

# **RES23-017**

## **Testimony**

**MISC. COMM. 86**

PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)

**PUBLIC SAFETY (PS) Meeting**

Meeting Date: Mar 2, 2023 @ 01:00 PM

Support: 11

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Cherylee Chang	Email: cherylee.chang@duke.edu	Zip: 96706
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Feb 24, 2023 @ 02:13 PM

Name: Daniel Fischberg	Email: dfischberg@mac.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Feb 25, 2023 @ 07:03 AM

Testimony:  
February 25, 2023  
Honorable Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and Esteemed Public Safety Members,  
I am writing, as an individual, in strong support of Resolution 23-017, confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.  
For background, I am a physician leader here in Hawaii in the medical specialties of Pain Medicine and Palliative Medicine. I lead a hospital-based team in Honolulu where I also play a leadership role in the education of medical trainees. I have known and collaborated on projects with Dr. Char for most of the nearly twenty years that I have lived and practiced medicine in Hawaii.

My major professional collaborations with Dr. Char have been in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the Hawaii state Provider Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatments (POLST) program. In bringing this national program to Hawaii, it was essential to have the involvement of a thoughtful and respected leader from the first responder community and Dr. Char, in her role at that time as head of Honolulu EMS, was the natural choice. Dr. Char has brought invaluable skills to the POLST program which could never have succeeded without her input and leadership.

The attributes that Dr. Char brings to any project are manifold. In a working group, she is an active listener who will respectfully consider all viewpoints. Dr. Char has extensive real-world experience that then allows her to always provide the most practical and logical perspective in any situation. In our POLST work, her input always led to more practical and successful solutions to any challenge. And when it comes to implementation of any group decision, Dr. Char is a strong supporter of the group decision and works tirelessly towards successful implementation. Dr. Char is also constantly vigilant for opportunities for quality improvement and will bring valuable ideas back to the group.

From the years of collaboration, I was profoundly grateful when Dr. Char agreed to lead the Department of Health during a crisis the likes of which none of us have experienced in our lifetimes. I was, of course, completely unsurprised when Dr. Char lead the DOH with great intelligence, grace, and equanimity.

In summary, I recommend my colleague, Dr. Elizabeth Char, to you in the strongest terms possible and without hesitation whatsoever. Her skills as a highly intelligent, critical thinker, active listener, leader, and team-player will serve the Commission and the people of Honolulu well. Thousands of people have literally had their lives in Dr. Char's hands as an Emergency Medicine physician. Like them, she has my complete unwavering trust and respect.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.

Respectfully,  
Daniel Fischberg, MD, PhD, FAAHPM  
Board-certified in Hospice & Palliative Medicine, Pain Medicine, Addiction Medicine, Internal Medicine

Name: Danette Tomiyasu	Email: dtomiyasu@gmail.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Feb 28, 2023 @ 07:50 AM

Name: Cathy Ross	Email: crhomehi@gmail.com	Zip: 96837
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Feb 28, 2023 @ 11:52 AM

Testimony:

Chair Okimoto and Vice Chair Tulba,

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of Resolution 23-17 – Confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu. Dr. Char's expertise and experience in emergency medicine, first responders, and public health will provide a valuable perspective to the multifaceted issues impacting the Honolulu Police Department (HPD). This includes the understanding of and appreciation for people experiencing a variety of behavioral health issues and or houselessness, as well the interconnectedness between seemingly disjointed systems. Furthermore, Dr. Char's leadership experience with the City and County of Honolulu's Emergency Services Department and the Hawaii State Department of Health further qualifies her to assess and make recommendations on the administrative aspect of the HPD.

Dr. Char joined the Department of Health (DOH) at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic when information about the virus and its mitigation measures were rapidly evolving and while the public demand for information was high. She provided sound and steady leadership, often making difficult decisions based on the best available (and ever-changing) data and science around COVID-19, and artfully articulated those decisions to various audiences. The pandemic also required collaboration with new agencies and partners as well as coordination across all levels of government and with various community groups, and Dr. Char skillfully worked with these entities. I was fortunate to see first-hand how she navigated complex issues and managed competing priorities with the utmost professionalism and grace. Dr. Char is a demonstrated leader and collaborator with a track record of working together to achieve common goals and these skills will greatly benefit the Honolulu Police Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for this nomination and I respectfully request your committee confirm the appointment of Dr. Char.

Name: Joy Kobayashi	Email: joykeiko@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Feb 28, 2023 @ 08:31 PM
Name: gary yabuta	Email: gyabuta@hi-hidta.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 1, 2023 @ 11:03 AM
Name: Marian Tsuji	Email: Mariantsuji@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 1, 2023 @ 04:02 PM
Name: Nanci Kreidman	Email: nancik@stoptheviolence.org	Zip: 96816
Representing: Domestic Violence Action Center	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 1, 2023 @ 06:01 PM
Name: Katie Arita-Chang	Email: kaitlin.arita.chang@gmail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 2, 2023 @ 08:59 AM
Name: Kathleen Ho Ho	Email: Horay505@gmail.com	Zip: 96701
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 2, 2023 @ 10:57 AM
Name: ZHIZI xiong	Email: Alohdivinedesign@gmail.com	Zip: 96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

CARE Community Advocy Research Education	Support	Mar 2, 2023 @ 11:53 AM
Testimony: CARES testifies in strong support.		

February 24, 2023

Re: Resolution 23-17 SUPPORTING the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu

To: Chair Okimoto and Vice Chair Tulba

I am testifying IN SUPPORT of Resolution 23-17 confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.

As introduction, until 2020 when I relocated to Durham, North Carolina to establish a new Division of Neurocritical Care at the Duke University, I worked at The Queen's Medical Center for 23 years where I co-founded the Neuroscience Institute and Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit and established the Comprehensive Stroke Center. During the time that I directed these programs, I have had the privilege to work with Dr. Libby Char, first in her role as an emergency medicine physician, while she was the Medical Director for the Emergency Medical Services and during her various other public service roles since then.

Dr. Char has a wide depth of expertise in emergency care and incident response and has always been an advocate for improvement in care and processes. She demonstrated this early in our work together when a new acute stroke treatment emerged, changing the paradigm that stroke became a medical emergency. She helped educate the ED staff and worked with EMS to change protocols and give stroke patients the best chance for stroke reversal and better outcomes.

She has always worked as a collaborative team member to support and advocate for patients and the groups she represents. For example, while she served as a member and later president of the Oahu American Heart Association and an EMS liaison to the Hawaii State Stroke Coalition, she constantly sought others' expert input to make sure the protocols utilized were up-to-date and feasible to implement. She has always made sure that the EMS providers in the field were included and their input heard when changes were being made that impacted their delivery of care.

I have also worked with Dr. Char to help establish the Providers Orders for Life-Sustaining Therapy (POLST) in the State of Hawaii. Dr. Char shared her emergency medicine and pre-hospital provider expertise, and with representatives of palliative care, hospice, critical care, and the Hawaii State Department of Health, supported changes in state legislation to improve the awareness of patients' wishes and support a patient's autonomy in pre-hospital health care decisions. It is widely used in our State today.

During these activities, I have seen that Dr. Char's leadership skills include other's opinions and knowledge so that she can consider all options. She is able to make decisions and work well with others to operationalize strategies and plans. She is thoughtful and accountable. This has been evident when she was tapped to lead the Department of Health through the COVID-19 pandemic and deal with other acute health issues threatening the State.

I believe that Dr. Char, as a member of the Police Commission, will be able to represent all voices of our community, bring a wealth of experience from her own extensive knowledge base and from working with many individuals and groups, and provide objective, thoughtful insight to the commission's deliberations and decisions. I am in whole-hearted support of her appointment to the Police Commission.

Respectfully and with warm regards,



Cherylee W. J. Chang, MD, FACP, FCCM, FCNS  
Division Chief, Neurocritical Care  
Professor, Neurology  
Duke University  
Past-President, Neurocritical Care Society  
Executive Committee member, Society of Critical Care Medicine

March 2, 2023

Val A. Okimoto, Chair  
Augie Tulba, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Public Safety  
Honolulu City Council  
530 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: RESOLUTION 23-017: CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF DR. ELIZABETH CHAR  
TO SERVE ON THE POLICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

Dear Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba, and members of the Committee on Public Safety,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth “Libby” Char to serve on the Honolulu Police Commission.

I have had the pleasure and privilege of working closely with Dr. Char when she served as the Director of the Department of Health and during some of our most challenging times in recent history. She is extraordinarily committed to public service and to improving the health and well-being of all of Hawaii’s residents. She stepped in to serve our community during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and brought strong, collaborative leadership along with her extensive experience in emergency medicine and emergency management. Under her leadership, Hawaii was ranked first in the nation for health system performance during the COVID-19 pandemic by The Commonwealth Fund (2022). The scorecard ranks every state’s health care system performance on how well it provides high-quality, accessible, and equitable health care.

Her years of front line and hands on work with first responders, homeless, and vulnerable individuals and communities emphasized the Department’s priorities in promoting equity, ensuring active community engagement, and proactive communication. Dr. Char exemplifies honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect. She sets high standards for transparency and accountability for herself and for others in serving the public.

I am confident that Dr. Char will be a tremendous asset to the Honolulu Police Commission, to the Honolulu Police Department and the community. I respectfully urge you to support the confirmation of Dr. Libby Char as a member of the Honolulu Police Commission.

Sincerely,

Danette Wong Tomiyasu



TO: Councilmember Val A. Okimoto, Chair  
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice-Chair  
Members of the Committee on Public Safety

**Strong support for Resolution 23-017** – Appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the Police Commission – Confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the Honolulu Police Commission for a term to expire on December 31, 2027.  
March 2, 2023, 1:00PM

Dear Chair Okimoto, Vice-Chair Tulba, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety:

I write in strong support of Resolution 23-017 and the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the Honolulu Police Commission.

I have only known Dr. Char for less than two years. I was fortunate enough to work for her at the Department of Health. In that time, I found her to be forthright, fair, and honest in all her interactions. She leads through action and is incredibly committed to everything she does. She is decisive, thoughtful, and not afraid to get into the weeds to thoroughly understand an issue and its consequences. She values the employees and listened to them, always treating everyone as an equal.

Dr. Char's experience with first responders from her time at the Honolulu Fire Department is invaluable. While she may not have worked for the Honolulu Police Department, she does understand the stresses and needs of first responders. Her experience coupled with her demonstrated impressive work ethic and unwavering commitment to the community make Dr. Char an exceptional choice for the Honolulu Police Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Resolution 23-017 and the confirmation of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the Honolulu Police Commission. I humbly ask for your vote in support of Resolution 23-017.

Sincerely,  
Joy Kobayashi



**500 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD  
Box 165  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813**

**PHONE: (808)356-4400  
FAX: (808)356-4499**

**March 1, 2023**

**Support of Dr. Elizabeth Char for the  
Honolulu Police Commission**

My name is Gary Yabuta, and I am the Executive Director of the Hawaii High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)--a grant-funded program of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President. The Hawaii HIDTA supports drug interdiction and demand reduction strategies by developing collaborative federal, state, and local enforcement task forces and prevention programs throughout the State of Hawaii, including the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii County, Maui County, and Kauai County. With HIDTA funding, resources, analytical support and training, the HIDTA program serves as a force-multiplier in statewide, interstate, and international narcotic interdiction operatives.

Prior to my appointment as the Executive Director of Hawaii HIDTA in 2014, I was Chief of Police for the Maui Police Department. I also served as the Chair for the Hawaii Law Enforcement Officer Independent Review Board, which examined all law enforcement deadly force incidents in Hawaii. In all, I have over 44 years of criminal justice experience.

Not only do I support the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to the Honolulu Police Commission, but I'm also ecstatic that Dr. Char is being considered for this most important position; and during a moment in which her intelligence, ethical values, knowledge of the Honolulu Police Department, and cultural and community awareness are of paramount importance, and necessary to provide effective oversight of the people's law enforcement agency--the Honolulu Police Department.

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BUREAU OF ALCOHOL TOBACCO AND FIREARMS • CITY & COUNTY HONOLULU DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY • DRUG ENFORCEMENT  
ADMINISTRATION • FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION • HAWAII POLICE DEPARTMENT • HAWAII NATIONAL GUARD • HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS  
HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT • INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE • JOINT INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE -WEST  
KAUAI POLICE DEPARTMENT • MAUI POLICE DEPARTMENT • NAVAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE  
STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL • STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE • UNITED STATES COAST GUARD • UNITED STATES CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION  
UNITED STATES MARSHALS SERVICE • UNITED STATES POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE • WESTERN STATES INFORMATION NETWORK

**HAWAII HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA**

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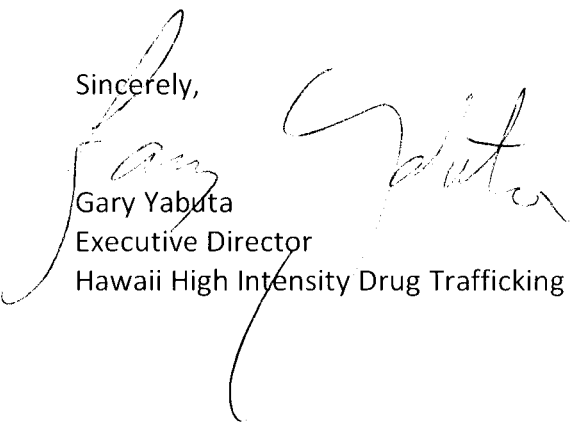
3/1/2023

My impression of Dr. Char is based on our professional partnership that began when I was appointed as the Hawaii HIDTA Executive Director. The Hawaii HIDTA and Dr. Char coordinated opioid overdose and fentanyl exposure training for the City and County of Honolulu's First Responders (Honolulu Police Department, Honolulu Fire Department, and Honolulu Medical Services Department). Dr. Char pioneered an opioid overdose response technique that applied a breathing apparatus that was every bit as important as the opioid overdose reversal medication known as Narcan. Today, a breathing apparatus is a standard application for opioid overdose treatment nationwide.

During Dr. Char's appointment as the state's Director of Health, we maintained our corroboration and provided drug abuse prevention strategies with the Department of Health's Hawaii Opioid Initiative, Hawaii CARES Hotline, and Overdose to Action program (OD2A).

I truly believe in Dr. Elizabeth Char and I know of no other person worthy of an appointment to the Honolulu Police Commission. I foresee her to be a leader amongst the Police Commission members--due to mental toughness, pragmatic thought process, and willingness to speak the truth or whatever is important; and Dr. Char is never one to vacillate. Simply put, Dr. Char is an astute leader who has served our State and City and County of Honolulu for many years, and her desire to continue public service is indicative of her care for our next generation of residents, visitors, and children. I am confident that Dr. Char can make the lives of our people safer than before.

Sincerely,



Gary Yabuta  
Executive Director

Hawaii High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Val Okimoto, Chair  
The Honorable Augie Tulba, Vice Chair  
Public Safety Committee  
Honolulu City Council  
Honolulu Hale  
530 S. King Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Resolution 23-17 Confirming Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Honolulu Police Commission

Dear Chair Okimoto and Vice Chair Tulba,

It my honor to submit this testimony in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's appointment to the Honolulu Police Commission. After having had the opportunity to work with Dr. Char at the Department of Health during one of its most trying times and seeing her in action, I have no doubt she will serve the Commission with the same level of commitment and attention.

Dr. Char has the ability to quickly sort out facts and bring them to a logical conclusion. She won't hesitate to ask questions when more information is needed. Her demeanor is calm, measured and logical. She has the background as an emergency department doctor and first responder. This gives her the insight to understand the split-second decisions that HPD makes at times.

Dr. Char is a benefit to any organization she is associated with. She is highly recommended for this important role in our community.

Sincerely,

Marian Tsuji  
Mariantsuji@hawaii.rr.com



TO: Val Okimoto, Chair  
Augie Tulba, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Public Safety  
FR: Nanci Kreidman, MA, Chief Executive Officer

Aloha. I submit this testimony for the Committee's consideration in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's nomination to serve on the Honolulu Police Commission.

Dr. Char has dedicated her career to serving others as a physician and in government. During the COVID pandemic, Dr. Char led the Department of Health through unprecedented challenges. She managed complex issues and ensured that the Department's response was inclusive of all communities.

Dr. Char's integrity, work ethic and experience will serve the Commission well. She will work to ensure that the Honolulu Police Department's actions are fair and that the Commission is responsive to all of the people in our community.

As you know the Honolulu Police Department is an important ally in the community's work to address domestic violence. The Police Commission helps to hold the department and its officers to a standard that facilitates accountability, efficiency and reliable service in the interest of public safety. Dr. Char will bring added value to this Body.

Thank you for your favorable action on this nomination.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION CENTER**

ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 3198, HONOLULU, HI 96801-3198  
LEGAL HELPLINE: (808) 531-3771  
TOLL-FREE NEIGHBOR ISLAND HELPLINE: (800) 690-6200  
WEBSITE: [WWW.DOMESTICVIOLENCEACTIONCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.DOMESTICVIOLENCEACTIONCENTER.ORG)  
EMAIL: [DVAC@STOPTHEVIOLENCE.ORG](mailto:DVAC@STOPTHEVIOLENCE.ORG)

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Val Okimoto, Chair  
and Members of the Public Safety Committee  
Honolulu City Council  
530 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: RESOLUTION 23-017: CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF DR. ELIZABETH CHAR TO SERVE ON THE POLICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

Dear Chair Okimoto and Members of the Public Safety Committee:

I am writing in **strong support** of Resolution 23-017, confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Honolulu Police Commission.

I had the privilege of working for Dr. Char in her previous role as Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health. Her work ethic and commitment to our communities will serve the Police Commission well.

As an emergency room physician and leader in the first responder community, Dr. Char honed the ability to make decisions after quickly and thoroughly assessing issues from all angles.

Dr. Char was appointed Director of Health at a critical time for our state. She would often work late into the night to analyze challenging and unprecedented public and environmental health issues and make informed decisions. She is unafraid to dig into an issue and ask difficult questions.

Dr. Char brought stakeholders together to ensure that COVID-19 resources were equitably distributed, including to underserved communities. She understands the importance of elevating all voices in places of power.

Dr. Char is a servant leader who has dedicated her life and work to others. I have complete faith that she will ensure that the Police Commission continues to fulfill its responsibility of considering and conducting oversight over important matters facing the Honolulu Police Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Resolution 23-017, confirming the appointment of Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu.

Sincerely,  
Katie Arita-Chang

March 2, 2023

Honolulu City Council  
Honolulu Hale  
530 S. King Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Resolution 23-17 Confirming Dr. Elizabeth Char to serve on the Honolulu Police Commission

Dear Council Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and Members,

I submit this testimony in support of Dr. Elizabeth Char's appointment to the Honolulu Police Commission. I had the honor of working with Dr. Char at the Department of Health during one of its most trying times in responding to COVID-19 and the water contamination to our primary aquifer Red Hill. I saw first-hand her steady, thoughtful, perceptive and unweaving commitment to protecting the people Hawaii.

Dr. Char is not afraid to make to hard decisions after gathering the facts. She is intelligent, empathetic, and a logical thinker have no doubt she will serve the Commission well.

Dr. Char would a benefit to any organization that she is associated with. I would highly recommend her for this important role in our community.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Ho  
Ho.Kathleen808@gmail.com