

RE: GOV. MSG. NOS. 648, 650, 651, 652

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2021
State of Hawaii
Sir:

Your Committee on Health, to which was referred Governor's Message Nos. 648, 650, 651, and 652, submitting for study and consideration the nominations of:

LANGUAGE ACCESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

G.M. No. 648	CARI UESUGI, for a term to expire 06-30-2024;
G.M. No. 650	MARIA ARSUAGA, for a term to expire 06-30-2025;
G.M. No. 651	TERRINA WONG, for a term to expire 06-30-2022; and
G.M. No. 652	VALENTINA YAROVAYA, for a term to expire 06-30-2024,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal histories, resumes, and statements submitted by Cari Uesugi, Maria Arsuaga, Terrina Wong, and Valentina Yarovaya for service on the Language Access Advisory Council.

CARI UESUGI

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Cari Uesugi from the Department of Human Services, Office of Language Access, and two individuals.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Uesugi's experience in the field of social work, commitment to public service and dedication to assisting others in navigating state systems qualify her for reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council. Ms. Uesugi is currently the Limited English Proficiency project manager and coordinator for the Department of Human Services. She has over thirty years of experience as a social worker in diverse communities. Your Committee notes that Ms. Uesugi is currently serving on the Language Access Advisory Council and is familiar with the Council's work. Ms. Uesugi earned her Bachelor of Science degree in human development from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and Master's degree in counseling, marriage, and family therapy from the University of Phoenix.

Your Committee further finds that Ms. Uesugi's reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council fulfills the requirement that a representative be from the state government. Ms. Uesugi indicated in her personal statement that she could contribute to the Office of Language Access' continuing efforts to provide oversight and central coordination to state agencies, as well as technical assistance to state and covered entities. Your Committee therefore recommends that Ms. Uesugi be reappointed to the Language Access Advisory Council based on her experience in the field of social work and her commitment to assisting others in navigating state systems.

MARIA ARSUAGA

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Maria Arsuaga from the Office of Language Access and three individuals.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Arsuaga's experience as a Spanish language translator and interpreter, commitment to public service, and dedication to the professionalism of translators qualify her for reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council. Ms. Arsuaga is currently a federally certified Spanish interpreter and a member of the National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators. Ms. Arsuaga has more than twenty years of experience in the interpreting and translating profession and has provided language services in financial, medical, and legal settings, among others. She has interpreted live televised debates, news events, and diplomatic summits for multiple United States presidents, senators, and foreign politicians. Your Committee notes that Ms. Arsuaga is currently serving on the Language Access Advisory Council and is familiar with the Council's work. Ms. Arsuaga earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in romance languages and Bachelor of Music degree in voice and opera performance from Oberlin College, certificate in English-Spanish translation from New York University, and certificate for court translation and interpretation from the University of Arizona.

Your Committee further finds that Ms. Arsuaga's reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council fulfills the requirement that a representative be from a professional interpreter's organization. Ms. Arsuaga indicated in her personal statement that she hopes to guide the Office of Language Access on practical, technical, and ethical matters involving the use of interpretation and written translations for limited English proficient individuals. Your Committee therefore recommends that Ms. Arsuaga be reappointed to the Language Access Advisory Council based on her experience in language translation and her commitment translation and interpretation professionalism.

TERRINA WONG

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Terrina Wong from the Office of Language Access, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights, and Kalihi Palama Health Center.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Wong's experience in the field of immigration services, commitment to public service, and dedication to the well-being of vulnerable immigrants qualify her for reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council. Ms. Wong is currently the Interim Deputy Director and Director of Immigration Services at Pacific Gateway Center, a nonprofit organization whose goal is to empower low-income residents, immigrants, refugees, and other vulnerable populations to achieve self-sufficiency through skill-building and access to opportunities while respecting cultural heritages. In her position as Director of Immigration Services, Ms. Wong works with clients who have limited English proficiency. Additionally, Ms. Wong received the Spark of Hope Award of the Interfaith Alliance of Hawaii for her work with disenfranchised communities. Your Committee notes that Ms. Wong is currently serving as the Interim Chair of the Language Access Advisory Council and is familiar with the Council's work. Ms. Wong earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in French from Mills College and Master of Arts degree in education from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Your Committee further finds that Ms. Wong's appointment to the Language Access Advisory Council fulfills the requirement that a representative be from a bilingual referral service or program. Ms. Wong indicated in her personal statement that her priorities for the Language Access Advisory Council would be to ensure access to services by building capacity in language access in the State, ensuring advocacy and equity at all levels, and developing ways to acquire data for effective decision-making. Your Committee therefore recommends that Ms. Wong be reappointed to the Language Access Advisory Council based on her experience in immigration services and her commitment to aiding disenfranchised communities.

VALENTINA YAROVAYA

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the reappointment of Valentina Yarovaya from the Office of Language Access.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Ms. Yarovaya's experience as a special education teacher, commitment to public service, and dedication to language education qualify her for reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council. Ms. Yarovaya is a retired special education teacher who taught total communication classes for deaf and hard of hearing students as well as special education classes. Ms. Yarovaya has years of experience teaching children and adults with disabilities and promoting the accessibility guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Your Committee notes that Ms. Yarovaya is currently serving on Language Access Advisory Council as an at large member and is familiar with the Council's work. Ms. Yarovaya earned her Master of Science degree in special education from Adelphi University and completed a Bilingual Advanced Certificate Program in special Education from Touro College.

Your Committee further finds that Ms. Yarovaya's reappointment to the Language Access Advisory Council fulfills the requirement that a representative be a member-at-large. Ms. Yarovaya indicated in her personal statement that her goal for the Language Access Advisory Council is to improve access for limited English-speaking persons and assist anyone in the community who needs services and language resources. Your Committee therefore recommends that Ms. Yarovaya be reappointed to the Language Access Advisory Council based on her experience in language education and her commitment to meeting the needs of limited English-speaking persons.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committee on Health that are attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominees, has found the nominees to be qualified for the positions to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nominations.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Health,

JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, Chair