

# **GM 52**

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Measure Title: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Dental Examiners, Gubernatorial Nominee, SHARON TANAKA, for a term to expire 06-30-2019.

Report Title: Board of Dental Examiners

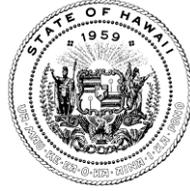
Description:

Companion:

Package:

Current Referral: CPH

Introducer(s):



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR  
SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
LT. GOVERNOR

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**PRESENTATION OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

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

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
First Special Session of 2017  
Tuesday, August 29, 2017  
1:30 p.m.

TESTIMONY ON **GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 52**, SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO **THE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS**, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, **SHARON TANAKA**, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2019.

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR,  
AND TO THE HONORABLE JILL N. TOKUDA, VICE CHAIR,  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Catherine Awakuni Colón, Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department"). The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message No. 52, nominating Ms. Sharon Tanaka for membership on the Board of Dental Examiners ("Board") for a term to expire June 30, 2019.

The Department supports the nomination of Ms. Tanaka to serve as a public member on the Board because of her dedication to better the community, which is

shown through her career in public service and social work within the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH). Prior to starting her own management consulting company, Ms. Tanaka worked for over 30 years to positively influence the lives of many of Hawaii's disabled and disadvantaged residents as a social worker within DOH's Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled Branch. Throughout her time with DOH, Ms. Tanaka's tasks and responsibilities varied to include individual case management assignments to overseeing and managing operations of programs with statewide scope, all for the purpose of strengthening Hawaii's social support services for children and families dealing with developmental disabilities.

Ms. Tanaka also recognizes the various requirements that come with serving on the Board. She understands that service entails regularly attending meetings of the Board to ensure quorum, being apprised of industry issues and all materials provided in advance of meetings, and that participation in the Board's discussions is essential for a strong, well-functioning Board. Ms. Tanaka welcomes the opportunity to serve and to make positive contributions to the Board as a new public member. Thus, the Department believes that Ms. Tanaka's health-related public service background with the State, and her continuing interest to voluntarily serve as one of the Board's two public members, will greatly benefit the State if she is allowed to serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments in support of Ms. Tanaka's nomination to serve on the Board of Dental Examiners.

August 26, 2017

To whom it may concern:

It is with pleasure that I submit this recommendation of Ms. Sharon Tanaka to your office for consideration of her application for appointment to the Hawaii State Board of Dentistry.

I have known Ms. Tanaka for over 20 years, first as a family friend, then later as a fellow health professional and mentor. Her career in the area of family health, child development and developmental disabilities provides her with a broad knowledge base on various health issues affecting children and adults. She has always impressed me with her commitment to improving access to health and dental care for children and adults. As a professional medical social worker with a degree in public health, she is able to relate how the health needs of the many impact the delivery of service to the individual patient.

She worked in the area of quality assurance, and program development in her position with the Division of Developmental Disabilities, of the Department of Health. She has a heart of an advocate and the vision of an architect.

When I started my medical practice, I turned to her for consultation on access and delivery. She was right there with advice and assistance. For this I am grateful.

With her eye on access, service delivery and service performance she would be an asset to your Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Bloom, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Melissa Bloom, MD

Family Medicine

Bloom Direct Care, LLC

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Sharon Tanaka  
Questions

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

My interest in various aspects of public health has been long standing. I have worked in the health field for over thirty years as a social worker and have been involved in working on various aspects of quality assurance. One area of interest has been the dental field, particularly after learning of the limitations of dental services for adults on Medicaid as well as potential and real results of dentists' "errors."

Being semi-retired, I felt that at this time I could give time to this area of interest and make a contribution.

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

The primary role and responsibility of the Board would be to serve as the quality assurance watchdog for the dentistry profession ensuring the statutory requirements are upheld.

As part of this charge, the Board would address complaints from the public. These complaints must be investigated and reviewed for action. The action(s) recommended should be made judiciously for the benefit of the public.

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

Social workers are often the advocates – for people, ideas, policies, etc. This generally translates into being the one who brings up issues of concern for discussion, action, and/or resolution. The results of advocacy must be shaped with reason-/logic and fairness. At the same time, action(s) taken should also be done with education to hopefully increase awareness and prevent recurrence. As a Board member, I hope to contribute to these results.

4. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the Board.

One of my responsibilities in the past had been to work on statutes and administrative rules (i.e., adult foster homes and developmental disabilities). Understanding how statutes and administrative rules are developed, promulgated, and used to guide practice and performance is useful in fulfilling the responsibilities of a Board member.

As part of my past job responsibilities was in the development of quality assurance protocols for a federal-state funding partnership program. These protocols had to be developed to meet federal requirements imposed to promote accountability. I attended a number of federal conferences and discussion sessions as well as conferences sponsored by national organizations (as National Association of State DD Directors and American Association of Mental Retardation) on quality assurance and related topics.

Social workers perform assessment, planning, and evaluation functions when working with clients (and systems). These skills are critical (and useful) in any endeavor. These are basic tools I would use as a Board member in addressing complaints and issues brought before the Board.

Recently, to enhance my knowledge and skills in the dental area, I attended an OSHA workshop where current OSHA rules and regulations were reviewed for attendees. In addition, I recently attended a DENTRIX workshop to learn about the DENTRIX software, as well as learn the availability of tools to promote accountability, fiscally, and clinically within a business.

It has been an eye opening experience to have to balance the knowledge and skills gained from thirty plus years in State government to work in the private sector. The bureaucracy of government, due in part to its functions to develop policy and to ensure quality, often leave the private sector the challenge of implementation within their business framework. It is the challenge of quality assurance entities to ensure proper practice which does not compromise the health and well-being of the public.

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

My goal would be to have made contributions to the quality of dental care provided in the State of Hawaii.

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

Dedication: Once I make a commitment, I work to follow through on assignments and responsibilities.

Even-tempered: In general I am calm and level headed, not apt to get excited or emotional, especially when there is conflict. I tend to listen and act upon information rather than emotions.

Fairness: Decisions are made not only guided by logic/policy/practice, but also considering other seemingly extraneous factors. Sometimes consideration of all factors may result in a decision that may be, or seem to be, a compromise, but must not disregard the over-reaching values.

7. Name a previous experience you've had that will benefit as a Board member.

In response to the initial requirements of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver programs, I developed the protocols for quality assurance which were approved with our waiver. In addition, as part of my responsibilities, I also was one of the leads in developing our targeted case management program, another Title XIX reimbursed program.

My experience in quality assurance efforts have been throughout my career in state government and would contribute to my role as a Board member.

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

In Chapter 448-5, HRS, Dentistry, it specifically prohibits any member of the Board from having any connection or financial interest in any dental supply company and I have never had nor do I intend to have any connection or financial interest in any dental supply company.

While I do have an agreement to provide operational consultation with a dental practice, it does not involve any other fiduciary benefits from the practice. I do not have any major decision making responsibilities.

If at any time either I perceive or feel that there may be a possibility of a conflict, I would resign or bring forth the issue(s) of concern to the Board for input and recommendation/resolution.