

**COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI**

# **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, ETHICS, AND TRANSPARENCY COMMITTEE**

March 10, 2023

**Committee  
Report No. \_\_\_\_\_**

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the County Council  
County of Maui  
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee, having met on February 21, 2023, and reconvened on February 22, 2023, makes reference to Resolution 23-43, entitled "APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF LORI TSUHAKO AS THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS."

Resolution 23-43's purpose is to approve the appointment of Lori Tsuhako as Director of Housing and Human Concerns, in accordance with Sections 6-2(5) and 8-10.2 of the Revised Charter of the County of Maui (1983), as amended ("Charter").

Your Committee notes Charter Section 8-10.2 provides that the Director of Housing and Human Concerns be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the Council. In addition, Charter Section 6-2(5) provides that the Council confirm or deny the confirmation within 60 days after receiving notice of the appointment by the Mayor, or the appointment will be deemed confirmed. Accordingly, the deadline for the Council to confirm or deny the appointment of Ms. Tsuhako as Director of Housing and Human Concerns is March 13, 2023.

By correspondence dated January 12, 2023, the Mayor transmitted the County of Maui job description for the Director of Housing and Human Concerns and a resume for the appointee.

Your Committee notes Section 2.14.060, Maui County Code, lists minimum qualifications for the position, including five years of administrative experience, and three years of managerial and budgetary experience.

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Your Committee received comments from the Mayor and Ms. Tsuhako regarding the appointment before interviewing Ms. Tsuhako.

The Mayor said Ms. Tsuhako has served as the Director of Housing and Human Concerns under two prior Administrations, and has 36 years of experience as a social worker in the fields of child welfare, criminal justice, substance abuse education and prevention, and homelessness. Ms. Tsuhako was previously Administrator of the State of Hawai'i's Homeless Programs and also worked with the aging community. The Mayor also said Ms. Tsuhako's decades of experience implementing evidence-based and data-driven programs, including efforts to improve the social safety net of communities qualifies her for the position.

Ms. Tsuhako said the Department of Housing and Human Concerns plays a critical role in meeting the community's needs, including affordable housing, immigrant services, volunteerism, early-childhood resources, grants management, homelessness, and kūpuna programs. She said the breadth of the Department reaches far and wide across Maui County and functions not only in an administrative capacity as a convener and a funder, but also as a direct service provider. Ms. Tsuhako said it has been her responsibility to maintain and fortify a system of care that ensures the community's needs are met to the best of the Department's ability, while also adapting care to respond during crises like weather events and the COVID-19 pandemic. She credited her abilities and leadership skills to her deep connections within the community and the foundation and support provided to her by her family.

Your Committee notes it received numerous testimony in favor of Ms. Tsuhako, including many from community members whose lives were improved by services she directly administered.

Your Committee discussed the Charter Amendment approved in the 2022 General Election to bifurcate the Department of Housing and Human Concerns into the Department of Housing and Department of Human

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Concerns, effective July 1, 2024. Your Committee noted Ms. Tsuhako, if reappointed by the Mayor, would require Council confirmation again at that time.

Your Committee expressed support for Ms. Tsuhako's appointment.

Your Committee voted 8-1 to recommend adoption of Resolution 23-43. Committee Chair U'u-Hodgins, Vice-Chair Paltin, and members Cook, Kama, Lee, Rawlins-Fernandez, Sinenci, and Sugimura voted "aye." Committee member Johnson voted "no."

Your Committee notes the resolution required renumbering from Resolution 23-43 to Resolution 23-76.

Your Committee is in receipt of Resolution 23-76, CD1, approved as to form and legality by the Department of the Corporation Counsel, incorporating your Committee's nonsubstantive revisions.

Your Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee RECOMMENDS that Resolution 23-76, CD1, as revised herein and attached hereto, entitled "APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF LORI TSUHAKO AS THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS," be ADOPTED.

This report is submitted in accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules of the Council.

  
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NOHELANI U'U-HODGINS, Chair

# Resolution

**No. 23-76, CD1**

APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF  
LORI TSUHAKO AS THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING  
AND HUMAN CONCERNS

WHEREAS, by letter dated January 12, 2023, Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr. notified the Council that he appointed Lori Tsuhako as the Director of Housing and Human Concerns; and

WHEREAS, Charter Section 8-10.2 states that, "The director of housing and human concerns shall be appointed by the mayor with the approval of the council and may be removed by the mayor."; and

WHEREAS, Charter Section 6-2(5) requires that the Council confirm or deny the appointment within 60 days after receiving notice of the appointment by the Mayor; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it approves the appointment of Lori Tsuhako as the Director of Housing and Human Concerns; and
2. That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor and Managing Director.

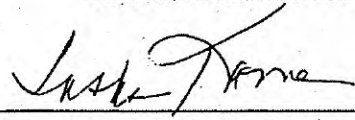
APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY



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VICTORIA J. TAKAYESU  
Acting Corporation Counsel  
County of Maui  
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INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lash T. Kame". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "L".

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Upon the request of the Mayor.