

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 2015

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 506

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 506, submitting for study and consideration the nomination of:

DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

G.M. No. 506 CATHERINE AWAKUNI COLON,
for a term to expire 12-3-2018,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by the nominee and finds Catherine Awakuni Colón to possess the requisite qualifications to be nominated as the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination of Catherine Awakuni Colón from the Office of the Governor; Department of Transportation; Young Brothers, Limited; Hawaiian Telcom; Building Industry Association of Hawaii; Hawaii Pest Control Association; Locations LLC; Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative; 'Ōlelo Community Media; Hō'ike Kaua'i Community Television, Inc.; Akakū Maui Community Media; and twenty-five individuals.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Awakuni Colón's background, experience, and commitment to public service qualify her for appointment as the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. Your Committee notes that for the last thirteen years, Ms. Awakuni Colón has served in various government roles affecting the area of commerce and consumer



affairs. Ms. Awakuni Colón was a staff attorney for the Public Utilities Commission for over four years and later served more than two years as Chief Legal Counsel for the Commission. Through her work at the Public Utilities Commission, Ms. Awakuni Colón gained a thorough understanding of the regulatory process and complex energy issues faced by the Commission and the effect regulation and competition have on businesses and consumers.

Your Committee further finds that Ms. Awakuni Colón previously served as the Executive Director for the Division of Consumer Advocacy in the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. In her role as Consumer Advocate, Ms. Awakuni Colón represented Hawaii consumers on a number of rapidly evolving regulatory issues in matters before the Public Utilities Commission and other agencies. Ms. Awakuni Colón also negotiated and executed the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, which has served as the foundation for the State's long-term efforts to reach energy independence.

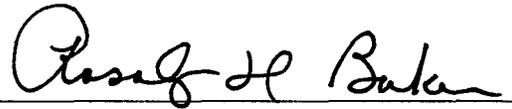
Most recently, Ms. Awakuni Colón served as the Administrator of the Cable Television Division within the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. In that role, Ms. Awakuni Colón and the Division partnered with public and private agencies to expedite broadband development and began work on a master plan for statewide Institutional Network development. Ms. Awakuni Colón's prior experience as the Consumer Advocate and Cable Television Division Administrator have enabled her to gain an intimate understanding of the operations of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs and the Department's mission. Furthermore, Ms. Awakuni Colón's familiarity with the Public Utilities Commission has given her insight into the unique needs of the Commission. This will enable her to better support the Public Utilities Commission once the Commission's transition from the Department of Budget and Finance to the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs is complete during the summer of 2015.

Your Committee notes that Ms. Awakuni Colón's familiarity with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; the Department's diverse jurisdictional purview, administrative requirements, funding mechanisms; and the legislative process make her exceptionally prepared to serve as Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. Accordingly, your Committee recommends that Ms. Awakuni Colón be appointed as Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs based on her extensive knowledge, background, and dedication to serving the public.



As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominee, has found the nominee to be qualified for the position to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Commerce and
Consumer Protection,



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



