Chair, Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
*Submitted Via [HEAtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:HEAtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)*

RE: **GM 550 – Consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, Simeon Acoba, Jr.**  
**Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.**  
**Conference Room: 211**

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Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Arts:

We submit this testimony in enthusiastic support of the nomination of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. We have known and worked with Justice Acoba for many years, including appearing before him as a jurist. As a judge, he was fair, reasonable and diligent. If you made a good argument, you had a fair chance of persuading him to your side. If you had a weak argument your chances were not so good. Justice Acoba stands for something in this community. He leads by example—he is a person of unquestioned integrity. In recent years he has put his passion behind finding ways to achieve justice for the indigent. His support on this matter has been consistent and strong, innovative and daring. His qualities are very consistent with the qualities needed by a regent. He is also a person who is admired; his appointment will add to the stature of the Regents as a group and that is not unimportant. But there is no doubt that his contributions will come from his critical thinking skills and his integrity.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify in support of the nomination of Justice Acoba to the Board of Regents.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

---

Gary M. Slovin  
Mihoko E. Ito

999 Bishop Street, Suite 1400  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 539-0840

**From:** [hayley@cheng-law.com](mailto:hayley@cheng-law.com)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of GM 550 Simeon Acoba Jr. Nomination to the UH Board of Regents  
**Date:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 2:35:16 PM

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Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I am writing in support of confirming Justice Simeon Acoba as a Board Member to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. As a practicing attorney, it was a huge loss to the legal community when Justice Acoba retired from the Hawaii Supreme Court. He was truly one of the most intelligent and thoughtful Justices on the Court, and always ruled with integrity and fairness to all parties. I currently have the pleasure of serving with him on the Judicial Administrative Committee within the Hawaii State Bar Association, and can attest that he is a dedicated leader and humble team player who always has the goals of the committee at heart. I am certain he will bring those same characteristics to the Board of Regents. I appreciate this opportunity to be heard on this matter, and respectfully ask that Justice Acoba be confirmed as a Board Member to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Sincerely,

Hayley Cheng

Hayley Y.C. Cheng  
Attorney at Law  
345 Queen St, Suite 600  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: 808.550.2662  
Fax: 808.599.1645



**From:** [Helene Tajiri](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [Helene96720@gmail.com](mailto:Helene96720@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR  
**Date:** Friday, April 10, 2015 9:58:29 PM

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To Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

I am in support of Simeon Acoba Jr's nomination/appointment to the UH Board of Regents.

Testimony submitted by: Helene H. Tajiri, individual

Thank you for your consideration.

STARN • O'TOOLE • MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

April 9, 2015

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 219  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Testimony in Support of GM 550 Justice Simeon R. Acoba Jr.'s Nomination  
to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii

Dear Chair Taniguchi:

It is my honor to offer my highest recommendation in support of Justice Acoba's nomination to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

I have known Justice Acoba for approximately 44 years. We both served as law clerks (in different years) for the late Chief Justice William S. Richardson. During that span of time I have watched with pride Justice Acoba's enormously valuable contributions to the Hawaii State Judiciary as a judge at every level of the state judicial system. He is a person of unquestioned integrity, outstanding analytical ability, fairness, excellent judicial temperament, and with an incredible commitment to hard work. These attributes will enable him to serve with great distinction on the Board of Regents.

Please find attached information on Justice Acoba's recognition by the American Judicature Society in November 2013 with the Dwight D. Opperman Award for distinguished judicial service. Justice Acoba was selected by a three-member panel comprised of distinguished jurists from Utah, Rhode Island and California out of a candidate pool of judges from throughout the country. Justice Acoba's national honor brought great pride to all citizens in Hawaii, particularly those of us who are participants in the justice system in Hawaii.

It is my sincere belief that, if confirmed, Justice Acoba will serve with great distinction as regent for the University of Hawaii. Mahalo nui for considering my comments.

Aloha ke Akua,



Ivan M. Lui-Kwan

Enclosures



*Ninth Annual  
Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence*

*Presented to*

**Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.**

*Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. exemplifies judicial excellence. He was nominated for his extensive judicial experience, commitment to public service, and leadership in the area of access to justice. He is renowned for being one of Hawaii's most prolific jurists.*

*Justice Acoba's judicial career of nearly 35 years has been — and continues to be — dedicated to improving the administration of justice, expanding access to justice for all, and promoting leadership and public service.*

*Justice Acoba has served as Associate Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court from 2000 to present, Judge on the Hawaii Intermediate Court of Appeals from 1994 to 2000, and Judge on the First Circuit Court from 1980-1994. He presently serves as co-chair of the Hawaii State Bar Association's Judicial Administration Committee. From 2008-2010, Justice Acoba served as Founding Chair of Hawaii's Access to Justice Commission, and has continued to be a active member of the Commission. Under his leadership, the Commission initiated a partnership with the Judiciary, the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Americorps, and state and local bar associations to open Self-Help Centers, or Access to Justice Rooms, in Hawaii's courthouses.*

*The American Judicature Society is privileged to present The Honorable Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. its Ninth Annual Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence.*

*November 1, 2013  
Honolulu, Hawaii*

# NEWS RELEASE



**AMERICAN  
JUDICATURE  
SOCIETY** SM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 4, 2013

American Judicature Society  
James J. Alfini  
(800) 626-4089 or [jalfini@ajs.org](mailto:jalfini@ajs.org)

## **Justice Simeon Acoba of Hawaii to Receive National Award**

**Nashville, Tennessee** – Honorable Simeon Acoba, Justice of the Supreme Court of Hawaii, has been selected to receive the Ninth Annual Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence from the American Judicature Society. AJS President Martha Hill Jamison of the 14<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals of Texas said that, "Justice Acoba's record reflects a superb commitment to judicial excellence."

In his nomination letter, Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald of the Hawaii Supreme Court said, "Justice Acoba has been a sitting judge in Hawaii state courts for nearly 35 years, and has served at every level of the state court system... I believe his extensive judicial experience, commitment to public service, and leadership in the area of access to justice makes him an excellent candidate for this award."

Justice Acoba has served nearly fourteen years on the Hawaii Supreme Court. Chief Justice Recktenwald said that Justice Acoba is "renowned for being one of Hawaii's most prolific jurists", having issued more than 200 published majority opinions and nearly the same number of concurring and dissenting opinions. Justice Acoba presently serves as co-chair of the Hawaii State Bar Association's Judicial Administration Committee, which is responsible for coordinating the bar's activities relating to the improvement of the judiciary and the administration of justice. In supporting his nomination for the Opperman Award, Hawaii Attorney General David M. Louie stated that Justice Acoba "has made extraordinary contributions to ensuring access to justice." From 2008 to 2010, Justice Acoba served as Founding Chair of Hawaii's Access to Justice Commission, and has continued to be an active member of the Commission, serving as Chair of various subcommittees. Under his leadership, the Commission initiated a partnership with the Judiciary, the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Americorps, and state and local bar associations to open Self-Help Centers, or Access to Justice Rooms, in Hawaii's courthouses.

In supporting Justice Acoba's nomination, former Hawaii Governor Benjamin J. Cayetano wrote, "There is no shortage of intelligent jurists in our legal system, however, I believe what distinguishes Justice Acoba is his deep commitment to expanding access to justice for all." Similarly, Liann Ebesugawa, President of the Honolulu Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, wrote, "Justice Acoba remains a beacon of integrity and trust for our community."

Former Chief Judge of Hawaii's Intermediate Court of Appeals and Chair of the AJS Hawaii Chapter Board James Burns describes Justice Acoba as "an exemplary person and jurist who always has clearly understood his role serving the public as a judge and as a justice. It was not until Chief Justice Recktenwald appointed Justice Acoba as Chair of Hawaii's Access to Justice Commission that the program expanded and succeeded. His leadership was extraordinarily successful."

Past national AJS President Larry Okinaga and current national AJS board member Ivan Lui-Kwan commented that "Justice Acoba is truly deserving of selection for the Dwight D. Opperman Award. He possesses qualities of judicial excellence, integrity, fairness and judicial ethics."

Justice Acoba began his legal career as a law clerk to Chief Justice William S. Richardson of the Hawaii Supreme Court, and then served as Deputy Attorney General, and as Director of the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii. He is a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and received his J.D. from

Northwestern University School of Law. He has served as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Hawaii School of Law and at Hawaii Pacific University.

Justice Acoba was chosen by the three-member panel: Justice Christine Durham of the Utah Supreme Court and last year's Opperman Award recipient, Judge Edward C. Clifton of Rhode Island, and Judge Judith McConnell of California. The American Judicature Society (AJS) created the Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence to honor state trial and appellate judges for distinguished judicial service. The award is named for Dwight D. Opperman, former chairman and CEO of West Publishing Company. Opperman was a Distinguished Lifetime Director of AJS.

###

Founded in 1913, the American Judicature Society is a nonpartisan organization with a national membership of judges, lawyers, and other citizens interested in improving our nation's courts and the administration of justice. The AJS mission is to secure and promote an independent and qualified judiciary and a fair system of justice. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.ajs.org>.

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Hearing Date: April 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m., location TBD

Testimony submitted by: James E.T. Koshiba (Koshiba Price Gruebner & Mau, AAL, ALC)

Testimony in Support of GM 550 Simeon Acoba Jr.

Nomination to the UH Board of Regents

Governance of Hawaii's only State-operated four-year University System is critically important and yet it continues to challenge and frustrate. That the University must continue to succeed and provide opportunities into the future is irrefutable . . . and yet despite the "autonomy" and millions of dollars of taxpayer support, in the view of many, the University has not lived up to expectations.

"Who runs the University of Hawaii?" is a refrain that is frequently heard. Phantom concerts, frequent administrative changes and inexplicable personnel separation costs, athletic department instability, and maintenance backlogs are just a few of the more highly publicized issues which lend credence to the question.

I have known Justice Acoba since he was a student officer at the University of Hawaii some 53 years ago. He has always been engaged in public service and continues his long commitment to our State. He is one of the most intelligent, "akamai" persons I have ever known. Even more importantly, he has always lived and spoken his convictions regardless of public or other opinion and has never waived from doing what was right or in the best interests of our State.

Justice Acoba's service on the Supreme Court of Hawaii clearly evidences his erudition and commitment to principles of law and the best interests of our State. I can think of no person what I would more highly recommend than Justice Acoba. He brings his experience, knowledge, commitment and considerable intellect to a difficult and challenging post that is critical to the welfare of our State.

If I can answer any questions you or the Committee have, please feel free to call upon me at your convenience.



**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [ashman.janet@gmail.com](mailto:ashman.janet@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for GM550 on Apr 15, 2015 13:30PM\*  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 14, 2015 8:36:54 AM

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**GM550**

Submitted on: 4/14/2015

Testimony for HEA on Apr 15, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [jeffrey.acido@gmail.com](mailto:jeffrey.acido@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for GM550 on Apr 15, 2015 13:30PM  
**Date:** Monday, April 13, 2015 4:26:41 PM

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**GM550**

Submitted on: 4/13/2015

Testimony for HEA on Apr 15, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeffrey Acido	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Aloha Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committee, My name is Jeffrey Tangonan Acido, a graduate of UH Manoa but more important a graduate of Farrington High School. And I am also a former regent at University of Hawaii. It is always a great occasion to speak of someone from Farrington High School and someone who is Filipino assuming leadership positions that impact higher education. I want to share with you briefly that confirming Judge Acoba means a great deal to me and the Filipino community. I went to school all my life in Hawaii and very few times have I encountered Filipino professors and Filipino administrators. This moment and this gesture of confirmation is more than a symbol to me. It is an act of commitment not just for Filipinos but for the underserved and under-represented groups. For Native Hawaiians TMT is their current struggle right now, for Filipinos it is fighting just to be visible and to be heard—despite being nearly 300K of the population of Hawaii. Allow us, even just for this moment, to make the confirmation of Judge Acoba, a small gesture of recognition, a small gesture that you are listening to the hopes and dreams of our community. When you confirm Judge Acoba, you confirm me; you confirm Farrington High School, You confirm Kalihi, and you confirm the Filipino community. Mahalo, Jeffrey Tangonan Acido

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)



JOEL E. AUGUST  
RETIRED JUDGE

484 PALANI PLACE  
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793  
j.august2@hawaiiantel.net

808-244-8611  
808-242-9952  
808-268-1463 (C)

Re: Nomination of Simeon Acoba Jr to  
U.H. Board of Regents

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I have known and worked with retired Justice Simeon Acoba for over 30 years. He combines the attributes of wisdom, humility and diligence to a level rare in our State. His place on the Board of Regents would be of great value to the University of Hawaii and to other members of the Board.

Thank for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Joel E. August

**From:** [john wong](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** SUPPORT OF SIMEON R. ACOPA, JR. TO UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 14, 2015 10:46:51 AM

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I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Simeon Acoba to the UH Board of Regents. Having known him for over 30 years, I am not alone in appreciating his dedication to public service as a distinguished attorney, Circuit Court Judge, and Associate Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court. Equally if not more important, he is dedicated to his family and his community. His continued presence on the UH Board of Regents will be a benefit to the University system and can only serve to improve the entire University community. Mahalo for your consideration, John C. Wong (UH Manoa, B.A.1975; UH J.D., 1980)

**From:** [Judy Gmail](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of Simeon Acoba Jr.  
**Date:** Saturday, April 11, 2015 6:49:57 PM

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Hello Senators:

I am writing to support the appointment of Simeon Acoba to the UHM Board of Regents.

Judy Lee

**From:** [Leslie Patacsil](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR. NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
**Date:** Friday, April 10, 2015 5:52:52 AM

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Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
HEARING DATE April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD  
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOBA JR.  
NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: Leslie Patacsil Chinn, Esq.

I support Simeon Acoba, Jr.'s Nomination to the UH Board of Regents. There is no person more qualified than Justice Acoba for this position. Aside from his legal and judicial background and knowledge, Justice Acoba has shown a life long commitment and dedication to improving the quality of our education in Hawaii, including higher education. Even as a Justice on the Supreme Court, he made it a top priority to mentor me and many other of my classmates. He taught classes at the law school and other local colleges part time and has always availed himself to community and student organizations for a wide range of talks, forums and presentations. With this background and already having served on the Board, his input and expertise will strongly contribute to achieving the State's primary goal of ensuring long term sustainability of UH. Thank you for your consideration

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Wednesday, April 15, 2015  
1:30 p.m.  
Hawai'i State Capitol – Room 211

Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of GM 550** Confirmation of **SIMEON ACOBA, JR.** to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the confirmation of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the Board of Regents because he would greatly add to the integrity of this important governing body.

Through serving as Justice Acoba's law clerk and witnessing his intellect, integrity and commitment to doing what is fair and right for Hawaii, I gained a deep respect for Hawaii's legal system. As a new lawyer, I felt that I was entering a system that worked because the highest court had a person like Justice Acoba who was not only highly intelligent, but had the personal integrity to do what is fair and just. As an alumna of the University of Hawaii (UH), I also believe that Justice Acoba's service on the Board of Regents would do the same for the students, faculty, staff and UH community.

Justice Acoba's career is also characterized by his commitment to community. He has 35 years of judicial service in every level of the court system. He has been deeply committed to the process of justice and always worked hard to get the most reasoned and fair result. Additionally, Justice Acoba served as the founding Chair of Hawaii's Access to Justice Commission and has continued to be involved in this important work.

It is, in part, due to his influence and focus on justice that I served as president of the Japanese American Citizens League Honolulu Chapter (JACL), a civil rights organization. In 2013, the JACL recognized Justice Acoba's service to our community and his record of justice work by presenting him with the Distinguished Service Award. The award commended his jurisprudence, his service to the community, and his commitment to growing the next generation. Justice Acoba has always given so much of himself to teaching both his students in the classroom as well as his many law clerks and interns. Thus, it is fitting that he would want to serve on the Board of Regents and support the education of our students at UH.

Based on all of the foregoing, I urge you to confirm Justice Acoba to the Board of Regents.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support.

Liann Ebesugawa

**From:** [Lorna Ching](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** GM 550, Nomination of Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents  
**Date:** Monday, April 13, 2015 6:48:36 PM

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For: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

This email is sent in strong support of the governor's nomination of Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. as a member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Having worked for Retired Associate Justice Acoba for 38 years, both in private practice and for the State of Hawaii Judiciary, I believe I can offer an honest assessment of Justice Acoba's character, integrity, and work ethic.

Justice Acoba is one of, if not the most, honest person that I have known. His credibility is unquestioned; ethically, he is beyond reproach.

Whether in private practice or as a sitting judge/justice, Justice Acoba was committed to his obligations. He represented his clients well, advocating on their behalf to their benefit. As a judge/justice, he was thoroughly prepared for any arguments presented. His work day did not end after he left the office. On almost a daily basis he left work-related voicemail messages that were generated at all hours of the night and early morning.

Justice Acoba would do well as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. The University system would be the beneficiary of Justice Acoba's dedication and commitment to public service. He would bring a depth of knowledge, wisdom, and judgment that is so valuable to a major institution of higher education in Hawaii. I urge you to recommend confirmation of Governor Ige's appointment of Justice Acoba to the Board of Regents.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my wholehearted support of Justice Acoba as a University of Hawaii regent. I apologize for this late testimony, as I am presently out of the country and did not receive notice of the hearing until very recently.

Mahalo,  
Lorna Ching

Sent from my ASUS Pad

**From:** [ca Gmai](#)  
**To:** [milton](#)  
**Cc:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony in Support of GM 550 Simeon Acoba Jr. Nomination to the UH Board of Regents  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 08, 2015 9:56:30 PM

---

Who is this guy? Thanks milton. Hi to Tyler. c

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 8, 2015, at 6:46 PM, milton <[milton.asano@yahoo.com](mailto:milton.asano@yahoo.com)> wrote:

Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
The Honorable Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

**I am in support of Simeon Acoba Jr.'s appointment to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents (BOR).**

Mr. Acoba has already proven his value to the BOR through his interim active service on that body. His superior intellect, reasoned judgment, untarnished integrity, and proven selfless experience in public and private practice is much needed at this time on the BOR. His loyalty to the University of Hawaii has not waned since his participation in elected student government at the university and has continued through his unselfish, energetic willingness throughout his career and retirement to share his extensive background with university students, faculty, and administration.

I strongly believe that the university would greatly benefit, not only from Mr. Acoba's experience and character, but also his vision for the institution; and, therefore, I unequivocally support the appointment of Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**From:** [Kahikino Noa Dettweiler-Pavia](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 550  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 14, 2015 10:30:38 AM

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Dear Chair Taniguchi and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of GM 550, nominating Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. to University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I am fortunate to claim Justice Acoba as one of my earliest mentors in the practice of law. As a first year law student, Justice Acoba welcomed me and several of my classmates from the William S. Richardson School of Law to his chambers where we volunteered as externs assisting in legal research and writing for the Hawaii Supreme Court. Justice Acoba was the only Justice at that time to afford such an amazing opportunity. Although we were all dedicated, as novices, I am sure the effort and patience Justice Acoba invested in our tutelage far outweighed any benefit he or the court recognized from our work. I still fondly recall Justice Acoba gathering all of us in his chambers to provide us with informal instruction in the finer points of appellate procedure.

This is but a small example of the dedication Justice Acoba has to the betterment of Hawaii's people through education. His achievements, particularly in advancing the fields of justice and education, are legion. I can think of no better person to serve as a regent and I provide my support to his nomination without qualification.

Sincerely,

Noa Dettweiler-Pavia  
41-731 Kumuhau Street  
Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795



April 10, 2015

The Hawaii State Senate  
The Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
Regular Session of 2015

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

DATE OF HEARING: Wednesday, April 15, 2015

TIME OF HEARING: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE OF HEARING: Conference Room 211

**Re: GM 550 Gubernatorial Nominee of Simeon Acoba Jr.  
to Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii**

I am submitting testimony in support of the Gubernatorial Nominee of Simeon Acoba Jr. to Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Simeon Acoba has had a distinguished career as a judge and justice in our State district and circuit courts, the Intermediate Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court. I had the pleasure of knowing Justice Acoba over the years from both reading his opinions and appearing before him during oral argument in front of the Supreme Court.

I believe Justice Acoba is an excellent choice to continue on the Board of Regents. He brings with him the integrity and passion for higher education that will serve him well as a regent. This is particularly true at a time period when the University is coming under close scrutiny in so many of its endeavors.

Very truly yours,

Rebecca L. Covert

April 13, 2015

TO: Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
c/o Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chairman

RE: Testimony in support of GM 550 Simeon Acoba, Jr.  
Nomination to the UH Board of Regents

BY: Rodney Mukai, Friend and Classmate of Simeon Acoba

My friendship with Simeon began about 58 years ago while we were in intermediate school, Simeon was attending Dole Intermediate in Kalihi and I was attending Kalakaua Intermediate in Kalihi-Kai. We became good friends because we played on the same Pony League baseball team, the Puuhale Pirates.

My testimony will focus on the time spent with Simeon in high school and the University of Hawaii.

At Farrington High School:

- Simeon served as our Senior Class President, a class that had an enrollment of over 1,000 students.
- We were both in the same YMCA club known as the "Gents", a very popular Hi-Y club with the girls.
- A little known fact is that Simeon was a good singer back in those days. He was one of 6 guys who formed a group known as the "Gems". They were often asked to sing and perform at many of the club dances. Today, if we asked Sim to sing, I'm not sure if he could carry a tune.

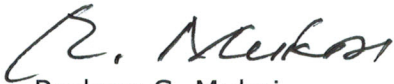
After graduating from Farrington in 1962, we both attended the University of Hawaii:

- Simeon was awarded the prestigious Wallace Rider Farrington Scholarship, a 4-year scholarship that was sponsored by the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.
- Simeon majored in Political Science. In our freshman year at the University, we both were elected as Senators to the student governing body, ASUH. Simeon continued to serve as a Senator for 3 years and in his senior year was elected Vice-President of ASUH.
- Simeon's leadership, vision and perseverance were especially evident when he chaired the Civil Rights Symposium on the UH campus. Our speakers were:
  - Martin Luther King, a founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference
  - James Farmer, head of CORE (Congress of Racial Equality)

- William James Simmons, Executive Director of the White Citizens Council
- Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Black Muslims

Simeon's accomplishments during high school and college were outstanding. His core values of trust, fairness, integrity, and friendship have not wavered during the many years I've known him. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Simeon's nomination to the UH Board of Regents. I'm especially proud to know that my friend and classmate is still willing and able to serve the University, our community and the Hawaii that we all love.

Respectfully submitted,



Rodney S. Mukai

[rod.mukai@locationshawaii.com](mailto:rod.mukai@locationshawaii.com)

(808) 224-4396

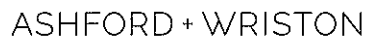
**From:** [Rosalind Chun](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support Of GM 550 Simeon Acoba Jr.  
**Date:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 12:47:49 AM

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I strongly support the nomination of Simeon Acoba Jr. to the UH Board of Regents. He is temporarily serving as a member on the UH Board of Regents. As an alumnus of UH, he has strong interest in the UH system. He is highly qualified with excellent achievements. He is knowledgeable on policies and procedures of the University of Hawaii and is already involved with existing issues.

Testimony Submitted By: Rosalind A. Chun

Sent from my iPad



ROSEMARY T. FAZIO  
A Law Corporation  
Direct: (808) 539-0415  
rfazio@awlaw.com

April 8, 2015

VIA E-MAIL

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Hearing Date: April 15, 2015  
Time: 1:30 p.m.  
Place: TBD, State Capitol  
(Testimony in Support of GM 550 Simeon Acoba, Jr.  
Nomination to the UH Board of Regents)

Dear Senator Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of this letter is to express strong and unequivocal support of Justice Simeon Acoba to continue his service on the Board of Regents.

As an interim appointee of former Governor Abercrombie, Justice Acoba worked tirelessly on the Board. He quickly became familiar with the major challenges facing our University. If you were to confirm Governor Ige's nomination of Justice Acoba as a permanent member of the Board, he would require no "learning curve."

The University faces numerous legal problems. Justice Acoba's experience as a distinguished jurist on all levels of our court system, plus his experience in the private practice of law, enables him to provide other Regents with much needed guidance in sorting out legal issues.

He is a dedicated community servant. His personal characteristics—including his unbiased approach to all issues and people, ability to make decisions promptly and willingness to work hard—provide additional support for his confirmation.

In light of the above, I respectfully ask you to confirm the nomination of Justice Acoba for a permanent position on the Board of Regents. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Rosemary Izio

ROSEMARY T. FAZIO

# Law Offices of Vladimir P. Devens, LLC

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW COMPANY



**Keani Alapa**

(808) 253-8122

[kalapa@pacificlaw.com](mailto:kalapa@pacificlaw.com)

**Vladimir P. Devens**

(808) 253-8108

[devens@pacificlaw.com](mailto:devens@pacificlaw.com)

**Kurt Kagawa**

(808) 253-8121

[kkagawa@pacificlaw.com](mailto:kkagawa@pacificlaw.com)

707 Richards Street, Penthouse-1, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Office (808) 528-5003

Fax (808) 254-6872

[Pacificlawn.com](http://Pacificlawn.com)

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April 10, 2015

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi  
Chair  
Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
State Capitol, Room 219  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: **The Honorable Simeon R. Acoba, Jr.'s nomination to the UH Board of Regents**

Dear Chair Taniguchi:

I write this letter in strong support of the Honorable Simeon R. Acoba, Jr. nomination to the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents.

I am a trial attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Hawaii since 1987. My practice is concentrated in the areas of personal injury, labor law and worker's compensation. I serve on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association ("HSBA") and Crimestoppers Honolulu, and also volunteer as a hearings officer with the Disciplinary Board of the Hawaii Supreme Court.

I have had the privilege and honor of serving on the HSBA's Judicial Administration Committee with Justice Acoba who is our committee co-chair. It was not until I began serving on this committee over the last several years that I had the opportunity to work alongside and up close with him. Up until that point, my only interaction with him was an appearance before the Hawaii Supreme Court while he was on the Court.

I can think of no better candidate to continue serving as a regent than Justice Acoba. Aside from his distinguished career as a jurist, Justice Acoba has an unblemished and lengthy record of public service. After he recently retired from the Supreme Court, he could have rode off into the sunset to enjoy a well deserved retirement. Instead, he has chosen to remain publicly active as he continues to serve tirelessly on various voluntary committees for nothing more than the satisfaction of knowing he is contributing to the community at large. His high energy level and enthusiasm for the work he does is enviable and admirable.

Chair Brian Taniguchi  
4/10/15  
Page Two

Rising from humble beginnings, Justice Acoba is a product of our public school system and a graduate of UH. A dedicated public servant all of his life, Justice Acoba has found success at every level in his professional career. The high degree of intellect he possesses is intertwined with a quiet humility, collegiality and an insistence that new ideas be offered and openly discussed. His style of leadership and participation is one of respect toward all, while strongly encouraging the sharing of viewpoints from all sides. At the same time, he comes with a balanced and even keeled temperament and a complimenting decisiveness to him, which allows tasks to be accomplished orderly and efficiently. He is extremely scholarly, but at the same time brings a healthy dose of common sense to his problem solving skills, so that common sense prevails and practical resolutions do not get lost along the way. He listens carefully, takes into account all sides of a matter before engaging in decision making. Justice Acoba brings instant credibility to the table based on his professional experiences. His judicial demeanor will also work well in a board setting where facts and ideas have to be fully vetted before critical decisions are ultimately made.

I am aware that he and his wife recently endowed a scholarship at the Richardson School of Law for public high school students, which is just another example of him giving back to the community and expressing his appreciation for the opportunities given to him.

I applaud Justice Acoba's willingness to continue serving as a regent and have no doubt he will continue to be a valuable asset to our university. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Justice Acoba's nomination and I sincerely hope he will receive your committee's full support.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Vladimir Devens

VLADIMIR DEVENS



**From:** [william.domingo](#)  
**To:** [HEA Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM 550 SIMEON ACOPA JR. NOMINATION TO THE UH BOARD OF REGENTS  
**Date:** Monday, April 13, 2015 4:40:48 PM

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Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Arts  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
HEARING DATE April 15, 2015, 1:30 pm, location TBD

Dear Senator Taniguchi and committee members:

I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Justice Simeon Acoba, Jr. to the Board of Regents. I have known Justice Acoba for most of my life as we both grew up in the fold of Aldersgate United Methodist Church adjacent to Mayor Wright Housing. He has always been a role model to me and his accomplishments in the law and the community at large have inspired a generation of young people, not only Filipinos. Justice Acoba will greatly improve the credibility of the BOR. His legendary skill in legal reasoning, his unquestionable integrity and his love for his alma mater make him the perfect Regent. The appointment and confirmation of Justice Acoba will herald a watershed in the history of higher education in Hawaii.

Aloha,  
William M. Domingo

**Attorney at Law**  
**547 Halekauwila Street, Suite 102**  
**Honolulu, HI 96813**  
**Phone: (808) 521-4323**  
**Fax: (808) 585-9912**  
**Email: [wmdomingo@yahoo.com](mailto:wmdomingo@yahoo.com)**

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