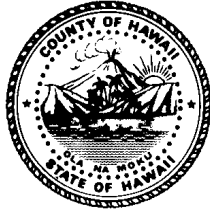


William P. Kenoi
Mayor

William T. Takaba
Managing Director



Lono A. Tyson
Director

Ivan M. Torigoe
Deputy Director

County of Hawai'i

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

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2009-2010 HAWAII COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING January 21, 2010

TESTIMONY OF LONO TYSON, DIRECTOR DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

G'Day & Aloha Chairman Haisuka and distinguished Members of the Hawai'i County Charter Commission. My name is Lono Tyson and I serve this County as the Director of the Department of Environmental Management. I am here today to provide testimony in opposition to the proposed language included in Charter Amendment 11 relating to the qualification requirements for the Department of Environmental Management Director.

I reference Charter Commission Communication 27, which transmitted my comments and recommendations pertaining to the proposed Charter Amendments relative to my department and specifically, Charter Amendment 11. These recommendations included a proposal that the Hawai'i County Charter be amended to require that the qualifications for the Department of Environmental Management Director include an engineering degree in a related field. Currently Section 6-10.3 of the County Charter only requires that the director "have had a minimum of five years' administrative experience in a related field."

It should be noted that prior to December 2000, the department's solid waste and waste water divisions were administered through the County's Department of Public Works. County Charter Sections 6-2.2 and 8-3 both require that the heads of the Department of Public Works and the Department of Water Supply be registered engineers. It should be noted that possession of an engineering degree is not an absolute requirement for obtaining engineering registration within the State of Hawai'i, however, an engineering background would be required and is most appropriately confirmed through the possession of an engineering degree.

Having served as this department's Solid Waste Division Chief from September 2003 to July 2005, and now as the department director, I feel uniquely qualified to comment on this issue. This department provides an essential service to the County. In addition to the Civil Defense, Fire and Police departments, this department provides vital Public health and safety services. Beyond these agencies, this department manages programs and facilities which also affect the environment. In order to provide appropriate oversight and support to this department's solid waste and wastewater divisions, the Department of Environmental Management Director should possess a thorough understanding of the scope and impacts relative to department programs, as well as an understanding of operations, maintenance and monitoring of County facilities and their potential for impacting the local environment. For these reasons, I am reiterating my recommendation that our County would best be served by amending the County Charter to include a provision that the Department of Environmental Management Director possess an engineering degree or a degree in a related field.