

## **Candidate Statement for CSHEMA Board of Trustees Election 2026**

### **Candidate Name:**

Hans O. Nielsen, MPA, CFPS

### **Candidate's Current Professional Role:**

Director

Environmental Health and Safety Office  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### **Paragraph 1: Please describe your professional experience relevant to the Board of Trustees position.**

I currently serve as Director of the Environmental Health and Safety Office at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and I've worked in environmental and occupational health and safety since 1994. Over those 32 years, I've had the chance to contribute across a wide range of EH&S functions, including occupational health and safety, laboratory safety, hazardous materials and waste, training, compliance, emergency response, program development, leadership, and the development of sound business practices and systems to support complex work in a large academic environment. More than anything else, curiosity has shaped how I move through this field. I'm wired to learn, to understand what's really going on, and to help define and solve the next puzzle. That's a big part of why this work has been such a strong fit for me and why I still love it. A long-standing mantra of mine is "know thyself," and it has grounded me not just as a leader but also as a colleague, a peer, and a learner. Over time, I've built real competence, but I'm always learning, and this field has a way of keeping all of us humble, which is probably a good thing. I place a high value on people, growth, and creating conditions where others can do meaningful work well. I've also had the privilege of serving on several community and professional boards, including multiple years as a board member and eventually President of the American Industrial Hygiene Association, Hawaii Section, which gave me meaningful experience in collaborative board service and professional leadership.

### **Paragraph 2: Please describe your CSHEMA experience, involvement and leadership involvement.**

I've been actively involved in CSHEMA since 2011 and have attended nearly every annual conference, except during the COVID years. Over that time, I've volunteered on committees and subcommittees, served on two conference planning committees for Tucson 2016 and Seattle 2025, and co-chaired the Laboratory Safety Committee during its transition to the Laboratory Safety Community of Practice. During that transition, participation grew from fewer than 20 members to more than 150 in the first year, and I was proud to be part of that work and to help hand it off to others who carried it forward well. I also co-developed and delivered laboratory safety PDS courses at numerous conferences, coordinated technical webinars, and sought practical ways to support member learning and growth across the association. CSHEMA has given me a great deal over the years, including some of the best

mentoring relationships of my career. It has also given me perspective, friendship, and support that extended well beyond conference rooms and committee work. During some very challenging times on my campus, people from this association reached out in ways I'll never forget. That kind of care says a lot about this community, and about the kind of people it draws. What has always stood out to me most about CSHEMA is that shared spirit of learning, generosity, and lifting one another up. I feel lucky to have found this community, or maybe to have stumbled into it, and to be part of a field where people so clearly believe that everyone here matters.

**Paragraph 3: Please state your goals for CSHEMA while serving on the Board of Trustees.**

If elected to serve on the Board of Trustees, I'll see it as an opportunity to give back to an association and a community that's given my university and me so much. I'll be proud to serve alongside some of the best leaders in our field and to contribute in meaningful ways to the organization and its people. My goal is to help CSHEMA remain strong, relevant, useful, welcoming, and deeply human. That includes helping newer members feel genuinely included, helping experienced members stay engaged and invested, and creating more opportunities for people to learn, grow, advance in their careers, and contribute. It also means giving back some of the mentoring, encouragement, perspective, and practical support this organization has given me over the years. One of the things I value most about CSHEMA is that it reflects a way of being I believe in deeply: kindness matters, because everyone you meet is carrying something. We do serious work, and we can still meet each other with warmth, humor, generosity, and respect. That's not extra. It's part of what makes CSHEMA special. If my service on the Board makes a meaningful difference for one person, I'll consider that a win.