

Monday August 20, 2018

Good Morning Councilmembers my name is Cesar Gaxiola and I am the Executive Director at the J. Walter Cameron Center. This morning I am providing testimony supporting the Mayor's appointment of Gladys C Baisa to Director of the Board of Water Supply. Ms Baisa is a very experienced and proven effective manager.

I have worked for many years with Ms. Baisa in her previous job as Executive Director of MEO and as Chair and member of the Maui County Council. She is an exceptionally effective manager. She led MEO to become one of the 5 most outstanding community action agencies in the country and grew the Agency from a million-dollar budget to 21 million when she retired in 2005. Her MEO staff was about a third larger of the Water Department current staff size.

As ED of MEO she addressed some of the most challenging problems in our community, solving needs ranging from infant care, senior transportation and other needs, inmate reintegration & helping persons with disabilities. She solved our local labor needs when she arranged for unemployed Hispanic farm workers from the mainland to come to Maui to save the agriculture industry in the late 80's when near zero unemployment left our fruit rotting in the fields. Her creativity, ability to work with all sectors of the community & mobilize resources is legend. She started the Maui Nonprofit Directors Association, was a founding member of the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows Program, & GO Maui to mention a few. She has been involved in many other boards, commissions, chairing most of them.

She has a lifetime of connection with water and water issues having lived almost all of her life Upcountry. She served all 10 years of her Council service on the Water Committee and chaired the Committee for 2 of those years. Her husband Sherman Baisa retired from the Water Dept. as an inspector.

She has a record of effective local, State, and federal legislative experience. Since she has been in charge of the department she has established a healthy working relationship with the union representatives and successfully worked with us to solve long standing issues.

I strongly urge you to approve the resolution before you today.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning.

Cesar E. Gaxiola

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