DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

by John T. Harrison, Environmental Center

G.M. 203 nominates Genevieve Salmonson as Director of Environmental Quality Control for a term to expire June 30, 2003.

Our statement on this nomination does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Created by Act 132 of the Fifth Legislature in 1970, the Office of Environmental Quality Control substantiates and implements the State's commitment to the maintenance and enhancement of environmental quality. Although the Office has moved from its original placement within the Governor's Office to its current administrative placement within the Department of Health, it retains a crucial autonomy explicit in its statutory mandates to "serve the governor in an advisory capacity on all matters relating to environmental quality control", and "to coordinate and, when requested by the governor, to direct pursuant to Chapter 91 all state governmental agencies in matters concerning environmental quality."

Act 132 further specified powers and duties of the director. These specified responsibilities have not changed appreciably since 1970, despite the evolution of the scope and capabilities of state environmental management and the intensification of Hawaii's environmental management complexity and exigency. Those who framed our system of environmental quality management had the foresight to recognize the need for informed oversight within the regulatory infrastructure of government itself, and they created the office, and imbued the director with appropriate advisory powers.

I have met with the proposed nominee, and I am pleased to report that she is well aware of her new duties and intent on carrying forward the vigilance and commitment demanded by the office. I look forward to working closely with her to sustain OEQC's momentum of outreach and constructive engagement in the furtherance of our goal to sustain an environment of quality for the benefit of generations to come.