



**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 26, 2024

### **GOVERNOR GREEN SELECTS CIARA KAHAHANE AS HEAD OF THE COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

HONOLULU – Governor Josh Green, M.D., has appointed Ciara (pronounced Key-ruh) Kahahane, currently serving in the Complex Litigation Division of the Dept. of the Attorney General (AG), to be the next First Deputy of the state Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM). Her appointment is subject to approval by CWRM.

“Ciara is a dedicated public servant and I’m confident she will help lead the commission through the many complex issues surrounding management of water resources throughout Hawai‘i,” Governor Green said. “As last year’s devastating Maui wildfires demonstrated, how we conserve, manage and allocate water is one of the most critical issues state government faces.”

DLNR and CWRM Chair Dawn Chang added, “Ciara brings unique expertise as the CWRM Deputy. She is proficient in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, has lineal and cultural connections to West Maui, and understands the law, including our public trust duties. Her personal and professional experience equips her to address some of the most challenging water issues with cultural sensitivity and adherence to the law.”

For the past year and a half, Kahahane’s work in the AG’s office involved representing the state in several noteworthy cases, including those with legal issues of statewide importance. She continues to coordinate, on behalf of the Attorney General, the comprehensive review and analysis of the Lahaina wildfires of August 2023. This role includes supporting the independent team of experts conducting the review.

Attorney General Anne Lopez stated, “Ciara is a remarkable woman and an excellent attorney. Ciara’s intelligence, understanding of the tensions surrounding water rights

and usage, and ability to lead will serve her and the people of Hawai'i well."

Prior to that she worked in the Public Safety, Hawaiian Homelands and Housing Division of the Department of the Attorney General, where she provided litigation support as well as advice and counsel to the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) on a wide variety of legal issues. In this role, Kahahane assisted staff with the adoption and amendment of administrative rules, including rules governing the provision of water service by HHFDC.

After graduating from the Kamehameha Schools Maui and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, William S. Richardson School of Law in 2019, she served as a law clerk to Judge Robert J. Faris, the Chief Bankruptcy Judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Hawai'i. In 2016, also at UH Mānoa she earned a bachelor's degree in Hawaiian studies.

To complete ongoing work at the AG's Office, she will not begin her duties at CWRM until October 10. Dean Uyeno who has been serving as Interim First Deputy will continue in that role until then.

"I'm grateful and excited to be selected as the CWRM First Deputy. I look forward to learning from the commission's experienced and dedicated staff as we navigate the complex and sometimes challenging issues related to water in Hawai'i. I am committed to supporting CWRM's mission of protecting and enhancing the benefits of Hawai'i's water resources for present and future generations through thoughtful and responsible management," Kahahane said.

###

## RESOURCES

(Image courtesy: DLNR)

[Photograph](#) – Ciara Kahahane.

### Media Contacts:

Erika Engle  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Governor, State of Hawai'i  
Office: 808-586-0120  
Email: [erika.engle@hawaii.gov](mailto:erika.engle@hawaii.gov)

Makana McClellan  
Director of Communications  
Office of the Governor, State of Hawai'i  
Cell: 808-265-0083  
Email: [makana.mcclellan@hawaii.gov](mailto:makana.mcclellan@hawaii.gov)

Dan Dennison  
Communications Director  
808-587-0396

[DLNR.comms@hawaii.gov](mailto:DLNR.comms@hawaii.gov)