



THE HONORABLE SHENG THAO • MAYOR OF OAKLAND

CITY HALL • 1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612 • (510) 238-3141 • SThao@OaklandCA.Gov

Letter of Appointment

October 3, 2023

Dear President Bas and members of the City Council:

Pursuant to City Charter Section 601, the Mayor has appointed the following persons as members of the following board or commission, subject to City Council confirmation:

Commission on Persons with Disabilities

Benjamin Bartu, to serve a three-year term beginning on September 3, 2021 and ending September 2, 2024, filling a vacant seat previously held by Erin Hattersly.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sheng Thao" in a cursive, flowing script.

Mayor Sheng Thao

Profile

Benjamin

First Name

Bartu

Last Name

Email Address

Street Address

State or Zip

Oakland

City

CA

State

94607

Postal Code

What City Council district do you live in?

☒ District 3

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

University of California, Berkeley

Employer

Disability Ecoogies Lab Manager

Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Commission on Persons with Disabilities: Submitted

Affordable Housing & Infrastructure Bond Public Oversight Committee: Submitted

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us how your qualifications and participation will relate to the requested board and/or commission's mission.

My current position at UC Berkeley, and my graduate studies, focus(ed) in particular on the Environmental Justice and its relationship to human rights. This is mirrored with housing, which has become a top concern in Oakland. I feel I have experience in this arena, as well; I have been housing insecure as a child and as an adult, and through the national fair housing fundraiser I have run for the past three years through Poetree Poetry, I have had the chance to familiarize myself with state and national fair housing policies, and believe I could bring this knowledge to bear on the Affordable Housing & Infrastructure Oversight Committee, especially for more Environmental Justice experience or Fair Housing policy experience is needed in the room. Regarding the commission on persons with disabilities, my current work is heavily tied to disability, from an academic perspective, but also one of practice. How do we make more space for disabled people in the world? How do we create welcoming environments for us, as we also encourage the creation of policies that do the same? And how to hold ourselves accountable? Though my research is quantitative and qualitative, and requires a certain remove from my own lived condition at times, my own experience is bound up with disability as well -- I am myself a disabled person, having been diagnosed with Epilepsy as a child. The mission of the commission on Persons with Disabilities is to increase the integration of disabled persons into the community; I feel poised, through studies and experience, to contribute to doing this as well. Thank you for your consideration, B

Please submit your resume or curriculum vitae. You may upload a document. (A Word format is preferred.) Alternatively, you may paste the text of your resume in the field provided below.

[Bartu Resume.docx](#)

Upload a Resume

Please paste the text of your resume or curriculum vitae below.

Please click the acknowledgement below.

Service on City of Oakland boards, commissions, and committees may require filings of the FPPC's Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700). Upon appointment and determination of filing status, I will comply with all filing obligations.

☒ **I Agree ***

Benjamin Bartu, Disability Studies Researcher & Poetry Editor

EDUCATION

**Columbia
University —
M.A in Human
Rights & Public
Policy**
**Linfield
University —
Bachelor's in
Political
Science &
Writing**



References available upon request.

WORK EXPERIENCE

**Disabled
Ecologies Lab
Manager, UC
Berkeley —
11/22 - Present**

Design *
Graduate
Courses on
Disability
.studies

Lead in-depth *
quantitative
and qualitative
research on the
impacts of
pollution upon
disabled
communities
.and tenants

Edited and *
performed
research for the
Othering and
Belonging
Institute's
fellow Associate
Professor Dr.

.Sunaura Taylor's forthcoming *Disabled Ecologies*

Interim Editor-in-Chief, Palette Poetry — 03/19-Present

- *Read over 2,000 submissions of poetry every year in a fast-paced digital office and answer email inquiries.
- *Coordinate digital events with attendances of up to 100 people.
- *Spearhead Palette's Annual National Fair Housing Month Fundraiser, which I created three years ago. Oversaw project growth of over 200% in our 3rd year. The fundraiser is dedicated to generating donations for housing-insecure people and unsheltered persons. I run it via our social media channels and website.

Teacher & Administrator, Mentoring Academy, Berkeley — 08/20-07/22

- * Driven to action by Covid-19's negative impacts on our education system, I spent two years making a positive difference upon the lives of young people in my community. I taught 4 diverse classes of 15 students for 2 years in Oakland, with subjects ranging from Methods of Critical Thinking in English to Political Theory.
- * Researched the development of Covid-19 legislation and policy at a state and federal level in collaboration with staff members to implement policies that kept our community safe. We oversaw the implementation of 7 changes to school policy, and I personally saw to the Covid testing of more than 110 students.

Research Assistant, Columbia University — 03/20-07/21

- * Performed intensive research into US political history, legislation, and policy about land use and civil rights over the course of the last 200 years. During my tenure I drafted a dozen literature reviews, acquired rare international archival files, & wrote over 40 pages of analytical research contributions.
- *Edited & copyedited Dr. Mamdani's NYT bestseller "Neither Settler Nor Native".
- * Drafted more than 30 weekly memos for Dr. Mamdani, coordinated over 20 digital events, & tracked & logged almost 100 invoices in sums of over \$4,000.


CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY
MAYOR SHENG THAO

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF BENJAMIN BARTU TO THE COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, Section 601 of the City Charter provides that members of City boards and commissions shall be appointed by the Mayor subject to confirmation by the affirmative vote of five members of the City Council; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 9968 C.M.S., adopted August 5, 1980, and amended by Ordinance No. 11864 C.M.S., adopted March 12, 1996 and then by Ordinance No. 13334 C.M.S., adopted October 20, 2015, created the Commission on Persons with Disabilities to address issues germane to accessibility, services and civil rights for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Persons with Disabilities consists of eleven (11) members, serving three-year staggered terms with no more than two consecutive terms; and

WHEREAS, at least a majority of the Commission members appointed must be persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Mayor Sheng Thao has appointed Benjamin Bartu to the Commission on Persons with Disabilities, subject to confirmation by the City Council; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That pursuant to City Charter Section 601, the City Council hereby confirms the Mayor’s appointment to the Commission on Persons with Disabilities:

Benjamin Bartu, to serve the remainder of a three-year term that began on September 3, 2021 and ends September 2, 2024, filling a seat previously held by Erin Hattersley.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____
ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California