



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of GM0560 and GM0561
Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the
Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board,
Gubernatorial Nominee, SANDRA DIAZ,
for terms to expire 6-30-20 and 6-30-24 respectively.**

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date and Time: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. Room: 229

1 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports the nomination and confirmation
2 of Sandra Diaz to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board (MSAB).
3 Ms. Diaz fills the community member or non-provider of mental health services segment of the
4 board, pursuant to Chapter 334-11 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.

5 Ms. Diaz is a graduate of the Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work at the University
6 of Hawaii at Manoa, where she received a master's degree in social work during 2019. She is
7 employed by Aloha House in Wailuku as a community-based case manager.

8 Ms. Diaz has participated on the MSAB since May 2019. She has been a conscientious
9 participant of the Board by accepting tasks/assignments and providing timely updates and follow
10 up discussion. Her experience working with individuals who live with mental illness for over ten
11 years, education, and community service, makes her uniquely qualified to be a member of the
12 MSAB.

13 We respectfully request your favorable consideration in confirming the appointment of
14 Ms. Diaz to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Maui Service Area Board.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on her behalf.

(1) Why do you want to be a member of the Board?

I aim to join the board in order to share the skills, knowledge, and education I've acquired to serve the community.

(2) What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Board?

As a board member it will be crucial to listen, assess and respond to the needs of the community, and work cooperatively with all stakeholders involved.

(3) In what ways do you feel that you can help protect the consumer?

I have knowledge about ethics and confidentiality from the framework of my professional work, that's applicable and essential to the protection of consumer information.

(4) Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the Board.

I have the personal and professional expertise in the areas of mental illness and substance abuse. The reason that I've devoted myself to this line of work is because I've had immediate family members that struggles with these challenges, which resulted in my interest in these topics as a personal protective measure, and my personal experience has enriched my academic/professional career. I've worked with the SMI (severe mental illness) population since my undergraduate education. I've worked with community member in outpatient settings, residential treatment, and individual practice. All of these experiences have led me to have a global approach to these issues, while gifting me with the knowledge of the community resources available to the residents of Maui.

(4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

My hope is to serve the community authentically, with cultural competence at the forefront, while encouraging the voices of all our community members to engage in problem solving.

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will benefit the Board.

I am a great listener, I am open minded, and I work towards resolve with a collaborative spirit.

(6) Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a Board member.

My experience of working with the SMI population on Maui has taught me how to “play a long game.” Meaning that I don’t expect immediate outcomes, and that I have an understanding that progress requires consistency and commitment – from the servicing providers and the consumer. I’ve seen individuals radically change their lives and move towards health and wellness. I’ve also seen that for some that requires a lot of support. I believe we can help our loved ones move in this direction. It requires all of our efforts, and I want to be a part of that team.

(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Board? How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

We live on a small island where we are all interconnected. There are challenges to confidentiality that arise from that factual reality. I feel confident in my ability to discuss this with consumer’s and professional’s in a manner that results in everyone feeling supported and safe. I’m also aware and able to refer individuals to resources that support said safety.