



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

KOMIKINA PONO KĪWILA O HAWAI‘I

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DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2026
TIME: 2:00 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

To:

[COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS](#)

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

From: Alphonso Braggs, Chair

and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: HB 1522 Relating to Discrimination

Testimony in SUPPORT

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (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. HCRC has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment (Chapter 378, Part I, HRS), housing (Chapter 515, HRS), public accommodations (Chapter 489, HRS), and access to state and state-funded services (HRS § 368-1.5).

Hawai‘i must preserve the rights of its people regardless of shifting priorities in Washington. By passing HB1522, the Legislature ensures that our state remains a leader in civil rights protections and continues to uphold fairness and equality for everyone.

Hawai‘i has the shortest filing period among comparable state agencies in the nation at just 180 days. This is out of step with other jurisdictions. Under the Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission, individuals have up to 300 days to file a complaint. For housing discrimination cases handled by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the timeline is up to one year. Hawai'i's current law limits access to justice for people who need more time to come forward or may no longer be protected by federal law.

Most states provide significantly longer filing periods than Hawai'i. California and New York provide up to one year, and many other states range from 300 days to one year. Hawai'i's 180-day limit is the shortest among jurisdictions with similar civil rights protections. Extending the deadline to one year would bring us in line with these standards and ensure that victims of discrimination have a fair and reasonable opportunity to seek help regardless of available federal administrative remedies.

This change is about protecting rights. People who experience discrimination often need time to process what happened, find legal advice, or deal with personal and financial challenges before they can file a complaint. A short deadline can shut the door to justice before they even have a chance to act.

Extending the statute of limitations will not only provide a buffer of time for accessible justice for complainants and capture any loss of federal protection, but it will also give the Commission the flexibility to manage intakes and investigations responsibly without sacrificing fairness or quality.

For these reasons, the HCRC urges the Committee to pass HB1522 and strengthen Hawai'i's commitment to justice.



Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Chair David Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe

February 10, 2026 at 2:00 pm 325 via Videoconference
HB1522 Statute of Limitations Civil Rights Commission

TESTIMONY

Stephen Munkelt, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports BILL NUMBER HB1522

House Bill 1522 would amend Section 368-11 of HRS by extending the time for filing a complaint with the Civil Rights commission from six months to one year.

The League of Women Voters supports the civil rights established in our Constitution and laws. The league also supports transparency, accountability and equity in government. The Civil Rights Commission serves to advance both of these goals by providing a means for persons who believe their rights have been violated to file a claim for redress. In today's turbulent world extending the time for filing a complaint is a reasonable step to assure there is an opportunity to investigate questionable actions and the harms they have caused.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Stephen Munkelt



February 8, 2026

Senator David A. Tarnas, Chair
Senator Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Re: H.B. 1522 Relating to Discrimination

Hearing: Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 2:00 PM, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and the Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

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 submits testimony in strong support of H.B. 1522 Relating to Discrimination.

We strongly concur with the Legislature that an extension of the statute of limitations would ensure that individuals in Hawaii have a greater access to civil-rights protections.

Extending the statute of limitations for discrimination claims is highly beneficial for women by recognizing the lasting impact of harassment, giving individuals time to secure new employment, and overcome fear of retaliation. Expanded filing deadlines are particularly important for survivors who may not immediately recognize misconduct or feel able to report it. Survivors of sexual harassment or assault frequently require additional time to process their experiences before pursuing legal remedies. A longer reporting period allows individuals to collect relevant evidence and consult with legal counsel without feeling rushed.

Many victims are also unaware that certain behaviors constitute unlawful conduct or may not fully understand the workplace protections available to them. Data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shows that while only 25% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment when asked directly, nearly 60% identified such experiences when questioned about specific behaviors, including sexually explicit or suggestive remarks, gestures, or inappropriate physical contact.

Hawaii Women Lawyers commends and thanks the Legislature for prioritizing realities faced by victims of discrimination and for taking steps to ensure that our laws meaningfully support access to justice.

For the above reasons, we strongly support H.B. 1522 Relating to Discrimination.

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



LAMBDA LAW HAWAI'I
WILLIAM S. RICHARDSON SCHOOL OF LAW

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF [HB1522](#)

House Committee on Consumer Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
February 9th, 2025

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committees,

Lambda Law Hawai'i, a Law Student Association at the William S. Richardson School of Law, at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, **strongly supports HB1522** to extend the statute of limitations to file a complaint of discrimination with the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission to 1 year.

180 days is not nearly enough time for a person with family, work, and other obligations to file a claim, and is especially non-optimal given the long wait times claimants face when going through this process in the first place, as tends to be the case with many legal processes. This bill would allow for a broader implementation of justice.

Please support HB1522. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Lambda Law Hawai'i, a Law Student Association at the William S. Richardson School of Law
Mission: To advance equal rights for LGBTQIA+ individuals at WSRSL and beyond.

HB-1522

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 8:27:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Wurtzel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

I am writing to support H.B. 1522. The bill amends HRS Section 368-11 to extend the statute of limitations for filing a complaint of discrimination to the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission to one year. Currently the statute allows one hundred eighty days for filing.

I support the amendment. Many people believe that the filing period is longer, based on the equivalent federal statute. Further it allows more time for victims to process trauma, find legal counsel, and report abuse.

Starting in 2020, California extnded the statute of limitation in their equivalent statute to three years.

I support H.B. 1522 and urge the Comittee to pass the measure,

Thank you for your time.

HB-1522

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 10:45:50 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/10/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Bringman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill. I do believe 180 days is a short timeline for those getting their documents in order.