

# **GM 32**

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Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, CARI UESUGI, for a term to expire 06-30-2020.

Report Title: Language Access Advisory Council

Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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To: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

From: Aphirak Bamrungruan  
Executive Director, Office of Language Access

Date: August 28, 2017

Subject: **GM 32** - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Language Access Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, CARI UESUGI, for a term to expire 06-30-2020.

Hearing: Tuesday, August 29, 2017, 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

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**Agency's Position:** The Office of Language Access (OLA) strongly supports the nomination of Ms. Cari Uesugi to the Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC) to fill the seat of "one representative from the state government" pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 321C-7(1) for a term to expire June 30, 2020.

**Purpose and Justification:** The purpose is for the consideration and confirmation of the LAAC Gubernatorial Nominee, Ms. Cari Uesugi.

Ms. Uesugi is a Program Specialist at the Hawaii State Judiciary's Intergovernmental and Community Relations Department in the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts. In this position, Ms. Uesugi is responsible for the coordination, planning, and development of statewide programs to increase equal access to the Courts as well as providing administrative support to the Supreme Court Committee on Court Interpreters and Language Access.

Furthermore, Ms. Uesugi has more than thirty years of professional experience working as a social worker in diverse communities and as a patient advocate in the medical field. Ms.

Uesugi also served on the LAAC as a representative from the County of Maui from April 2016 until May 2017 before relocating to Oahu.

Ms. Uesugi's desire to continue serving on the LAAC demonstrates her passion and commitment to the issue of language access. Over the years, Ms. Uesugi has shown keen vision, skillful networking, and strong abilities to listen, understand, and collaborate in ways that advance OLA goals. Her passion, work experience, and advocacy for Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals are assets she will bring to the council.

The purpose of OLA is to address the language access needs of LEP persons and ensure their meaningful access to services, programs, and activities offered by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government, including departments, offices, commissions, boards, or other state-funded agencies. OLA provides oversight, central coordination, and technical assistance to state agencies in their implementation of language access obligations – a civil right under both state and federal law.

OLA respectfully requests your favorable consideration in confirming the appointment of Ms. Cari Uesugi to the LAAC.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this committee.

To: Senator Baker  
From: Cari Uesugi  
GM 32  
Language Access Advisory Council

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

As a resident of Honolulu and a State employee with the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts, I see the need for interpreter services increasing in the future throughout our State. I hope as a member of the Language Access Advisory Council, I'll have the opportunity to share resources, as well as, meet the growing language needs of our State.

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

I perceive the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Board are to support the Executive Director of the Office of Language Access by providing input on the implementation and compliance with Hawaii's language access laws and on establishing statewide goals and objectives to improve access to programs, services, and activities of state and state-funded agencies by LEP consumers.

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

I hope that with my experience of working over 30 years as a Social Worker in diverse communities and as a Patient Advocate in the medical field can lend to advocating for LEP consumers to receive meaningful access to services, programs and activities within their communities.

4) Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position?

Throughout my career as a social worker and as an advocate for people with disabilities, the elderly, children and adults with special needs and patients and their family; I've collaborated with private and government agencies to create innovative programs to meet the needs of the consumer. Prior to moving to Honolulu, I initiated and implemented Maui Memorial Medical Center's Title IV and Language Access Plan. Collaborated with government agencies and community organizations to create and support a professional medical interpreters' training program with University of Hawaii/Maui College.

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

I hope to support the Executive Director of the Office of Language Access with coordinating language access plans by the state-funded agencies and to oversee and monitor compliance of Hawaii's language access law.

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

The three qualities that best describe me are: takes initiative, thinks outside of the box and an advocate. All these qualities lend to my commitment in assisting LEP consumers in receiving meaningful access in their community which would serve well as a member of the Advisory Council.

7) Name a previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a Board member. My experience working as a patient advocate at the Queen's Medical Center and Maui Memorial Medical Center has increased my commitment in working with LEP consumers in understanding services, programs and activities which are available to them.

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

I recently moved from Maui to Honolulu and have attained a position with the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts with the State of Hawaii. I do not foresee any possible conflicts of interest that would arise during my service on the Board. If there was a conflict, I would discuss it with the Executive Director and if it could not be resolved I would resign my position as a member of the Advisory Council.