

# GM 3

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Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Public Utilities Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAMES GRIFFIN, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

Report Title: Public Utilities Commission

Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):

Presentation to the Senate Committee on  
Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

The Twenty-Ninth Legislature  
Fist Special Session of 2017

Tuesday, August 29, 2017  
10:00 a.m.

Testimony on **Governor's Message No. 3**, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation as a Member of the **Public Utilities Commission**, Gubernatorial Nominee, **James Griffin**, for a Term to Expire on June 30, 2022

To the Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair,  
The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair,  
and Members of the Committee:

My name is Catherine Awakuni Colón, and I am writing in my personal capacity in **support** of the appointment of James Griffin to serve as a member of the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission ("Commission"), for a term to expire on June 30, 2022.

For approximately two years, while I was also employed at the Commission, I had the opportunity to work with and closely observe Mr. Griffin, who then served as the Commission's Chief of Policy and Research. I found Mr. Griffin be a quick study, applying his already well-developed knowledge of energy policy to his work in supporting the Commissioners and guiding other staff. Mr. Griffin collaboratively worked with Commissioners, staff, consultants, and utilities on a range of issues for all utilities regulated by the Commission, including water, wastewater, communications, and energy. I have every expectation that Mr. Griffin's expertise in utilities regulation will only grow, enabling him to further assist the Commission and the community it serves.

Because Hawaii's energy goals are impressive, important, and challenging, we especially need members of the Commission who are familiar with the regulated utilities, the Commission's procedure, the utilities' technical challenges, and the policy behind decisions made by the Commission. Mr. Griffin's experience will no doubt prove invaluable as the Commission provides guidance to the electric utilities as they work toward meeting our Renewable Portfolio Standards.

I believe Mr. Griffin will continue to be a valued and highly productive member of the Commission, and respectfully request that you recommend approval of his nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to support GM No. 3. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



RANDALL Y. IWASE  
CHAIR

LORRAINE H. AKIBA  
COMMISSIONER

JAMES P. GRIFFIN  
COMMISSIONER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**  
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August 28, 2017

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair  
The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection  
State Capitol, Room 229  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Re: Testimony in Support of GM3: Confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee  
James Griffin, to the Public Utilities Commission

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of GM3, "Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Public Utilities Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, James Griffin for a term to expires June 30, 2022." James Griffin previously served as the Policy Chief for the Public Utilities Commission ("PUC") from 2012 through 2016. I have worked extensively with him and have personal knowledge of his capabilities. He is well qualified and possesses the requisite technical knowledge, expertise and background regarding the issues and policies involved with the regulated utilities and docket matters before the PUC. He is also well respected and his expertise is recognized by the various industry and community stakeholders who appear before the PUC.

Most importantly, he understands and appreciates the importance of the independence of each commissioner and the integrity of the PUC as a quasi judicial decision making agency in addressing the policy matters and contested case dockets that come before the commission. I have confidence that he will fully discharge these responsibilities and duties as commissioner to maintain and enhance the integrity of the agency.

Accordingly, I urge your favorable consideration of the nomination and confirmation of James Griffin as a PUC commissioner.

Very truly yours,

Lorraine H. Akiba  
Commissioner

TESTIMONY OF RANDY IWASE  
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

August 29, 2017  
10:00 a.m.

**MEASURE:** Gov. Msg. No. 3

**TITLE:** Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Public Utilities Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAMES GRIFFIN, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

Chair Baker and Members of the Committee:

Please permit me to take this means to submit testimony in strong support of the nomination of Jay Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission ("PUC") GM3.

Over the next several months the PUC will be involved in numerous important cases such as utility rates and advancing dockets which will draw the blueprint for our energy future.

Dr. Griffin is uniquely qualified to serve as a commissioner as we address these dockets.

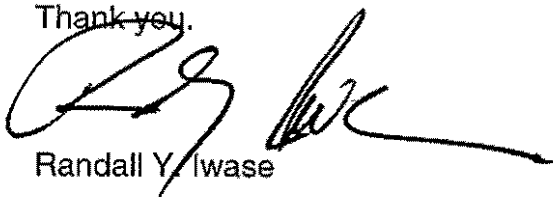
First, he served as the PUC's Chief of Policy and Research from 2012 – 2016. In that capacity, he was intimately involved with developing the PUC's decisions in such dockets as DER, DR, Decoupling, and PSIP. These major dockets are ongoing and will develop our energy blueprint. Dr. Griffin will hit the ground running as commissioner.

Second, in 2014 the PUC issued its white paper "Inclination." It sets a vision and pathway for Hawaii's energy future. It is a document which continues to guide the commission. Dr. Griffin was a key person who contributed greatly in the drafting of this seminal document.

With his background and experience, Dr. Griffin will be an invaluable resource and addition to the commission.

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of this nomination.

Thank you.



Randall Y. Iwase

Dean Nishina  
[dnishina@dcca.hawaii.gov](mailto:dnishina@dcca.hawaii.gov)

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

THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
INTERIM SESSION OF 2017

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2017  
10 a.m.

TESTIMONY ON GM 3

My name is Dean Nishina and I have been with the Division of Consumer Advocacy, Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, State of Hawaii, for over 25 years in various positions of increasing responsibility. I am offering the following testimony as an individual who has experience with Hawaii's regulatory process with the Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") and as a customer of the companies regulated by the Commission. I am offering my support of James Griffin as a commissioner for the Public Utilities Commission. I believe that Mr. Griffin will make an excellent commissioner.

As I'm sure the committee is already aware, Mr. Griffin was part of the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute faculty and also served as the Chief of Policy and Research at the Commission. Thus, Mr. Griffin has significant energy and regulatory experience and, if confirmed, I am positive that Mr. Griffin will put that experience and knowledge to help Hawaii and Hawaii's regulated utility and transportation consumers. Mr. Griffin's expertise will also undoubtedly help Hawaii with its objective of striving towards 100% renewable energy as well as meeting the existing energy efficiency portfolio standard.

In my personal experience with interacting with Mr. Griffin, he has demonstrated significant knowledge and interest in the energy industry and he is very intelligent and articulate. Using the above talents, Mr. Griffin has been able to help guide very important movements in Hawaii's clean energy transition and, if he is confirmed, he will be able to help continue that movement.

The Commission's role in Hawaii's economic health has been increasing over time and it is important to ensure that the people who serve as commissioner are properly qualified. I believe that Mr. Griffin is well qualified and brings significant professional experience with the subject of regulation of Hawaii public utilities and transportation industries. Thus, I support the nomination of Mr. Griffin and urge the committee to confirm Mr. Griffin to be the next commissioner at the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of  
**LUIS P. SALAVERIA**  
Director  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND  
HEALTH**

Tuesday, August 29, 2017  
10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

in consideration of  
**GM 3**

**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE PUBLIC  
UTILITIES COMMISSION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, JAMES GRIFFIN, FOR A  
TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2022.**

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT), **strongly supports** the confirmation of James Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission.

Mr. Griffin has been deeply involved in clean energy policy and research since 2009 through his work at the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI). Additionally, as Chief of Policy and Research at the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission (PUC) between 2012 and 2017, Mr. Griffin was instrumental in providing the necessary research and economic analyses in support of Commission decisions. His experience and vast knowledge through his work at the PUC and HNEI will enable him to serve the best interests of the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Mr. Griffin's nomination.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, & HEALTH  
Tuesday, August 29, 2017 — 10:00 a.m. — Room 229

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports GM 3, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Public Utilities Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, James Griffin, for a term to expire 6-30-2022**

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

We are Murray Clay, Kyle Datta, and Amy Hennessey, the management team of the Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and reduce waste. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono strongly supports GM 3**, which approves the confirmation of James Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

James Griffin has been serving the public interest with electric utility regulation for over a decade at both Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute and at the PUC. He has the depth of experience to understand the regulatory issues facing the PUC and how to view them from multiple perspectives. James has shown through his work and decisions, that he has the ability to listen to all sides and strike the balance that serves to further the interests of the State of Hawai'i. We value his practical perspective on what approaches to achieving 100 percent renewables will work in Hawai'i, given our state's unique island grids in predominantly rural counties. In addition, James has made the effort to attend multiple forums on the cutting edge issues of utility regulation across the county, and will bring that knowledge and insight to the PUC.

We are impressed with Mr. Griffin's work and feel he would make a great member of the Public Utilities Commission. We look forward to working with him in the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



Murray Clay  
Managing Partner

Kyle Datta  
General Partner

Amy Hennessey  
Director of Communications



**Testimony of Hermina Morita**  
**Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection & Health**  
**GM 3 – Nomination of Dr. James P. Griffin to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission**  
**Tuesday, August 29, 2017 10:00 a.m.**

Aloha Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Governor Message 3, the nomination of Dr. James Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission. First, I would like to thank the Committee for considering this nomination during this special session. A favorable action by the Senate will help to remove the uncertainty of who should legally occupy this position since the removal of Commissioner Michael Champley on June 30, 2016 and the issue of what constitutes a vacancy, the constitutionality of holdover statutes associated with the nomination, confirmation and appointment of gubernatorial candidates for this important position but, more importantly, restore the balance of power between the Administration and Legislature.

I have known Dr. Griffin for over 17 years and have followed his career since he first worked for me as a legislative aide when he was a graduate student. Later, I hired him as the Chief of Policy and Research during my tenure as the Public Utilities Commission Chair. I credit him advancing my knowledge and understanding of energy issues and energy policy throughout my legislative and regulatory careers. Dr. Griffin has the policy, technical and financial expertise to be a Public Utilities Commissioner. However, I believe his greatest strength is his ability to communicate, verbally and written, complex issues to a general audience. This ability is sorely missing throughout our community where we must face, discuss and seek solutions regarding major transformations in both our electricity and telecommunications infrastructure which affects how we live, work, play and do business throughout the State.

There is no doubt that Dr. Griffin has an impressive resume. Recently, a financial analyst asked me if he would be a capable Commissioner because it appeared to him that Dr. Griffin was just an “academic wonk.” I explained to him that nothing could be further from the truth and that even though Dr. Griffin had a strong academic background it was in applied research where he has become intimately involved in all aspects of the electricity sector seeking practical solutions as we face modernizing our critical infrastructure with advancing technologies and changing business models, customer preferences and challenging environmental concerns.

Dedication to public service and independence are important attributes for a Commissioner. Throughout the years I have known Dr. Griffin, he has demonstrated his dedication to working for the public good. Also, I believe with confirmation, it will be more feasible for Dr. Griffin to demonstrate some level of independence given the current level of uncertainty with the cloud of a legal and the possibility of political interference the longer the nomination sits awaiting the need for confirmation. There is too much important work at the Commission to allow for these types of issues to continue.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit favorable testimony for this very important position.

**Testimony to:** **Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health**  
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair; Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair

**Measure:** **GM3**, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Public Utilities Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAMES GRIFFIN, for a term to expire 06-30-2022.

**Hearing scheduled:** **August 29, 2017, 10:00 AM, Conference Room 229**

**Testifier:** **Maria Tome**, Professional Engineer (PE); Master's in Public Administration (MPA); Senior Member, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE); Member, American Society of Civil Engineers.

**Position:** **Strong Support**

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Aloha Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee. I am testifying in strong support of nominee James Griffin for the position of Commissioner with the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

I have known of and worked with Dr. Griffin since about 2010. I was the head of the renewable energy program at the State Energy Office when I first became aware of Dr. Griffin's work on energy economics and renewables integration at the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute. Later, when I was hired as a staff member at the Public Utilities Commission, I personally observed Dr. Griffin to be hard-working, knowledgeable, and to have a high level of integrity. He has demonstrated the ability to balance thoughtfulness and caution with decisiveness and action.

He understands technical and economic issues facing Hawaii's energy systems, as well as regulatory requirements applied to Hawaii's PUC-regulated entities.

Therefore, I believe that Dr. Griffin will be an excellent Commissioner. I encourage you to vote to confirm him.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**From:** [BashNola@aol.com](mailto:BashNola@aol.com)  
**To:** [Heath Williams](#)  
**Subject:** Nomination of Jay Griffin - PUC Commissioner  
**Date:** Saturday, August 26, 2017 9:35:03 AM

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H. Williams - I support the nomination of Jay Griffin as PUC Commissioner. I have known Jay and worked with him on energy matters for the past ten years, including the time he was PUC Chief of Staff. He has a thorough knowledge of energy issues, is practical, and seeks workable solutions. He will make an excellent Commissioner.

Sebastian J. "Bash" Nola  
Energy Consultant - Utility Operations & Power Delivery

**From:** [Doug McLeod](#)  
**To:** [CPH Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [Heath Williams](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony on GM3 hearing August 29th at 10:00am  
**Date:** Saturday, August 26, 2017 9:14:59 AM

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Senator Roz Baker  
Chair, Senate Committee on  
Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health

Re: GM3 Nomination of James Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission  
Tuesday August 29, 2017. 10am

Aloha Chair Baker:

The energy community on Oahu knows Jay Griffin well, and I will let them speak of his many projects there. The purpose of my testimony is to shed light on how much Jay has done to support the growth of renewable energy on Maui. My testimony is my own, not that of any specific organization, but my work experience with Jay occurred both during my term as County Energy Commissioner, and also in my current roles as Program Committee Chair for the Maui Energy Conference, and as Energy Committee Chair and Vice President of the Maui Tomorrow Foundation.

Senators, the first thing you need to know about Jay's work on Maui is that he has repeatedly shown that rarest of qualities-grace under pressure. I remember a public meeting during the Maui Smart Grid project where we had to deal with very difficult issues involving public health concerns and Jay was remarkable in his ability to listen to criticism while also providing the members of the public who wanted to educate themselves with the information they would need to do so. As I recall that hearing was back in 2011, and in the six years since he has continued to impress me as one of the most intelligent and thoughtful voices on matters of energy policy. He is also just plain hard working. The number of hours spent traveling back and forth to Maui on various projects, and the sacrifices he has made in terms of time with his family, are noteworthy. In addition to the MauiSmart Grid project, Jay also spent many hours on Maui related to Big Wind and proposals for an inter-island cable, JUMP Smart Maui, wind curtailment issues, and the Nextera merger proceedings.

Back in 2013 when we started to organize the first Maui Energy Conference, Jay was the first Oahu based person I called. It remains one of the best decisions I ever made professionally. Jay has served continuously as a member of the Program Committee, and despite a heavy workload on other projects he has always made time for our meetings and has been integral to the success of the Maui Energy Conference ([www.mauienergyconference.com](http://www.mauienergyconference.com)). We consider ourselves the top energy conference in Hawaii as we enter our fifth year, and in my opinion we would not have gotten there without Jay. Senators, in putting together this energy conference we have been fortunate to be able to call upon some of the brightest minds in Hawaii, and I can say with some confidence that Jay has always been one of the brightest minds in the room even when we have a room full of bright people.

Jay has played an important role in the evolution of how our Program Committee considers broader notions of sustainability, a fact I attribute to his Master's Degree in Environmental Management and Public Policy. As we look to the 10th Anniversary of the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative (HCEI), we increasingly run into issues of public policy and the environment

in Hawaii. Are there “clean” fossil fuels; should we treat biomass and solar as equally “renewable” given the carbon impacts of one but not the other; and can we tolerate the increasing level of bird and bat kills being reported by wind farms on Maui and Oahu? These are the sort of questions the Commission must deal with and Jay is the best qualified person I can imagine to wrestle with these difficult questions.

A prior nominee to this position faced a number of questions involving integrity and honesty in professional dealings, including interactions with people from Maui. I want to state in the clearest possible terms that Jay has repeatedly demonstrated the very highest levels of honesty, candor, and integrity over many years in many different situations. I have seen Jay able to act in a role of intermediary trusted by both sides, and it has been my experience that members of the environmental community have also noted Jay’s honesty and diligence. He is completely trustworthy in my experience.

Senators, of all the votes you cast this Special Session, the one to confirm Jay Griffin as PUC Commissioner should be the easiest. He will work hard, he is extremely intelligent, and he is respectful of dissenting voices. In other words, the right person for the job.

Doug McLeod  
Makawao, Maui, HI  
[dkkenergyservices@gmail.com](mailto:dkkenergyservices@gmail.com)

**From:** [Marco Mangelsdorf](#)  
**To:** [CPH Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Subject: nomination of James "Jay" Griffin to the HI. PUC  
**Date:** Saturday, August 26, 2017 9:01:02 AM

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Dear Senator Roz Baker and Senator Jill Tokuda.

I am writing in strong support of the nomination of Dr. Jay Griffin to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

Jay is the best choice that Governor David Ige could have made. He brings an exceptionally intelligent and knowledgeable mind to the commission and is a superb addition.

At no time in our state's history have we been faced with such a myriad of regulatory issues and challenges, especially on the energy front.

I have complete confidence in Jay's abilities to make the wisest decisions on behalf of all of us in the energy business as well as for all residents of Hawaii.

With aloha and respectfully,

Marco Mangelsdorf, Ph.D.  
President, ProVision Solar  
Founder, Hawaii PV Coalition  
Director and Secretary, Hawaii Island Energy Cooperative

TESTIMONY OF  
John E. Cole

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

THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
First Special Session of 2017  
Tuesday, August 29, 2017  
10:00 A.M.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 3  
Nomination of James P. Griffin  
to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

My name is John Cole, and I strongly support the nomination of Dr. James P. Griffin to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

I have known and worked with Dr. Griffin for several years - both when I was a PUC commissioner and he was at the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI), and while he was Chief of Policy and Research at the Commission and I at HNEI. He has always displayed a deep technical knowledge of utility systems and has understood the need for policy to evolve along with the technology advances in order to move our state's utility systems forward efficiently and effectively. Dr. Griffin's extensive technical and public policy background is a perfect fit for the Commission as it navigates us through the challenges of the state's energy transformation.

More recently, I literally have worked side-by-side with Dr. Griffin at HNEI (both on the same projects and in adjoining offices) and have come to know him on a more personal level. Jay's work ethic is unparalleled and he is deeply committed to finding solutions to challenges set before him. I can also assure you that Jay is a loving father and husband whose guiding principle is to do his best to make a better future for his family and all the residents of Hawaii.

Jay will make an excellent Commissioner, and I strongly urge you to favorably consider his nomination.

Mark B. Glick

**Testimony of Mark B. Glick**

before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION AND HEALTH**

Tuesday, August 29, 2017  
10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

in consideration of  
**GM 3**

**RELATING TO THE CONFIRMATION OF JAMES GRIFFIN TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee.

I strongly support the confirmation of James “Jay” Griffin to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

My support stems from the experience of working with Dr. Griffin as the State of Hawaii’s Energy Administrator and now as member of the faculty at the University of Hawaii leading energy policy & innovation efforts at the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI). Dr. Griffin has served with great distinction on the executive staff of the Public Utilities Commission and HNEI, where his command of the technical aspects of Hawaii’s energy transition has effectively supported policy discussions and helped inform key decisions and orders in regulatory proceedings. Several examples that come to mind are Dr. Griffin’s influence on Commission orders regarding equitable interconnection standards and tariff structures for distributed energy resources and preparation of the Commission’s highly regarded Inclinations on the Future of Hawaii’s Electric Utilities.

When I think of the challenges facing the Commission today and the need for technical leadership that can better inform commissioners and staff alike, it is unimaginable to think of anyone better qualified to serve in that capacity as Dr. Griffin. This is particularly true when considering the crucial role that unbiased analytical resources play in the Commission’s agenda and decision-making and Dr. Griffin’s rich experience of coordinating such energy systems design and analysis in his previous positions at HNEI and the Commission.

247 Beach Walk #1101  
Honolulu, HI 96815



Mark B. Glick

I also wish to point out Dr. Griffin's unimpeachable character and proven ability to bring together diverse players in a manner that will instill confidence and a sense of objectivity in the Commission's decisions and orders. As difficult decisions are contemplated on how best to ensure energy reliability and lower costs as Hawaii accelerates its penetration of renewable energy throughout the state, Hawaii's energy consumers and stakeholders will be well served by Dr. Griffin's competent and steady hand.

Dr. Griffin will certainly bring to the Commission crucial energy systems knowledge and experience on energy planning, research and design. His technical proficiency, experience and integrity are essential ingredients in moving Hawaii's energy transformation forward while ensuring that ratepayers are better off in terms of electricity costs, reliability, security, and potential to support Hawaii's economic future.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of James "Jay" Griffin's confirmation to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

247 Beach Walk #1101  
Honolulu, HI 96815

**Sandra-Ann Y.H. Wong**

*Attorney at Law*

*A Law Corporation*

*1050 Bishop Street, #514*

*Honolulu, Hawaii 96813*

*Telephone: (808) 537-2598 email: [sawonglaw@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:sawonglaw@hawaii.rr.com)*

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health  
Testimony in Support of  
GM 3: Gubernatorial Nominee James Griffin to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission  
August 29, 2017 at 10a.m. in Room 229

Aloha Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sandra-Ann Y.H. Wong. I am an attorney that has practiced before the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) for the past 25 years. During this time, I have had the pleasure to work with Dr. Griffin and I always found him to be knowledgeable in regards to matters before the Commission, especially in regards to issues relating to energy. This expertise is needed if we are to succeed in reaching our goal of a 100% renewable energy future, and at the same time ensure that all consumers have just & reasonable rates and reliable service.

I am confident that Dr. Griffin, as a Commissioner, will be an independent and collaborative voice at the PUC. Therefore, I respectfully request that the Committee support his nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this appointment.

August 28, 2017

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am writing to provide testimony on behalf of James Griffin who is under consideration as a gubernatorial nominee for Commissioner at the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

By way of background, I have known James (Jay) since 2009 when he was hired into the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI). He was recommended to Rick Rocheleau (HNEI Executive Director) and me by Hermina Morita when she was Chair of Energy and Environmental Protection Committee. I first interviewed him in San Francisco. We later followed this interview up with a formal interview at the University of Hawaii.

While it was important to have Ms. Morita as a reference, that was only the beginning. We hired Jay due to the nature of his previous experience in Hawaii and his work on his doctoral thesis at RAND. In particular, we were impressed with his work in Israel on technology deployment projects as these were quite similar to what we were involved in at HNEI. Further, RAND is known as a leader in policy analysis. His experience in this field was invaluable as we were developing new work in energy and environmental policy analysis at HNEI.

He initially worked for me on the Maui Smart Grid project, a US Department of Energy project that had total funding of \$15M, which was awarded to HNEI in late 2008. The focus of this project was on addressing mechanisms for dealing with intermittent renewable energy resources and with deploying new technologies to better deal with demand-side management issues.

After I left HNEI in 2010, Jay took over the leadership of the Maui project and led it through a difficult period in terms of deploying a number of smart grid-related technologies. While I was still at HNEI, Jay was instrumental in starting a policy analysis and assessment initiative in concert with the University of Hawaii Economic Research Office (UHERO). This initiative formed the basis of what is now a robust program at HNEI in the area of energy policy analysis.

Following my departure and following his temporary move to the PUC, I remained in contact with him as part of my various other activities in California, Nevada, and Hawaii. Most recently, I served as interim Administrator for the Hawaii State Energy Office from January to July of this year. In this capacity, I continued my interactions with Jay as he always has a knowledgeable perspective on technology and policy in Hawaii. This

is because Jay is an extremely talented and motivated professional, who is continually considering how grid management could be improved, while staying abreast of both technology and policy developments.

Jay is also extremely diligent. He does not offer an opinion unless his evaluation and analyses are well considered. In discussions with previous PUC Commissioners, I know that they valued Jay's thinking to a high degree. While he was at the PUC, he and I had numerous discussions about the need to insert new emerging technologies into the electricity distribution system that would allow the system to operate more efficiently. He was consistently on top of the latest technologies and operational systems that were emerging around the world.

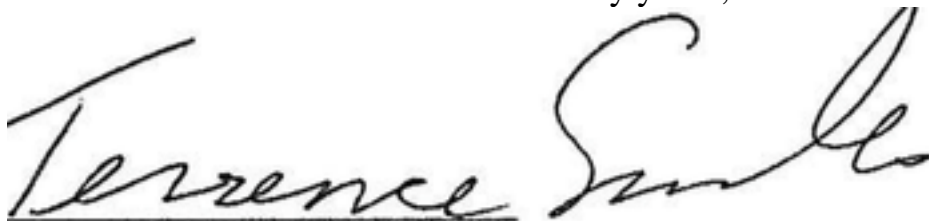
Jay is also an incredibly hard-working individual. When I was at HNEI, I tended to work a lot on weekends. Jay was almost always there as well. However, this was "working smarter" – not just working harder. His values and insights were always appreciated. As an example, I was serving on a National Research Council committee when Jay started at HNEI. He was instrumental in tracking down background data and analyses that later went into the final report on energy externalities, "Hidden Costs of Energy: Un-priced Consequences of Energy Production and Use."

Jay is also a very likeable person. He works well with others and is willing to share his ideas and accept other professionals' ideas and opinions.

In summary, I strongly recommend that James (Jay) Griffin be confirmed as a Public Utilities Commission Commissioner. His educational and professional background for such a position is excellent. His ability for handling a position in which competing interests must be fairly considered is also excellent. In that regard, Jay is an extremely fair and honorable person. Thus, his combination of attributes that include expertise, experience, knowledge, and temperament make him an excellent choice.

I will be happy to follow up with any questions that you may have of me. I can best be reached at 510-506-1932.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terrence Surles". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Terrence (Terry) Surles  
P. O. Box 215  
Albion, CA 95410

TESTIMONY OF  
Richard E. Rocheleau

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

THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
First Special Session of 2017  
Tuesday, August 29, 2017  
10:00 A.M.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 3  
Nomination of James P. Griffin  
to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

My name is Richard Rocheleau, and I strongly support the nomination of Dr. James P. Griffin to the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission. I am the Director of the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute at the University of Hawaii and served as Dr. Griffin's supervisor during his tenure at the University but am submitting this recommendation as a private citizen.

I have known Dr. Griffin and served as his supervisor since his hire at the University of Hawaii in 2009 including while he was Chief of Policy and Research at the Commission. Dr. Griffin has consistently demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of utility operations and has consistently sought opportunities to identify ways to advance the state's energy systems. This has included a substantial interest and effort to advance energy policy. I believe Dr. Griffin's experience and interests can be an important asset to the commission and will serve efforts to meet the State's aggressive energy goals. .

As his supervisor and acquaintance outside the office, I have also observed Dr. Griffin's work ethic. He is hard working and highly ethical. He is committed to Hawaii and to improving the community.

Jay will make an excellent Commissioner, and I strongly urge you to favorably consider his nomination.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION AND HEALTH

Measure: Governor's Message No. 3

Nomination of James Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission

Tuesday, August 29, 2017

Testimony of Delmond Won

Chair Baker and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of the nomination of James Griffin to the Public Utilities Commission.

For the past two and a half years, I have been employed by the Public Utilities Commission as its Executive Officer and have worked closely with Mr. Griffin first while he served as Chief of the Policy and Research Section and currently as an interim Commissioner.

I have worked in the regulatory arena for some 30 years, both at the State level as a member of the State Land Use Commission, as well as at the national level, having served as a member of the Federal Maritime Commission during the Clinton administration.

I understand fully, the difficulties of being a regulator and have learned that it is particularly so here, given the complexities and technological issues we face as Hawaii transitions from fossil fuels toward renewable energy sources.

Mr. Griffin has demonstrated an impressive breadth and depth of knowledge of the relevant issues currently before the Commission.

Having worked with more than a few regulators here and in Washington, D.C., I can say without reservation that Mr. Griffin is extremely well qualified for this position with the Public Utilities Commission.

TESTIMONY OF JAMES P. GRIFFIN

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

AUGUST 29, 2017

G.M. 3

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Public Utilities Commission, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAMES GRIFFIN, for a term to expire 6-30-2022

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health,

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I also want to thank Governor Ige for nominating me to the Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”). I am deeply honored to be considered for this remarkable opportunity to serve the people of Hawaii and advance the State’s vision for a clean energy future. I strongly believe in this vision and understand the Commission’s vital role in achieving it. I am fortunate to have served on the Commission for almost three months now, and during this time we have made tangible progress toward these goals. I hope to continue working with Chair Iwase and fellow Commissioner Akiba to build on this success. I believe we are poised for substantial progress toward the State’s goals with important decisions before the Commission in the coming months and implementation of the electric utilities’ strategic plans over the next several years.

While my background and professional focus has been in the energy sector, I also understand the broader oversight role of the Commission and the importance of our work to Hawaii’s residents and businesses. The PUC regulates over 1,700 entities throughout the state that provide electricity, gas, telecommunications, private water and sewage, and motor and water carrier transportation services. These entities range from some of the largest companies in Hawaii to small operators providing essential services to rural communities. Through the Commission’s oversight, our actions have a profound impact on the cost of living and quality of life for residents and businesses on every island. In addition, with our regulation of the electric and gas utilities and responsibility for the Hawaii Energy program, the Commission has a central role in achieving the State’s clean energy goals.

My background and experiences as a faculty researcher at the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (“HNEI”) and Chief of Policy and Research at the PUC have uniquely prepared me for this role. As a university researcher, I’ve worked on several studies analyzing the technical requirements to integrate higher levels of renewable energy into Hawaii’s electric systems and managed demonstration projects to test emerging clean energy technologies. Through these experiences, I have an in-depth understanding of the complex technical and economic analyses that are typically submitted to the PUC in support of new projects, programs, and requests to invest capital. I have also worked with a broad range of stakeholders in Hawaii, built relationships with the US Department of Energy and National Labs, and worked with leading clean energy technology companies on these projects.

Almost five years ago, at the request of former Chair Morita, I took a leave from my HNEI faculty position to join the PUC. In my capacity as the Chief of Policy and Research, I helped hire and train a new generation of analysts that supported Commission decision-making with research and analysis. We also had staff devoted to managing the Hawaii Energy program and the PUC's legislative activities. In this role, I contributed to many of the Commission's key decisions, had oversight responsibility for Commission-led programs, and developed deep knowledge of the PUC's major regulatory proceedings.

An important formative experience during this period was development of the Commission's roadmap for the electricity sector (known as the "Commission's Inclinations on the Future of Hawaii's Electric Utilities"). As lead for the staff team, I worked closely with the Commissioners to draft the document and initiate the key planning dockets to implement this vision. The Commission started this transformative effort in 2014 and has made considerable progress on several elements. However, there is important work remaining, particularly with respect to implementing new customer programs, and these are high priority items for the Commission that I will discuss shortly. Bringing resolution to these major planning dockets is another reason I was excited to return to the PUC.

Another formative experience while on staff was the opportunity to travel across the state for public meetings on many of the most controversial issues before the Commission. With this experience, I've seen firsthand the impact of the PUC's decisions across Hawaii's diverse communities and gained a deep appreciation of the enormous public trust placed in the PUC's decision makers. These experiences now inform my perspectives and priorities as a Commissioner.

This briefly summarizes key aspects of my background and professional experiences that are highly relevant to this position. I also want to highlight several important recent decisions since I returned to the PUC and discuss priorities both in the near-term and over the duration of this appointment.

Between late June and July, this Commission unanimously approved six utility-scale renewable projects on or before the timelines requested by the applicants. With the addition of these projects in the next few years, the state's electric utilities are on track to meet the 2020 renewable portfolio standard goal of 30%. With federal tax incentives for certain renewable technologies set to start declining in 2020, the window of opportunity to take advantage of these benefits for future projects is closing. My fellow Commissioners and I understand that timely regulatory decisions are critical to realizing these benefits for Hawaii's consumers.

In mid-July, this Commission resolved one of the major planning dockets described above when we issued a final decision and order accepting the Hawaiian Electric Companies ("HECO Companies") Power Supply Improvement Plans ("PSIPs"). This decision culminated three years of efforts by the HECO Companies, PUC, and stakeholders throughout the state to develop strategic plans that will guide the HECO Companies in the next five years. With resolution of this docket, the immediate focus shifts to implementing these plans, which includes further procurement of utility-scale renewable projects, development of new customer programs, and investments in the utilities' grids to integrate new renewable energy sources. When I look forward to the term of this appointment, the implementation of these plans will occupy a considerable amount of the Commission's time and is another reason I am motivated by this opportunity to serve. I am excited by and optimistic about the potential progress we can make towards the State's energy goals in the next five years.



Most immediately, there are important pending decisions for the community-based renewable energy (CBRE) program that was established by Act 100 in 2015 and a new suite of customer programs. The new programs under development will expand choices for customers to invest in the growing array of clean energy technologies for their residences and businesses. This is currently a major area of growth and innovation in the electric utility industry, and there is considerable interest in Hawaii's market ranging from leading global technology companies to homegrown startups. The tariffs developed and filed with the Commission will determine the technical requirements and compensation terms for these programs, and this is a highly technical, and sometimes contentious, decision-making process. I also understand that the time delays and uncertainties of decision-making on these programs have been a source of frustration.

Personally, seeing these programs kick off successfully is a high priority, and I know my fellow Commissioners share this viewpoint. This is highly technical subject matter and an area where my prior background and training is directly relevant to our decision-making. We expect to devote considerable attention to this topic as the final filings are submitted in the coming weeks, and we intend to make timely decisions.

As discussed above, the electric utilities' strategic plans anticipate further procurement for utility-scale renewables. This is another area with substantial Commission oversight and regulatory review. While on staff, I was responsible for several aspects of this process and bring this experience to the Commission when the next round of bidding begins, which is expected shortly. Given current industry trends, we expect to see highly competitive pricing for these projects, which will benefit both the cost of living in Hawaii and our progress on clean energy goals. For these reasons, this is a priority during the term of this appointment.

Finally, I also want to highlight that rate cases for the Hawaii Electric Light Company (HELCO), Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO), and Hawaii Gas (HG) are currently before the Commission. A rate case for the Maui Electric Company (MECO) is expected by the end of the year. In addition to these, the HECO Companies will be submitting their "Grid Modernization Strategy" by the end of this week. These rate cases involve combined annual revenues of over \$2 billion and the projected cumulative investment over the next five years for modernizing our electric grids is estimated at over \$200 million. These decisions will affect the cost of electricity and gas for the vast majority of Hawaii's residents and businesses, and, accordingly, will be carefully scrutinized. As a Commissioner, I bring my prior experience from reviewing similar requests and have already drawn on this in our recent interim decision in the HELCO rate case.

In summary, I have spent most of my professional career developing extensive subject matter expertise in the broad range of issues currently pending before the Commission. While on staff, I contributed to nearly all major cases and decisions during that time and have a deep understanding of the Commission's current proceedings. For someone with my background and training, this is the opportunity of a lifetime to put these skills and expertise to work as a Commissioner and serve the people of Hawaii.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you this morning.