

March 29, 2018

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Nomination of Mark J. Bennett to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein,

As the former Hawaii State Department of Education Superintendent (2001-2009) I, Patricia Hamamoto, am submitting testimony supporting the nomination of Mark J. Bennett to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

I have known Mr. Bennett since 2002 when he was appointed as Hawaii's State Attorney General. During my tenure as Superintendent, I had many opportunities to work directly with Mr. Bennett on legal matters specific to the Department of Education. Working with him was always both productive and a positive learning experience. I found him to be the expert in both the letter of the law as well as knowing the accepted interpretation and application of the law. I say this because his work and the work of his Deputies resulted in our State's success in meeting the requirements of a Federal Law Suit related to IDEA. Mr. Bennett was the driving force, the lead attorney in giving us counsel as well as insuring we did right for all parties.

What Mr. Bennett brought to the table was his legal expertise, his personal and professional values and their accompanying behaviors. I found him to be to a level headed, thoughtful and resourceful individual. What impressed me most was his willingness to put in the long hours to seek, when appropriate and possible, a "win/win" resolution. Conversely, he was brutally forthright, ethical and responsible when we were lacking for the record.

To his credit, he genuinely cares about what and how legal matters impact our State's well being. His professional practices are consistent and clear which means, he does not give "mixed messages."

I ask for your favorable consideration in confirming the nomination of Mark J. Bennett to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

Thank you for your attention,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patricia Hamamoto". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P" and a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Patricia Hamamoto