RES25-017
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 30

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jan 29, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 2

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christian Hellum	chellum1@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jan 24, 2025 @ 09:17 AM

Testimony:

I wish to testify in strong support of the nomination of Dr. Masahiko Kobayashi to continue to serve as the Medical Examiner for the City and County of Honolulu.

This past year, I have been privileged to serve in a special assignment to support the Department of the Medical Examiner, and I have been deeply impressed by the vitally important work being done by Dr. Kobayashi and his outstanding team of talented and dedicated professionals, who quietly serve this community with a level of professionalism, compassion, commitment to truth, and respect for human dignity that is profoundly inspiring and moving.

Dr. Kobayashi is a remarkable person, gifted with an extraordinary mind, who performs his duties with impeccable integrity and professionalism. Dr. Kobayashi is tirelessly dedicated to the Department, where he leads the team from the front, and does so with decency, humility, kindness, and generosity.

While we often hear about the truly admirable and important work being done by the City's other responder agencies, most news stories sadly fail to give similar recognition to the Department of the Medical Examiner, whose staff of medicolegal investigators responds 24/7/365 to deaths in this county - and the extended team of forensic pathologists, autopsy technicians, medical technologists, records staff, and administrative professionals, who together serve as the voice for those who can no longer speak, and provide empathy and support to families during some of most difficult days they may ever experience.

Some of us may not like for our thoughts to linger too long on the realities of the work of people like Dr. Kobayashi and his Department of the Medical Examiner. This is unfortunate, as I believe the community as a whole would find significant appreciation and pride in learning about this work, understanding its impacts related to justice and public health, and also find comfort in the level of respect and dignity afforded to decedents and their loved ones.

The taxpayers of this county have reason to feel quite good about the value derived by the relatively modest investment made in this small Department, which in Fiscal Year 2024 investigated 3,533 deaths, assuming jurisdiction in 1,325 cases – numbers that only continue to grow.

At the Department of the Medical Examiner, the dead truly can--and indeed do--help teach the living. As this Council would find opportunity, I encourage you to learn more about the work of this Department, and seek to continue to provide support for its vitally important mission.

The work at the Department of the Medical Examiner is difficult on many levels. Dr. Kobayashi and his team deal daily

with the aftermath of tragedy, suffering, and some of the worst impulses of humanity. The team carries a heavy burden on behalf of us all – and they deserve our support.

The first and best thing this Council can do to support the Department of the Medical Examiner is to confirm Dr. Masahiko Kobayashi as the Medical Examiner of the City and County of Honolulu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Arnolette Kahele	kahele.a.96795@gmail.com	96795
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jan 25, 2025 @ 12:33 PM

Testimony:

I am in support of the reappointment of Dr

Masahiko Kobayashi as Director of the Department of the Medical Examiner.