



Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus Commission



Advocating for the Hawai'i LGBTQIA+ Community

Mailing Address: LGBTQ+ Commission, c/o The Department of Human Services,
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April 6, 2026

Senate's Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs & Judiciary
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 3:01 PM

RE: Strong Support for Senate Concurrent Resolution 11/SR 9

Aloha Chairs Wakai & Rhoads, Vice Chairs Change & Gabbard, and fellow committee members,

I am writing in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 11/SR9 on behalf of the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission, which was established by the 2022 Hawai'i State Legislature to

"improve the State's interface with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus community; identify the short- and long-range needs of its members; and ensure that there is an effective means of researching, planning, and advocating for the equity of this population in all aspects of state government."

The Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission submits this testimony in **strong support** of Senate Concurrent Resolution 11/Senate Resolution 9, requesting the United States Congress to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity across key areas of public life.

This measure reflects Hawai'i's long-standing commitment to equality, fairness, and the fundamental dignity of all people. While our state has been a national leader in enacting protections for mähū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ individuals, those protections are not uniformly guaranteed across the country. As a result, queer people—particularly transgender individuals, Native Hawaiian, mähū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ individuals, and those living at the intersections of multiple marginalized identities—remain vulnerable to discrimination in employment, housing, education, public accommodations, and access to essential services.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 stands as one of the most significant civil rights laws in our nation's history. However, its protections remain incomplete without explicit inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity. While recent federal court decisions have expanded interpretations of sex discrimination, those rulings are subject to change and do not provide the comprehensive, durable protections that congressional action would ensure.

No one should face the risk of being fired, denied housing, refused service, or excluded from educational opportunities simply because of who they are or whom they love. Yet in many parts of the United States, these risks remain a daily reality. This inconsistency undermines both civil

Proudly established pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 369, as enacted through Act 41, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022

HI State LGBTQ+ Commission Testimony in Support of SCR 11/SR 9

rights and economic security, forcing LGBTQ+ individuals to navigate a patchwork of protections that vary widely by state.

SCR 11/SR 9 affirms Hawai'i's role as a leader in advancing equity and sends a clear message that civil rights protections must be inclusive, explicit, and nationwide. It also aligns with our state's core values of aloha, kuleana, and mālama to ensure that all people are treated with respect, responsibility, and care.

At a time when māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ rights are increasingly under threat in other parts of the country, it is critical that Hawai'i stand firmly on the side of equality and urge federal action to secure these protections for all.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission respectfully urges the Committee to pass SCR 11/SR 9.

If you or any member of your staff has any questions regarding my testimony you can reach me at hawaiistatelgbtqpluscommission@gmail.com.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Sandy Harjo Livingston (he/him/they/them)

Chair

[Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission](#)

[Inclusive LGBTQIA+ Glossary](#)

The [Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission](#) has this webpage and that is dedicated to understanding and being able to use the correct terms when talking about the rainbow community from māhū to LGBTQIA+ to QTPI+ to MVPFAFF+ and beyond. The list found on this page is not an exhaustive list and will be updated as appropriate.



April 6, 2026

Position: **SUPPORT** of **SCR11/SR9**, REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AND GENDER IDENTITY IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, EDUCATION, FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS, CREDIT, AND JURY SERVICE.

To: Senators Glenn Wakai and Karl Rhoads, Chairs
Senators Stanley Chang and Mike Gabbard, Vice Chairs
Members of the Senate Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs, and on Judiciary

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of SCR11/SR9, REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AND GENDER IDENTITY IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, EDUCATION, FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS, CREDIT, AND JURY SERVICE.

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 3:01 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women **supports SCR11/SR9**, affirming the principles of the Federal Equality Act and its protections against discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

As a statewide feminist government body dedicated to advancing equality for women and girls, our mission is rooted in ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination. This resolution is significant because it aligns with our commitment to equity, inclusion, and the protection of fundamental rights for all people in Hawaii, especially those who have historically faced barriers due to gender or identity.

By supporting the Federal Equality Act, the measure **promotes a legal framework that upholds protections against discrimination in vital areas such as employment, housing, and public accommodations**. These protections are essential for the well-being, safety, and full participation of women, girls, and gender minorities in society. Research and best practices indicate that comprehensive anti-discrimination laws contribute to healthier, more equitable communities, and **foster environments where everyone can thrive**.

We respectfully urge these Committees to **pass SCR11/SR9**. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

SR-9

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 10:05:19 AM

Testimony for EIG on 4/7/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 strongly supports SCR11. We need equality for all. Please pass this resolution.



Committee: Senate Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs & Judiciary
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 3:01 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 224 & Via Videoconference
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of SCR11/ SR9**

Dear Chairs Wakai & Rhoads, Vice-Chairs Chang & Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU-HI") writes in **support of SCR11 / SR9**, which requests the United States Congress to pass legislation to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, federally funded programs, credit, and jury service.

This measure is essential to protecting Hawai'i's cultural and genealogical integrity. In Kanaka Maoli culture, *māhū* describes someone who embodies *kāne* and *wahine* energies.¹ While the visibility of *māhū* individuals has recently increased, ongoing barriers remain.²

Transgender youth who are affirmed in their gender by their families establish healthy relationships with their parents and peers, do better in school, and are better equipped to plan for their future.³ Denying them support increases the likelihood of dropping out of school and increases their risk for substance use, depression, anxiety, and suicide.⁴ In 2023, 63% of Kanaka 'Ōiwi high school transgender youth or youth questioning their

¹ Papa Ola Lōkahi. *No Ka Māhū Toolkit*. https://www.papaolalokahi.org/wp-content/uploads/No_Ka_Mahui_v3.pdf

² Regidor, I., Haitsuka, K., Cavalieri, M., & Machida, A. (2025). *Hāpu 'u Ke Aloha: Māhū Listening Tour Report*. Papa Ola Lōkahi. https://www.papaolalokahi.org/wp-content/uploads/Digital_1Page_Version_Layout_Hapuu_Report_July25.pdf

³ Human Rights Campaign Foundation. (2024). *2024 Report on the Experiences of Parents of Transgender and Non-binary Children*. Human Rights Campaign. <https://reports.hrc.org/experiences-of-parents-of-transgender-and-non-binary-children#child-mental-health>

⁴ Matouk, K.M. & Wald, M. (2022, March). *Gender-affirming Care Saves Lives*. Columbia University Department of Psychiatry. <https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/news/gender-affirming-care-saves-lives>. See ACLU National: <https://www.aclu.org/issues/lgbtq-rights/transgender-rights/transgender-people-and-health-care>

gender reported signs of depression.⁵ In 2024, more than 1 in 3 transgender/unsure of gender youth attempted suicide.⁶ This measure is essential to ensuring the well-being of Hawai‘i’s communities and families.

While Hawai‘i has important protections, federal law does not currently prohibit discrimination against sexual and gender minorities in public accommodations and facilities, education, federally funded programs, employment, housing, credit, and jury service. No one should be disadvantaged from accessing opportunities based on their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Hawai‘i should take an important stance in ensuring that everyone has the freedom to be their authentic selves and has equal access to important opportunities. We urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Donavan Kamakani Albano

Donavan Kamakani Albano

Policy Fellow

ACLU of Hawai‘i

dalbano@acluhawaii.org

With more than 4,000 Hawaii-based members, the mission of the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai‘i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the United States and Hawai‘i State Constitutions through legislative, litigation, and public education work. The ACLU of Hawai‘i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai‘i has been serving our communities in Hawai‘i for over 60 years.

⁵ Hawai‘i State Departments of Education and Health, Hawai‘i Health Data Warehouse, Hawai‘i School Health Survey: Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

https://hhdw.org/report/query/selection/yrbs/_YRBSSelection.html

⁶ Hawai‘i Sexual and Gender (SGM) Minority Workgroup. *Sexual & Gender Minority Youth in Hawai‘i*. (2024). <https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/files/2024/03/Presentation-SGM-Youth-in-HI-2017-2019-FINAL-VERSION-2-3-4-2024.pdf>



SCR 11/SR 9, REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AND GENDER IDENTITY IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, EDUCATION, FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS, CREDIT, AND JURY SERVICE.

APRIL 7, 2026 · EIG/JDC HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** SCR 11/SR9, requesting the United States Congress to pass legislation to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, federally funded programs, credit, and jury service.

LGBTQ students experience significantly higher rates of bullying, harassment, and discrimination in schools than their non-LGBTQ peers. According to the GLSEN National School Climate Survey, the majority of LGBTQ students report hearing discriminatory language at school, and many feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Students who feel unsafe are more likely to miss school, have lower GPAs, and are less likely to pursue higher education. This demonstrates that discrimination is not only a civil rights issue, but also an educational access and achievement issue.

Discrimination and hostile school environments also have serious mental health consequences. Research published in journals such as *Pediatrics* and the *Journal of Adolescent Health* shows that LGBTQ youth who experience bullying or discrimination are at significantly higher risk for depression, anxiety, and suicide attempts. However, the same research also shows that supportive school environments—including clear anti-discrimination protections and inclusive policies—dramatically reduce these risks and improve educational outcomes.

Importantly, inclusive and nondiscriminatory school environments benefit all students, not just LGBTQ students. Schools that foster safe and inclusive environments have better attendance, improved academic performance, and stronger school connectedness overall. When students feel safe and respected, they are better able to focus on learning, participate in school activities, and succeed academically.

For these reasons, ensuring that federal civil rights law clearly prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is an important step toward improving educational equity, student safety, and academic success. This resolution recognizes that students cannot learn effectively if they do not feel safe or welcome in their own schools.

Contact: educationcaucusdph@gmail.com · 808-679-7454



APRIL 7, 2026

SCR 11/SR 9

CURRENT REFERRAL: EIG/JDC

808-679-7454
kris@imuaalliance.org
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Kris Coffield,
President

David Negaard,
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Mireille Ellsworth,
Director

Justin Salisbury,
Director

Eileen Roco,
Director

Beatrice DeRego,
Director

Corey Rosenlee,
Director

Amy Zhao,
*Policy and Partnerships
Strategist*

POSITION: SUPPORT

Imua Alliance supports SCR 11/SR 9, requesting the United States Congress to pass legislation to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, federally funded programs, credit, and jury service.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending sexual exploitation and gender violence. From this perspective, nondiscrimination protections are not only civil rights protections; they are also violence prevention and survivor protection policies. Many of the individuals most vulnerable to exploitation and abuse are also individuals who face discrimination in housing, employment, education, and access to services.

LGBTQ individuals experience higher rates of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and exploitation than the general population. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 61 percent of bisexual women and 44 percent of lesbian women have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner, compared to 35 percent of heterosexual women.

Studies also show that more than half—54% according to the Human Rights Campaign—of transgender and nonbinary individuals report experiencing intimate partner violence in their lifetime. These disparities reveal that LGBTQ individuals are disproportionately affected by gender violence, and that policies that protect LGBTQ individuals from discrimination also function as violence prevention and survivor protection policies.

Discrimination is not separate from violence and exploitation. Rather, it often increases vulnerability to both. Survivors who face housing discrimination may be unable to leave abusive partners or unsafe living situations. Individuals who experience workplace discrimination may

become economically dependent on abusive partners or exploitative employers. When people are denied services, health care, or education due to discrimination, they may become isolated and more vulnerable to exploitation. Youth who experience discrimination in school or at home are also at higher risk of homelessness, and homelessness is one of the strongest predictors of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

This measure recognizes that discrimination and violence are often interconnected, and that protecting individuals from discrimination helps protect them from exploitation, abuse, and instability. For organizations that work with survivors, nondiscrimination protections directly affect whether survivors can find housing, keep a job, stay in school, and access services safely, strengthening our state's defense against gender violence overall and for generations to come.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance



April 6, 2026

Senate's Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs & Judiciary
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 3:01 PM

RE: Strong Support for Senate Concurrent Resolution 11

Aloha Chairs Wakai & Rhoads, Vice Chairs Change & Gabbard, and fellow committee members,

Pride at Work – Hawai'i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i submits this testimony in **strong support** of Senate Concurrent Resolution 11, which requests that the United States Congress amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

As an organization representing LGBTQIA+ union members and allies across Hawai'i, we view this resolution as fundamentally about **worker dignity, economic security, and fairness on the job**.

No worker should have to choose between earning a paycheck and being their authentic self. Yet across the United States, LGBTQIA+ workers—especially transgender and nonbinary workers—continue to face discrimination in hiring, firing, promotions, wages, and workplace conditions. In too many places, a worker can still be denied a job or terminated simply because of who they are or who they love.

While court decisions have extended some protections under federal law, those interpretations are incomplete and vulnerable to reversal. Workers need clear, explicit, and durable protections that only Congress can provide. Amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would ensure that LGBTQ+ workers have consistent rights regardless of their zip code.

From a labor perspective, discrimination is not just a civil rights issue—it is an economic justice issue. Workplace discrimination contributes to wage gaps, job instability, and barriers to career advancement. It weakens collective bargaining power and undermines solidarity across the workforce. When employers are allowed to discriminate against some workers, it lowers standards for all workers.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i's Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Re: SCR 11

Hawai'i has demonstrated that strong protections for LGBTQ+ people and strong labor values go hand in hand. Our state has long recognized that inclusive workplaces are more equitable, more productive, and more resilient. SCR 11 extends that vision nationally and reinforces the principle that **an injury to one is an injury to all**.

At a time when workers' rights and LGBTQ+ rights are both under coordinated attack in many parts of the country, this resolution sends a powerful message: Hawai'i stands with workers, stands with LGBTQ+ communities, and stands for fairness and equality under the law.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to pass SCR 11 and to call on Congress to finally deliver comprehensive, nationwide civil rights protections for LGBTQ+ people.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)
President
[Pride at Work – Hawai'i](#)



HA'AHEO, 'OHANA, KAULIKE, UI
Pride Family Justice Activate
WHERE PRIDE BECOMES POLITICAL POWER

Website: www.hokupac.org ♦ Email: info@hokupac.org

April 6, 2026

Senate's Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs & Judiciary
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 3:01 PM

RE: Strong Support for Senate Concurrent Resolution 11/SR 9

Aloha Chairs Wakai & Rhoads, Vice Chairs Change & Gabbard, and fellow committee members,

This testimony on behalf of **HOKU PAC**, Hawai'i's LGBTQ+ political action committee dedicated to building queer political power and advancing policies that protect our communities. HOKU PAC submits this testimony in **strong support** of Senate Concurrent Resolution 11/Senate Resolution 9, requesting that the United States Congress amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

As Hawai'i's LGBTQ+ political action committee, HOKU PAC works to elect leaders who are committed to equality, justice, and accountability. SCR 11 represents a clear opportunity for Hawai'i to once again lead by example and call for long-overdue federal action to ensure that civil rights protections apply to everyone, everywhere.

Despite progress in Hawai'i and other states, māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ people across the country still face a patchwork of protections that leaves millions vulnerable to discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, credit, federally funded programs, and even jury service. These gaps are not theoretical—they have real consequences for people's livelihoods, safety, and ability to fully participate in civic life.

Federal law should be clear and unequivocal: discrimination has no place in our society. While court rulings have interpreted existing law to extend some protections, those decisions are limited in scope and subject to change. Only an explicit amendment to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 can provide the comprehensive and enduring protections that māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ Americans deserve.

SCR 11 is also about political accountability. Voters increasingly expect their elected officials to stand firmly on the side of equality. By advancing this resolution, Hawai'i affirms that supporting māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ rights is not optional—it is a fundamental expectation of public leadership.

Hawai'i has long been at the forefront of advancing māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ equality, grounded in the values of aloha, inclusion, and respect for human dignity. Passing SCR 11 continues that legacy and sends a strong message to Congress that the time for half-measures has passed. Full federal equality is both necessary and overdue.

At a moment when māhū, LGBTQIA+, and QTPI+ rights are being challenged across the country, Hawai'i must remain steadfast. SCR 11/SR 9 ensures that our state's voice is heard loud and clear: civil rights protections must be explicit, comprehensive, and nationwide.

For these reasons, HOKU PAC respectfully urges the Committee to pass SCR 11/SR 9.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Paid for by HOKU PAC – Not Authorized by any Candidate or Candidate Committee



April 6, 2026

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Re: S.C.R. 11 / S.R. 9 – REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AND GENDER IDENTITY IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, EDUCATION, FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS, CREDIT, AND JURY SERVICE

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 3:01 PM, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Wakai, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Chang, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Joint Committees:

Hawaii Women Lawyers is a lawyer's trade organization that aims to improve the lives and careers of women in all aspects of the legal profession, influence the future of the legal profession, and enhance the status of women and promote equal opportunities for all.

Hawaii Women Lawyers supports S.C.R. 11 / S.R. 9.

This resolution urges the United States Congress to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in critical areas including employment, housing, education, public accommodations, federally funded programs, credit, and jury service.

S.C.R. 11 / S.R. 9 aligns directly with Hawaii Women Lawyers' mission to enhance the status of women and promote equal opportunity. While Hawaii has enacted strong state-level protections for LGBTQ+ individuals and women, those protections are not guaranteed under federal law or in many other states. Without comprehensive federal protections, individuals remain vulnerable to discrimination simply because of where they live.

By supporting S.C.R. 11 / S.R. 9, the Legislature can affirm its commitment to civil rights and equality for all people, particularly those historically marginalized due to their gender or identity. Amending the Civil Rights Act to reflect these values would close longstanding legal gaps and bring consistency and dignity to the lived experiences of millions of Americans.

For the above reasons, we respectfully request that the Committees pass this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

SR-9

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 11:26:19 AM

Testimony for EIG on 4/7/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tina Even	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill!

Tina Marie Even

LATE

SR-9

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 8:26:24 PM

Testimony for EIG on 4/7/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Grave	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Emily Grave, and I am a resident of Honolulu, Hawai'i. I write in strong support of SCR 11.

SCR 11 urges Congress to take an essential step toward ensuring that federal civil rights protections explicitly include sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity. While existing interpretations of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 have expanded in important ways, those protections remain vulnerable to shifting legal interpretations and do not consistently cover all areas of public life. This resolution recognizes the urgent need for clarity, consistency, and permanence in our nation's civil rights laws.

No one should face discrimination in employment, housing, education, public accommodations, federally funded programs, or civic participation simply because of who they are. Yet across the country, LGBTQ+ individuals continue to experience barriers to safety, stability, and opportunity. Explicit federal protections are necessary to ensure equal treatment under the law.

Hawai'i has long been a leader in advancing equality and inclusion. SCR 11 reflects our state's commitment to the principle that all people deserve dignity, respect, and protection from discrimination. By urging Congress to act, Hawai'i affirms that civil rights must be comprehensive, clearly defined, and equally applied.

This resolution is also about safeguarding the well-being of our communities. Discrimination in housing, employment, and education has real and lasting impacts on individuals and families, including mental health, economic security, and access to opportunity. Ensuring clear protections helps create safer, healthier, and more resilient communities for everyone.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to adopt SCR 11.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Emily Grave, Honolulu