

April 11, 2022

To: El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

From: Norma Santiago, Behavioral Health Commission, Chair

RE: Letter of support of the appoint of of Lauryn Sumimoto, Elizabeth DeBenedetto, and Antoinette (Toni) Maita to the Behavioral Health Commission

It is with a great pleasure that I write in support of the appointment of Lauryn Sumimoto, Elizabeth DeBenedetto, and Antoinette (Toni) Maita to the Behavioral Health Commission. Given the experience most of you have as the Board of Supervisors representative on this Commission, you appreciate the need to have a fully functional commission comprising of individuals with diverse personal and/or professional backgrounds to meet the objectives stipulated in the Behavioral Health Commission bylaws. Currently, with 10 vacancies on the Commission meeting these objectives present its own series of challenges.

When elected Chair of the Commission, one of my first goals was to seek individuals who had maintained an ongoing interest to serve as Commissioners. As a result of this process, I found five individuals who not only exhibited the passion to serve in this capacity; but also, would add a breath of experience essential to best serve those in need of behavioral health services. Each through personal and/or professional proficiency is currently engaged in activities that will provide the current commission with a prospective from underserved, diverse communities. Each understands and are concerned with the challenges in providing these communities access to behavioral health services. Each have demonstrated a personal commitment to become involved in service to those who need our help in this capacity. Each will add a crucial voice to the Behavioral Health Commission necessary for it to meet its objectives.

Lauryn Sumimoto, Elizabeth DeBenedetto, and Antoinette (Toni) Maita are three of the five individuals who are very willing and excited to serve as Behavioral Health Commissioners. I appreciate Director Nicole Ebrahimi-Nuyken letter recommending their appointment. It was the Commission's hope to have acted on this matter during its March meeting; however, due to a lack of quorum, the meeting was canceled. Proceeding forward with the appointment of these highly qualified, enthusiastic individuals will do much in moving forward the objectives of the Behavioral Health Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Norma Santiago, Chair  
Behavioral Health Commission