



# HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 411 HONOLULU, HI 96813 • PHONE: 586-8636 • FAX: 586-8655 • TDD: 568-8692

March 10, 2020  
Rm. 225, 2:45 p.m.

To: The Honorable Laura H. Thielen, Chair  
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations

From: Liann Ebesugawa, Chair  
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: S.C.R. No. 9/ S.R. No. 10

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state funded services (on the basis of disability). The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights. Art. I, Sec. 5.

**The HCRC supports S.C.R. No. 9 and S.R. No. 10.**

These resolutions, if enacted, requests the various appointing authorities to dedicate themselves to achieving gender parity on state departments, boards, commissions and the Circuit Court judiciary.

The HCRC supports and encourages gender parity. The Commission also urges the Legislature to consider the public interest that is advanced by having departmental appointments, boards and commissions, and the judiciary reflect the diversity and demographics of our communities – providing access to participatory democracy and representation in governance.

The HCRC supports S.C.R. No. 9 and S.R. No. 10.

**SCR-9**

Submitted on: 3/8/2020 11:08:30 AM

Testimony for GVO on 3/10/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Field	Testifying for Hawaii Women's Coalition	Support	Yes

Comments:

Dear Chair Thielen, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Women’s Coalition writes in support of SCR9/SR10 which requests that various appointing authorities to dedicate themselves to achieve gender parity on state boards, commissions, and circuit court.

Corporations and institutions have much to gain with gender diversity in leadership – better profit, better employee job satisfaction and productivity, better reputation to name few.<sup>[1]</sup> Women are now the majority in U.S. labor force and college educated labor force: 50.04% of U.S. labor force is women<sup>[2]</sup> and in 2019, 29.5 million women in U.S. labor force had at least a bachelor’s degree compared to 29.3 million men.<sup>[3]</sup> Despite of women’s impressive gains in education and the workplace over the past 50 years and despite of all the benefits, men greatly outnumber women in leadership. Women make up only 28.9% of all state legislators nationwide<sup>[4]</sup> and women held 20% of corporate board positions in 2019.<sup>[5]</sup> As of January 2020, women held 34% of major Hawaii state board positions and 42% of judiciary positions.<sup>[6]</sup>

It will take another 50 years to achieve gender parity on boards if proactive measures are not taken. Massachusetts has introduced a measure for gender (50%), racial and ethnic (% of general population) parity on public boards and commissions in 2019.<sup>[7]</sup> Massachusetts measure also requires public boards and commissions to provide demographic data broken down by gender, race, ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation. Hawaii Women’s Coalition requests you consider an approach similar to Massachusetts’.

Thank you for your support for this important measure to promote fairness and equity in the leadership opportunities.

Sincerely,

Hawaii Women’s Coalition

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[1] <https://www.catalyst.org/research/why-diversity-and-inclusion-matter/>

[2] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/women-overtake-men-as-majority-of-u-s-workforce-11578670615>

[3] <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/06/20/u-s-women-near-milestone-in-the-college-educated-labor-force/>

[4] <https://www.ncsl.org/legislators-staff/legislators/womens-legislative-network/women-in-state-legislatures-for-2019.aspx>

[5] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/womens-share-of-board-seats-rises-to-20-11568194200>

[6] <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BiC1iaWu3RYzzleonM2dBxJRk0XOmt3a/view?>

[7] <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4153>

Statement Before The  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**Tuesday, March 10, 2020  
2:45 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225in consideration of  
**SCR 9 / SR 10****REQUESTING VARIOUS APPOINTING AUTHORITIES TO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO ACHIEVE GENDER PARITY  
ON STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS AND CIRCUIT COURT.**

Chair Thielen, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Senate Government Operations Committee

Common Cause Hawaii provides comments in support of SCR 9 / SR 10, which provides that the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the House of Representatives concurring, requests that the various appointing authorities dedicate themselves to achieving gender parity on state departments, boards, commissions, and Circuit Court judges.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy - one that works for everyone and not just the special interests.

Common Cause Hawaii understands that gender equality is a crucial feature of successful democratic societies and effective democratic governments. Public institutions and the courts serve the public -- women and men equally and should strive to be representative of the population they serve in order to understand and properly provide for the population's needs. SCR 9 / SR 10 encouraging gender parity will uplift women and men equally, strengthening democracy for all.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SCR 9 / SR 10. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at [sma@commoncause.org](mailto:sma@commoncause.org).

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma  
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

**SCR-9**

Submitted on: 3/6/2020 7:13:32 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/10/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support this measure, though it is my wish that someday we don't need measures like this to remind us of gender disparity.

**SCR-9**

Submitted on: 3/8/2020 11:23:35 AM

Testimony for GVO on 3/10/2020 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Kunitake	Testifying for American Association of University Women Hawaii State Public Policy Committee	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Thielen, Vice Chair Inouye and Members of the Committee on Government Operations,

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) Hawaii members support SCR 9.

AAUW is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for girls and women. Since our founding in 1881, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day - education, social, economic and political.

It is so important for our state government boards, commissions and circuit courts to achieve gender parity in order to equally represent our female population. Women are now the majority in U.S. labor force and college educated labor force: 50.04% of the U.S. labor force is women<sup>[2]</sup> and in 2019, 29.5 million women in the U.S. labor force had at least a bachelor's degree compared to 29.3 million men.<sup>[3]</sup> Despite of women's impressive gains in education and the workplace over the past 50 years and despite of all the business benefits, men greatly outnumber women in leadership.

Unfortunately women make up only 28.9% of all state legislators nationwide.<sup>[4]</sup> Women held 20% of corporate board positions in 2019, an increase from 15% in 2016 which was a result of a ripple effect of California's new law requiring female directors.<sup>[5]</sup> While small nonprofit boards are packed with women, only 33% of boards of nonprofits with incomes of \$25 million or more are led by women.<sup>[6]</sup> According to the Rutgers Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, approximately 63% of executives are White men, 24% are White women, 2% are Black women, 1% are Hispanic women, 1% are Asian women, and <1% are women of other racial and ethnic groups. These statistic must change to reflect the needs of girls and women.

We need state laws and resolutions to push for gender parity within our state government boards, commissions and circuit courts. As of January 2020, women held

34% of major Hawaii state board positions and 42% of judiciary positions.<sup>[8]</sup> It will take another 50 years to achieve gender parity on boards if proactive measures are not taken. Massachusetts has introduced a measure for gender (50%), racial and ethnic (% of general population) parity on public boards and commissions in 2019.<sup>[10]</sup> Massachusetts's measure also requires public boards and commissions to provide demographic data broken down by gender, race, ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation. We believe that Hawaii could follow Massachusetts's footsteps to set the stage for more women leaders in Hawaii.

Why is there a gender leadership gap? Blatant sex discrimination is still a problem, as data from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shows. Unconscious or implicit bias can cloud judgement in ways people are not fully aware of. Less obvious reasons for the lack of gender parity include hostile work environments, negative stereotypes about women in leadership, and bias against women keep women out of the top leadership spots. The AAUW report, *Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership*, examines the causes of women's underrepresentation in leadership roles in business, politics, and education and suggest what we can do to change the status quo (<https://www.aauw.org/research/barriers-and-bias/>).

Gender parity within leadership is a topic that has captured our nation's attention. Many thousands of books and articles offer theories about the nature of the problem and advice to individual women on how to stand up, step up, lean in, and make their voices heard. But the leadership gender gap is significant, persistent, and systemic. Individual choices alone simply will not solve the problem. Women's representation in leadership will not increase substantially without major changes in the culture, policies, and practices of the organizations where women learn and work. Accountability also inspires action, so we need public policies to ensure that government and for profit/non profit employers do the right thing. This is a solvable problem. We can do a great deal to move beyond stereotypical notions about leadership. Gender parity is a step forward for everyone.<sup>[9]</sup>

Gender parity in leadership will positively change the negative stereotypical ideas about gender roles. Corporations and institutions have much to gain with gender diversity in leadership – better profit, better employee job satisfaction and productivity, better reputation to name a few.<sup>[11]</sup> Just as the status quo is holding women back from leadership roles, it is holding men back from embracing caretaking and support roles. Working families, whether they rely on women as the sole breadwinner or have a two-earner income, will benefit from women leaders who will foster flexibility and fair expectations for working men and women, promote more women into top leadership positions and enforce fair corporate policies to improve gender diversity in management/executive leadership.

We urge you to pass SCR 9 to ensure Hawaii's brighter future that includes women leaders.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

American Association of University Women (AAUW) Hawaii State Public Policy Committee

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[1] <https://www.catalyst.org/research/why-diversity-and-inclusion-matter/>

[2] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/women-overtake-men-as-majority-of-u-s-workforce-11578670615>

[3] <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/06/20/u-s-women-near-milestone-in-the-college-educated-labor-force/>

[4] <https://www.ncsl.org/legislators-staff/legislators/womens-legislative-network/women-in-state-legislatures-for-2019.aspx>

[5] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/womens-share-of-board-seats-rises-to-20-11568194200>

[6] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2015/01/13/women-still-hold-only-19-percent-of-u-s-corporate-board-seats-what-could-change-that/>

[7] <https://www.aauw.org/research/barriers-and-bias/>

[8]

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BiC1iaWu3RYzzleonM2dBxJRk0XOmt3a/view?usp=sharing>

[9] <https://www.aauw.org/research/barriers-and-bias/>

[10] <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H4153>

**SCR-9**

Submitted on: 3/8/2020 11:55:45 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/10/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cyd L. Hoffeld	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**I strongly support SCR9.**

**SCR-9**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 4:46:38 PM

Testimony for GVO on 3/10/2020 2:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Marten	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**