

# GM574

Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN GEORGIEV, for a term to expire 06-30-2021.

Report Title: Disability and Communication Access Board

Current Referral: CPH



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
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March 29, 2018

### TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, COMMERCE, AND HEALTH

Governor's Message 574 - Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Disability and Communication Access Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Dean Georgiev for a Term to Expire June 30, 2021

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports the nomination of Mr. Dean Georgiev to the Board. This will be a first-time appointment of Mr. Georgiev to serve on DCAB. Mr. Georgiev served on DCAB's predecessor agency, the Commission on Persons with Disabilities in 1994 and helped with the transition and creation of the current Board.

Mr. Georgiev would be serving on the Board in the capacity of a consumer/person with a disability representing the population of individuals who are blind or who have low vision.

Mr. Georgiev is currently employed with the State Department of Human Services, Ho'opono Services for the Blind as a Supervisor in their Adjustment Services Section. He has been particularly instrumental in the development of independent living skills programs and the instruction of the use of computer technology for people who are blind or have low vision. With the proliferation of information via the Internet and the requirements for online web accessibility and adaptive technology for equal access, Mr. Georgiev's expertise will be very valuable as we move from tangible facility access issues to cloud-based information access issues.

We thank you for your positive consideration of Mr. Georgiev to the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director

**GM-574**

Submitted on: 3/28/2018 10:07:05 PM

Testimony for CPH on 3/29/2018 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dean M. Georgiev    | Individual          | Support                   | Yes                       |

Comments:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

GM574

March 28, 2018

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for considering me for service on the disability and Communication Access Board. I feel privileged to serve with this board and look forward to the work ahead; advocating for access and equal participation for disabled people in programs and services which the state has to offer and in society overall. I bring to this board position many years of experience as a professional in the disability arena, particular in the area of blindness as a teacher and training program director. More broadly, I have had a long history of community involvement on boards such as the Waipahu Neighborhood Board, townhome and community associations and blind consumer groups. In all cases, I have been a positive influence in helping these organizations meet their objectives. I look forward to a future of service with DCAB. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dean M. Georgiev

**From:** [Melissa Gerber](#)  
**To:** [CPH Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 28, 2018 11:02:18 PM

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND  
HEALTH

GM574

March 28, 2018

Dear Committee Members:

I offer this letter of support on behalf of Dean Georgiev, who would be a valuable addition to the Disability and Communication Access Board. In 2015, Dean was my Supervisor while I interned at Ho`opono Services for the Blind for my Vocation Rehabilitation Master's Program at the University of Hawaii.

As an experienced professional serving the disability community Dean has a strong passion for empowering individuals to reach beyond what they think is possible for their lives. Dean's assertive communication style combined with his empathy for people make him a strong advocate for the disability community. His supervision inspired me to want to give my best in serving clients, therefore, I am very confident he will give his best in serving as a board member. I am honored to give him my highest recommendation.

Sincerely,

Melissa Gerber  
Job Development and Training Supervisor  
Abilities Unlimited

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Gabe, Deborah](#)  
**To:** [CPH Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** DCAB nomination of Dean Georgiev  
**Date:** Thursday, March 29, 2018 6:52:38 AM

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I am writing this letter in support of the nomination of Dean Georgiev to the Disabilities Communication Access Board (DCAB).

Dean and I first met approximately 13 years ago, when he was my assistive technology instructor at the New Visions Adjustment to Blindness Program of Ho'opono Services for the Blind. Since then I have known him as my coworker, my colleague, my mentor and role model, my friend, and currently as my supervisor in the New Visions Program.

Dean is blind, and so am I. When I first met him, he had been teaching access technology for several years to other blind people. I was in his assistive tech class for about a year. Without his instruction, I would not have been able to maintain my job at the time as audiologist at Kapiolani Medical Center. Since that time, I changed careers and have been employed at Ho'opono. I continue to consult with him about my assistive tech questions to this day.

As his student and his co-worker and colleague, I saw Dean as one of my role models for what a blind person can do. He did not let his blindness stop him from living his life to the fullest. He taught me that if a blind person has the right attitude and level of confidence, blindness skills, and equal access to important print information, the handicapping stigma and effects of blindness are greatly reduced.

For the past few years, Dean has been my supervisor, managing the New Visions Program at Ho'opono. He has an intimate understanding of disability issues, particularly blindness. He understands the issues blind people face in accessing print or other visual information. He understands issues faced by people with all different degrees and levels of blindness, as he has personally experienced many of these himself as he lost his vision in his first few decades of life. He knows assistive technology allowing blind people to use computers, smart phones, audible book readers, and electronic braille devices. He knows braille and uses it in public places such as elevators and room signs, as well as using it for reading documents. He knows the importance of people with disabilities advocating for equal access. He also understands when occasionally a blind person might ask for an "accommodation" which is not truly needed for their blindness, but is merely a convenience, rather than a true need for accessibility.

I have the utmost respect for Dean. He is a good listener, will consider many sides of an issue before making a judgement.

I sincerely hope that you will consider and approve Dean's nomination for the DCAB.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Deborah Gabe  
Braille Instructor  
New visions Adjustment to Blindness Program

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