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Senator Colleen Hanabusa  
The Senate  
State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

INTERVIEWER: Senator Russell Kokubun (Chair) . DATE: April 13, 2007  
Senator Carol Fukunaga  
Senator Sam Slom  
Senator Jill Tokuda (Vice Chair)  
Senator Clayton Hee

INTERVIEWEE: Zelei Abordo TIME: 3:55 p.m.

PLACE: 415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

PURPOSE: Confirmation hearing of Peter Young and the general issue involved is the  
Bureau of Conveyances

-- oOo --

RK I would like to reconvene the committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and  
Hawaiian Affairs in executer session. It is now 3:55 p.m., Friday afternoon, April  
the 13<sup>th</sup>. We are here with subpoenaed witness Ms. Zelei Abordo, present in the  
room at this time, Sara Akinaka (phonetic), Richard Wada, Mark Bennett. For the  
committee, Chairman Kokubun, Vice Chair Tokuda. Members Senator Slom and  
Fukunaga. So, they thank you for being with us. I need to ask you to stand, so I  
can swear you in --

ZA Oh, okay.

RK -- as subpoenaed witness. Please raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony that you will be giving at this hearing will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

ZA Yes.

RK Thank you. Please Zelei be seated. Please state your name and your address and your employment and the title of your --

ZA Okay. My name is Zelei Abordo. My address is 1690 Ala Moana Blvd., Apt. 1002. I work for the Department of Land and Natural Resources. I am a certificate writer in the Reviewed Section -- Land Court Review Section.

RK Bureau of Conveyances?

ZA Right.

RK Okay. Zelei, you have been subpoenaed to testify the background character and qualifications of Peter Young who was nominated by the Governor --

ZA Correct.

RK -- as a chairman of the Board of Land and Natural Resources. After undergoing the oath, you understand that the testimony you give today will have to be truthful?

ZA Yes.

RK Very good, thank you. Ah, you also understand that this proceeding is being recorded for our recordkeeping purposes?

ZA Yes.

RK All right, thank you. Zelei, why don't we start with your -- um, how long you have worked -- excuse me -- at the Bureau of Conveyances?

ZA Um, I've been at the Bureau of Conveyances for six years now. I started as a Land Court compare, and I got promoted to a certificate writer. Um, I should have moved on. You know -- but, for some reason, I don't know why, I just stayed in that department, because I found that people in that department are so oppressed. I mean so oppressed. I started making friends with different compares and the certificate writers, and as time went on, I found out that these people. You see, we're under different rules. For one, I don't take any bull. I worked hard to get there. I applied four times and finally got in. And so I was raised that, as long as you do a good job, work hard and move on.

RK Right.

ZA Move on, right. But, when I got there -- I came from a private company. I use to work for a title company -- Title of Hawaii. And I am entitled and all together in those two companies, I had six years and now I'm at the bureau for six years. And when I got there -- I came from a private firm, so I've never worked for the State before, so I didn't know how it operated or -- you know. And I just was overwhelmed by the way people are treated, and for myself, I have to say, I'm not treated like that at all.

RK Let me interrupt one second.

ZA Okay.

RK I just need for the record indicate that at 4 p.m. we were joined by Jason Watson.

ZA Oh, okay.

RK Jason is the Deputy Sergeant at Arms.

ZA Oh, okay. Wow, so young. That's great, I love that.

RK We are -- um, as you know, we're trying to obtain information as best we can --

ZA Right.

RK -- about your experiences working at the bureaus. But, more importantly, we're really trying to focus on -- you're probably aware that there is an investigation being conducted in the bureau?

ZA: Right, correct.

RK Okay. Both by the Ethics Commission?

ZA: Correct.

RK As well as the Attorney General's Office?

ZA: Yes.

RK Do you have information specific to those investigations?

ZA Well, it depends what information you're talking about. I'm not privy to all of it - - you know, but certainly to most of it. Because I'm a union steward and so we're all kept abreast of what's going on in the bureau, in case somebody is not there, somebody else can pick up the load --

RK I see.

ZA -- if anything happens. Yeah -- so, I'm aware of everything that they are investing at the bureau.

RK: Umm, okay. You realize it we've heard from your co-workers, Harriet Enrique (phonetic) --

ZA Right.

\* \* \*

ZA -- right.

RK So, do you think you could give us any additional information or any additional on finders of those?

ZA No, not really.

RK Okay.

ZA Because Scott is the computer literate -- you know, his the one that knows about the computer. So, his the one that notice things about our computer. You know the way it was operating, it's slow. It always going off. It's like too many people on line or on the computer, everything just messes up. So, he noticed that, and he was like -- well, what's going on? Why is this happening? And, he started investigating. Um, I didn't find out what was really going on until -- because he was in meetings with Bob Masuda and Dennis Ihara, and they going back and fourth and then all of this. And then finally we were told what was going on.

RK So, you're a primarily a user of the computer system, but necessarily -- you didn't track the issues --

ZA Right.

RK -- like Scott?

ZA No, no.

RK Okay. Now, when we talked with Harriet, there were a couple of things that came up, and I wanted to ask you if you are aware of any of those, okay? One, in particular -- and I'll just jump right to it, is the fact, that there are revenues coming into the department, yeah?

ZA No, I'm not aware of those.

RK Okay. You -- you -- let me ask this in specifically -- you know, I guess there were cash payments for certain transactions, where to expect the documents, there were checks provided with respect to use of computers --

ZA No, I'm not in that department, that's why.

RK I see, okay.

ZA That would be receiving and the cashiers. So, Linda, the head cashier, she's on vacation now. She would be able to explain all that.

RK Okay. You -- okay. Thank you. Because there were some issues that were brought up with respect some checks that we want to get as much as information on as we can.

ZA Right, Linda --

RK So, you're not aware of that?

ZA No.

RK Okay. Thank you very much, we will look elsewhere. Um, you work for the  
Land Court side?

ZA Right, Land Court.

RK Land Court Division?

ZA The back log side, yeah.

RK Yeah. Well, that's one issue, and then we can get to that.

\* \* \*

RK Their relationship is --

ZA Nicole is a different story. She -- when Dennis came in, she didn't like it.

Because Dennis was giving the orders now. She would not take any orders from Dennis. And I know this because of the things she would come out and say. Like one day, she walked out of her office, and somebody was telling about the work, and she said, I care -- yeah, like I care, right. And just when she turned, she noticed I was looking right at her. And I was shaking my head -- yeah, we all know that you don't care. And then she looked me and she went -- ugh (phonetic). And she walked out -- you know. But, I have that kind of relationship with her, I'll tell her -- you know. Not like everybody else. But, yeah, she doesn't like Dennis.

RK Um hmm.

ZA And she didn't care for Bob, and she let everybody know.

RK Did Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic) has a problem with Bob Masuda, too?

ZA Yeah.

RK Oh, okay.

ZA Anybody in control.

RK Um hmm.

ZA Because you're not going tell her what to do. She's been there 35 years and so you don't tell her what to do.

RK Nicole Gega-Chang has been at the --

ZA Yes, uh huh.

RK All right.

ZA And she worked her way up to the branch.

\* \* \*

RK: People could go to lunch.

ZA Yeah, nothing like that.

RK Right, but in terms of other sorts of gifts or remuneration, you're not aware of that?

ZA Why I know during Christmas, we use to get a lot of gifts coming in.

RK From Title Guaranty?

ZA All over.

RK Oh, all over. Anything more extraordinary about Title Guaranty's gifts and any others?

ZA No, necessarily.

RK Okay. So -- and that was what Kaiulani Lambert (phonetic) explained it --like fruit baskets --

ZA Right.

RK: -- manapua -- you know that kind of food stuff.

ZA Right.

RK So, that was it as you can recall -- nothing beyond that, as best to your knowledge?

ZA Right.

\* \* \*

CF I see. Have you ever, I guess received any kinds of request from, I guess Title  
Guaranty or people affiliated with --

ZA They won't ask me for anything personally.

CF I see.

ZA If they're going to do something like that. They won't ask me.

CF They would log a request through --

ZA Nicole.

CF I see --

ZA Nicole or Carl.

CF -- she might assign else in your division, your branch to actually assist.

ZA To do it, right.

CF I see.

ZA Or she'll do it herself. Nicole will do it yourself or she'll have one of her AR's do it.

CF I see.

ZA Carol Ching. All of those things, Carol Ching or Rexford Davis (phonetic) will do for Nicole Chang.

CF I see. Is your section close to the area, in which, I guess they have public computers or --

ZA No, that's across the hall.

CF That's the regular section?

ZA Right.

CF Okay. So, if --

ZA We have four public access computers across the hall.

CF I see. Okay. In your division, are you familiar with how the overtime -- you know, has occurred with respect to individual -- you know, employees and/or staff -- um, I guess over this last 3-year period?

ZA Well --

CF I guess -- you know, if there's occasion in which the backlog or some of the work load appears to be falling behind quite a bit.

ZA Right.

CF Does Nichole Chang ask all of the employees to come in during long time periods or does she rotate -- you know, she assigns the --

ZA The overtime?

CF The overtime work?

ZA Overtime -- overtime is open to everybody, but if Nicole thinks that you're not producing as she much as she feel you should, then use to pinpoint people that she didn't think should have overtime. So, it depends on your production, when you're doing overtime.

CF I see. So, it's kind of more at the direction of the (inaudible)?

ZA Right.

CF Okay. Is there a lot of overtime that is occurring at present?

ZA Right now we're not allowed overtime. Well, we work from 6:45 and til 6 and that's it.

CF Okay. Thank you.

ZA You're welcome.

RK Senator Sam Slom.

SS Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Abordo for coming.

ZA You're welcome.

SS A couple of things. I want to get straight. The very first thing, you said, I should have moved on.

ZA Right.

SS Do you mean by that, you should have been promoted to something or moved to another division or what?

- ZA Well -- um, what I'm saying by that, I should have gone further. When I first started at the bureau, I was a comparer --
- SS Um hmm.
- ZA -- which is an abstract IV. Um, within three months I became an abstracter V.
- SS Um hmm.
- ZA And the next move for me would have been a receiver, a Land Court receiver.
- SS Um hmm.
- ZA I didn't move because of the people in my section.
- SS Your concern for them?
- ZA Yes.
- SS But, you had the opportunity to move?
- ZA Yes, I could have moved, if I wanted to.
- SS Is there -- are there opportunities for advancement and promotion?
- ZA Sure, yeah.
- SS Okay.
- ZA The training, though I have to say --
- SS Um hmm.
- ZA -- is to be desired. Because, there's already one girl that moved to Land Court receiving, and Nicole wrote a letter claiming that this girl, because she was sick, she wanted to come back to our section --
- SS Um hmm.

ZA -- but that's not true at all. Because the girl became permanent up front and decided to come back to our section, because the training was so bad, she couldn't stand it.

SS Um hmm.

ZA Right. So, she came back into our section. But, I just saw a letter coming from Nicole, that said the girl back to our section because she was sick, and that's not true. The girl permanent --

SS Um hmm.

ZA -- and then she decided to come back our section, because she couldn't stand the training.

SS I see.

ZA Well, there's a second girl now, whose in that position and now she's trying to work with the union to go back to her position.

SS Um hmm.

ZA So, I asked Dennis Ihara, because this is a union thing, right.

SS Um hmm.

ZA She wants to go back to her section.

SS True.

ZA But the section is already filled, so what is going to do. We got to open up a position, or what are we going to do with her now.

SS Yeah.

ZA And I asked, if it was the training. Because she had mentioned to Dennis Ihara one time, she couldn't stand it. They don't know what they're doing.

SS Um hmm.

ZA Right? And, so right now she's in that predicament, she's stuck in that position. She can't move until they can open something up, or they can put her someplace else.

SS And as you say, that's union thing.

ZA Right.

SS I'm just curious -- um, all the people that have come to us from your conveyances, like yourself --

ZA Right.

SS -- how many union stewards are there in each of the two?

ZA There's five of us.

SS Five in each or five total?

ZA For the whole.

SS For both the regular and the Land Court five?

ZA Right. We take care of the whole bureau.

SS Got it. Okay. Thank you for clearing that up. Um, you are aware of the investigations, too --

ZA Yes.

SS -- as you mentioned?

ZA Yes.

- SS What kind of effect has that had on moral with the employees -- I presume everybody knows?
- ZA No.
- SS Oh, they don't know that there is an investigation?
- ZA No, they only found out right now.
- SS Okay.
- ZA When they came to the hearing.
- SS Do you think that the desire for change or improvement, they would view this a positive thing -- the investigations?
- ZA Yes.
- SS Okay.
- ZA Well, when they found out in there, that they were investigators, they were so excited.
- SS Uh huh.
- ZA They were like -- yeah, about time -- somebody help.
- SS Uh huh. Okay. What kind of contact have you actually had with Peter Young?
- You've been there six years --
- ZA I get to meetings with him --
- SS Okay. Do you go to those daily meetings or the --
- ZA No, no that's only for management.
- SS I thought the daily meetings or the brown bag was for anybody?
- ZA Brown bags is for anybody.

SS Okay.

ZA Daily meetings is for management.

SS Okay.

ZA We had a concern, because Nicole wasn't doing the mail.

SS Um hmm.

ZA I don't know one day she just came up with this idea. I have no idea why. And she decided, she's not going to do the mail.

SS Um hmm.

ZA Right. And because I watched the whole time, this lady was on the phone all day long and e-mailing the rest of the day.

SS Um hmm.

ZA And then just started piling up, piling up. So, we went to a brown bags meeting, hoping we could talk to Peter.

SS Uh huh, and what happened?

ZA But, there was too many people in there, and we only have 45 minutes for lunch.

SS I see.

ZA So, we couldn't stay. We had to go back to work. But, we got to talk to him a little bit, and then we went back to work.

SS And what was your experience -- I mean did you find that -- do you think he was listening or paying attention?

ZA Well, not really. Because in 10 minutes, it's real quick.

SS Because too many people, too short of time.

ZA And then -- I don't know, we really didn't interact with Peter until maybe last year, and then we really started interacting with him.

SS Um hmm.

ZA We got e-mail that's why.

SS Um hmm.

ZA When Dennis Ihara came in, he gave us e-mail, so that we could keep --

SS So, for most of the time, there was no e-mail for employees?

ZA No.

SS Okay.

ZA I wrote letters, letters and letters.

SS E-mails easier.

ZA I have the thing down, right. There's a path for these letters. Go down the hall, up the stairs -- no, down the hall, up the elevators 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to personnel, down the stairs, into (inaudible) office and you drop everything off, right. And you get back to work.

SS So, other than the fact that these meetings were usually short in duration and may be crowded and all that, did you have any negative feeling?

ZA Yeah. We were trying to tell Peter, that this lady is backlogging the mail.

SS Okay. But, what I'm getting at though -- okay and you're talking about Nicole again?

ZA Right.

SS Because it seems that everybody is talking about Nicole, but Nicole is not the one that's up for confirmation, of course.

ZA I realize that, but Peter has allowed her to stay and do what she's doing. We brought it to his attention and we've met with him.

SS Yeah.

ZA And then I started e-mailing him. And now every little thing, I e-mail him, I e-mail Marie Laderda (phonetic), I e-mail Bob Masuda, Dennis Ihara, Bob Awana. The only one I don't e-mail is the governor. Because I figure, well Bob is going to give it to the governor, right.

SS Do you get responses from these e-mails?

ZA Yes.

SS You do?

ZA Marie Laderda (phonetic) will response. She will tell me thank you for keeping in the loops, Zelei. Um, Bob Masuda will respond.

SS Um hmm.

ZA And every time Peter responds, I feel it's a template. He hits a button and this thing comes up, right. It really doesn't really answer your question.

SS But, you do get a response -- you're not getting totally ignored?

ZA Right.

SS Okay.

ZA But, his not answering the question, though.

SS As you did testify before, Nicole has been there for 35 years?

- ZA Right, correct.
- SS You've been there for six years?
- ZA Right.
- SS So, you had problems with Nicole prior to Mr. (inaudible)?
- ZA No, no.
- SS There was no problems with Nicole until he came?
- ZA Well, I really have a problem with Nicole. The only problem I have, is her not doing her work. Because, she doesn't treat me badly.
- SS Yeah, that's what you said.
- ZA You know, I just don't like the way she treats other people, but that's her thing.
- SS But I mean -- let me make sure I understand this, was there any change in the way she acted, like six years ago versus now. Or has she always acted that way?
- ZA She got worse when Dennis Ihara came.
- SS Okay. When Dennis came, because you mentioned, she doesn't like control or authority or anybody telling her what to do.
- ZA Right, right.
- SS Um, you were asked several questions, if you were aware of this, if you saw that and you said that basically that's not your not area, and you haven't seen those things.
- ZA Right.

SS Are you personally aware of any wrongdoing -- have you seen anything -- not that you've heard anything, have you actually seen anything yourself or anything that raise suspicions for you?

ZA No.

SS Okay. So, the training is an area that we should be concerned about that, too?

ZA Yes.

SS Okay. All right. Okay. Thank you Ms. Abordo.

ZA Your welcome.

SS Thank you Mr. Chair.

RK Your welcome. Senator Tokuda.

JT Thank you, Zelei. I appreciate you coming here and sticking it out with us. I just have a couple of questions.

ZA Okay.

JT Who does Nicole -- I guess whose Nicole's boss?

ZA Dennis Ihara.

JT And if Dennis is sick, as we know -- unfortunately is at the moment.

ZA Bob Masuda. Carl taken out of that.

JT So, Nicole is fairly high up then, in terms of her role?

ZA Yes.

JT And I know you've mentioned that there has been numerous complaints about Ms. Gega-Chang (phonetic) --

ZA Yes.

JT -- to the director. Do you have copies of your letters by any chance?

ZA Yeah -- oh, not with me.

JT But you have copies of correspondences that outline problems with her management or --

ZA Yes.

JT -- actions or interactions with the particular divisions?

ZA You know one time, we went into a meeting with Peter, and I told Peter, because they had already taken Carl upstairs to do the bins, the 52 bins of mail

JT The special projects?

ZA Right.

JT Okay.

ZA And I told Peter, that do you know that Nicole is starting another backlog. I said, she's got 13 bins downstairs in the vault right now and everyday is so important, that you nail it now, because everyday a bin comes in. And she just lets it go. It was rising and then Bob came in, and Bob started putting in all these ideas. We started coming up with ideas. Bob said you guys come up with ideas, and we'll discuss it, we'll implement. And he had the hardest time implementing these things.

JT Was this backlog in particular where the idea came into how Title Guaranty or other individuals come into work?

ZA Right, correct.

- JT So, that's the backlog. And the mail that they would be opening, would there be potentially checks in there?
- ZA Yes. We were fully against that, all of the employees. We didn't want anybody in there. That's personal.
- JT Okay. That was the discussion regarding bringing in Title company employees to work in there. Currently, is there a backlog still or has this been --
- ZA Well, the backlog has been addressed. There's no mail, but every other section is backlogged now.
- JT Because they jumped into assist with that backlog?
- ZA Yes.
- JT And in terms of -- you know, again try to bring it home to the director, as a union steward, you've been a part of the grievances or discussions --
- ZA Yes.
- JT -- filed by employees, and I know he has been cc'd on all correspondents from the union themselves. Has he ever taken it upon himself to get involved and try to rectify this situation. I mean given the number of grievances that we were given copies of, is quite a few.
- ZA Yeah, not that I know.
- JT And if he was involved, you would know as a steward that he had?
- ZA Oh, yeah, I would know.
- JT Okay. So, basically despite your letters and now e-mails and grievances --
- ZA He would say work together.

JT Okay. But other than work together --

ZA Focus on working together -- let's not focus on that. Focus on working together.

JT And did he deal with the issue between Nicole and Dennis? I know that was a very heated relationship.

ZA He did nothing. Nicole stayed there doing what she was doing. Because I e-mail him. Peter, she still not working -- hello, somebody out there, somebody listening?

JT And Dennis responds to Bob and/or Peter?

ZA Masuda, right.

JT He falls below the director, the Deputy Director?

ZA Yeah. But, Bob is his direct -- Bob Masuda and then Peter. His direct chain of command.

JT If you have copies of those letters -- I know it's difficult to get that.

ZA I'll try.

JT I appreciate that.

ZA I got like -- so, I'll try to look through.

JT I think we're trying to establish to whether or not this has been an ongoing problem. And I know you got e-mail recently.

ZA Recently, yeah.

JT So, I --

ZA But, you know, I may have some letters, because I have written a lot of letters.

JT Okay. I appreciate that. Thank you.

- RK So, I want to follow up on couple of things. You know the public access computers, are they in your view plane -- I mean can you see them?
- ZA No, they're across the hall.
- RK They are -- oh, yeah that's right, I'm sorry, you did mention that. Do you know if there's any staff people watching the use of the public access computers?
- ZA No.
- RK No?
- ZA Because it's public, anybody can go on it, and you have a certain amount of time on it. If there's a lot of people there.
- RK Um hmm.
- ZA You have to share the computer.
- RK Um hmm.
- ZA But, no, no -- nobody watches those computers.
- RK Are they like in separate cubicles or --
- ZA No, it's out -- as soon as you walk in the door, it's right there on the left hand side.
- RK Four computers?
- ZA Right, up against the wall. And the clerk sits on the desk, like right here, But, the clerk is always busy doing stuff and helping people. So, they're not --
- RK: Really paying attention too much.
- ZA Right.
- RK But, would it be the clerk's position -- you know job responsibility. Pay attention to what's going with those public access computers, kind of monitor it?

ZA Not necessarily.

RK Not really.

ZA Because they're helping the public. Public don't know how to get their deeds, so they're helping the public.

RK Oh, I see -- but, they're there, though to assist.

ZA Right, they're there to assist the public.

RK Oh, I see. So, if there were someone who actually kind of knew what they were doing, in terms of using the public access computers.

ZA Oh, yeah no problem, you could just sit there and use it.

RK Okay.

ZA The clerks aren't.

RK Okay. And typically, are there a lot of people that want to use it or not that much.

ZA Not really. Every time I go in there, there's only like a few people, you know.

RK Never a line, that you've seen?

ZA No, never a line.

RK Okay. Good. I just wanted to get a sense of that because -- you know Scott brought that up to us.

ZA Right, right.

RK: Um hmm. Okay.

ZA Yeah, anybody has access to those computers. So, that really bothered me about Scott, you know. Because when we realized what he was talking about. I was

like -- oh my god, that's our computers -- in the (inaudible) room, anybody can go on that computer.

RK Right. So, that has raised some concern for us, too.

ZA Yeah.

RK Let me move to an area real quick. You know the OT --

ZA Overtime?

RK Yeah, overtime. Um, you mentioned that something about your hours are now -- as your supervisor, Nicole, has stated 6 in the morning til 6:45 that's it.

ZA Well, it's actually 6:45 in the morning til 6 in the evening, but this was a directive that was given by Bob. No more overtime, because we don't have any money.

RK Okay.

ZA So, until the new budget comes in, I guess in July --

RK I see.

ZA -- then I guess we'll have overtime. In the meantime, we're going to backlog.

RK Okay. Harriet explained to us that there were -- because of the mail back log -- yeah, for Land Court, that there was quite a bit of overtime, but there like may be two people who had like \$30,000 in terms of overtime income. I don't know the time frames.

ZA Wow --

RK Perhaps you weren't there at the time. And, so what I got out of that, was there were certain members of the Land Court division that were given most of the overtime, as opposed to others.

ZA Well, I think that's because -- not everybody wants to do overtime. But, not everybody is interested in that backlog. So, you'll have the same people doing overtime all the time, you know.

RK Um hmm.

ZA And depending on how -- because before we could only work til 6. And my boss, for instance, she was going to China for a month. So, she's going to backlog really badly, so she asked if she could put in more time. So, I guess we have the money, so Bob approved it, and Nicole wasn't -- she was against it and she brought up every reason that my boss couldn't do it. In the end, she got to do it because she was going on vacation and she was concerned about her work. And, so use to stay until 9:30 at night. Come 6:45 in the morning, work til 9:30 at night, until she went on her vacation.

RK And Bob Masuda, to the best of your knowledge. Bob is the one who approves all the overtime?

ZA Yes.

RK So, it's not Nicole. Nicole doesn't --

ZA No, well it use to be Nicole. You see Nicole had all the power until Bob came. When the governor sent Bob down, that was it. Everybody's line got cut, and we were like -- brah, cut it.

RK Well, let me understand this then. Your sense is that, and I've heard this, that there was a series of articles that came out, Pacific Business News, I believe may

be the other daily newspapers here, and were critical of the Bureau of Conveyances.

ZA Right.

RK And hearing that criticism, the governor, threw Bob Awana, is my understanding. Got Bob Masuda and Dennis Ihara to take over the supervision.

ZA Well, actually Bob Awana but Bob Masuda over there, and Bob Masuda hired Dennis Ihara.

RK Okay. And this occurred like in June of 2006?

ZA Right, yeah. Uh huh.

RK All right. And based on that, you think there's been kind of a turn around in the (inaudible) division?

ZA Yeah. That's why -- you know, the first day of the hearings, when everybody came in favor of. I was like -- oh, my god everybody is in favor of. But, when I started listening to their testimony, they changed their opinion about Peter, about a year and a half ago. And a lot of them said that in their testimony. Oh, yeah, we couldn't work him, about a year and a half ago, things started changing and that's when Bob Masuda came. Bob Masuda came about two years ago, and when he came things started moving, things started changing. I mean, he really cared. He came in and he was going to do a job and he separated it. I mean, his having big problems himself, but he managed to implement.

RK Right.

ZA And it just seemed like he had to pull teeth to do whatever he was doing.

RK Yeah, that's what we get from some of the communication, which is that he was kind of caught in the middle.

ZA So, when I listen to those testimonies, I was like -- what these people -- what. But, then when started testifying that about a year and a half ago and a lot of them said that, I said there you go, Bob Masuda came.

RK Well, I'm not sure, I think it was only Bob Masuda, but --

ZA Well, he had big thing -- because up until that point, we were like -- he was having the brown bags meeting, we were backlogging horribly. I mean, I know that we have problems before his tenure, but it just escalated, I mean big time during his tenure. I've never seen a 52 bin backlog before, ever. And this because Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic) did it. And Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic), Carl Watanabe, they are aligned with Peter Young, and that's our problem. See, it's not Peter Young. We really don't really care, it's who he is aligned himself with, that's what concerns us. Because these people are the ones that made that happen, and he still taking his advice from those people. Why don't take your advice from the people that came in, Bob Masuda and Dennis Ihara, but no. And we know when Peter is taking advice from Carl and Nicole, because we can tell when the mandate comes down to us. Because if it's like -- Carl got in it again. I wrote, Carl was told not to come downstairs. He was put upstairs in special projects. You work up there, right. Every time Dennis Ihara is out, he'll come in the office, everybody gets upset -- oh, my god what is he doing here, oh no. They are afraid, his going to come back, right. And now the backlog

is done. I mean, we're still backlogged in our separate sessions, because we had to help the mail, right. So, n now we're trying to catch up and we're just fearful everything is started to -- and his going to put this guy back. Right now, Carl Watanabe is upstairs in an special project, and nobody knows what his doing.

I've questioned Peter about his stats, because we're the ones that have to do the stats, right -- for the whole office. So, I wrote to Peter one day, and I said, one of the employees came up to me and had a concern about the special projects. They wanted to know what was going up on there and what they were doing, because according to rumors, these people are doing nothing upstairs, right -- and they're getting high pays. People up there are SR-17s and they're not doing the work.

RK Right. Let me ask you that, how many people are working with Carl Watanabe up there?

ZA Five. He took five people.

RK Five people that would typically be working in the bureau?

ZA Downstairs.

RK And there's no really --

ZA And so it upset the whole bureau.

RK Sure.

ZA We all had to move and change positions and -- you know to try to accommodate each section, because he was taking five.

RK Right, and even with the registrar and the five staff people, there's no understanding of what he is accomplishing?

ZA Right. We didn't know what he was doing.

RK And the inquiries were to Peter as to what he was --

ZA What is the special project doing, and so I asked Peter, are they going to have to put in stats, like the rest of the office?

RK Right, and --

ZA So, Peter wrote back -- and, like I said a template, right, and it didn't answer my question. So, I wrote him back, and I told him look, all I ask is, are you going to have them put in stats or not. Can you answer that question, yes or no? So, he wrote me back, and he said, well they're doing projects, and they're this and they're doing that and something about that they should be doing stats, or something like that. It wasn't like, yes, they are going to putting in their stats, right.

RK You wouldn't have that communication -- copy of that?

ZA Not with me, but I have that.

RK Do you have that e-mail?

ZA Yes.

RK Can you provide that?

ZA Sure.

RK Just to help us get a better understanding of how that -- now, that I know that there are five staff people working with them. I made the assumption, it was only him.

ZA Only who?

RK Carl.

ZA No, he took our staff.

RK Oh, okay. I would like to see a copy of that?

ZA Sure. What, do I have to bring it now?

RK No, no.

ZA Okay. Tomorrow -- oh tomorrow Saturday -- Monday then.

RK Monday is fine.

ZA Monday, okay.

CH I'll be in tomorrow.

RK I'll be in tomorrow, too.

ZA Am I off, I'm off tomorrow. Oh, I don't have a scanner.

RK It's a hard letter she was writing.

CH Oh, I see.

RK They only recently got e-mail.

ZA Oh, yeah, e-mail, right. It's an e-mail. Let me see if I can get it.

CH Just forward it to us.

ZA Yeah. Let me see if I can do that.

RK Okay.

JT She was also going to check, too, if there were copies of letters you previous e-mails that you had sent to Peter --

ZA Right.

JT -- asking for help.

CH Can I ask you question?

RK Yes, any other questions, Senator Hee?

CH Thank you for coming. You know these five people that were transferred with Carl -- Carl makes six.

ZA Right.

CH Is that right?

ZA Right, right.

CH What were the positions of the five people that went upstairs?

ZA Uh, one girl was indexing -- what's the other -- indexing. One came from Land Court -- no, regular system receiving -- Sheila. The other girl was something like customer service, and they had a new girl Gina, I think she was in indexing, too. And I forget who the last one was. I'm not sure, who the last person was.

CH But they're five?

ZA Right.

CH Now, you said, that you're responsible for all the stats?

ZA Um, yes. But, the certificate writers, we -- every week, we rotate. So, there's six certificate writers.

CH So, I understand what that mean. If I said to you, can you provide the stats for Carl Watanabe, is that possible?

ZA No, not at all. I can't provide the stats for Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic) either.

CH And the reason is why?

ZA I guess they're too high.

CH So, you're responsible for all the stats, but for Carl Watanabe and Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic).

ZA Right. So, I questioned --

CH To get that information, we would have to ask Bob Masuda or Ihara?

ZA I don't think Dennis Ihara would know.

CH Who is Carl Watanabe -- so, (inaudible) provide the stats for Carl Watanabe, is that possible?

ZA No, not at all. I can't provide the stats for Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic) either.

CH And the reason is why?

ZA I guess they're too high.

CH So, you're responsible for all the stats, but for Carl Watanabe and Nicole Gega-Chang (phonetic)?

ZA Right. So, I questioned that.

CH So, for that information, we would have to ask Bob Masuda or Ihara?

ZA I don't think Dennis Ihara would know.

CH Who is Carl Watanabe's supervisor?

ZA Bob Masuda.

CH Thank you.

ZA Your welcome.

RK Members, any other questions? If not, Ms. Zelei, thank you so much of your time for being with us today.

ZA Thank you.

RK And, if you could provide us with that information, both the e-mail --

ZA And the letters. I'll try find the letters.

RK -- as well as the copies of the letters, that would be good.

ZA Right. To Peter, right?

RK: Yes.

ZA Okay.

RK I think with respect to that the communication about the stats.

ZA Oh, yeah. Uh huh.

RK For Carl and his staff.

CH And Peter's e-mail back to you saying, he does this and does that.

ZA Right. I should have brought it. I was going to bring it. And, I said, oh man, this bag is heavy enough.

RK Thank you very much.

ZA Thank you.

RK So, here's my e-mail address. You can just get it to me and I'll get it to our committee members.

ZA Yeah, I have your e-mail address.

RK We will recess at this point our Executive Session. It's 4:45 -- um, and reconvene our committee. The next witness will be Hilton Louie (phonetic), the Ethics Commission Investigator. So, we are in recess at this point.