



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION **KOMIKINA PONO KĪWILA O HAWAI‘I**

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Wednesday, March 4, 2026 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
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: H.B. 1877 HD1—Relating to the Hawaii State Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission
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).

The HCRC backs the LGBTQ+ Commission and the support to expand its membership to better address LGBTQIA+ community needs, and achieve equity for individuals within the community in all aspects of the state government. The legislature created the LGBTQ+ Commission in 2022 to improve our State’s ability to interface with members of the LGBTQIA+ community in all aspects of the state government. H.B. 1877 HD1 would continue this mission by strengthening the coordination between government agencies with representatives appointed

by the speaker of the house and one by the president of the senate, as well as reserving a seat for an individual under the age of 29. Ensuring youth representation on the commission recognizes the importance of including the younger generation who will be directly impacted by policies, often for decades, in the creation of those strategies and agendas.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support.



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,
P.O. Box 339, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96809-0339

Email: hawaiistatelgbtqpluscommission@gmail.com
Web: <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/lgbtq-commission/>

February 28, 2026

House's Committees on Human Services and Homelessness
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 2:00 PM

RE: Strong Support for House Bill 1877

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and fellow committee members,

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 1877 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 offers its strong support for House Bill 1877, which expands the Commission's membership from eight to eleven voting members, reserves one seat for an individual under the age of 29, and authorizes the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate to each appoint a voting member.

Since our founding, the visibility, scope, and demand for the Commission's work have grown significantly. What began as a newly established advisory body has evolved into a trusted convener, policy partner, and community bridge between state government and LGBTQ+ communities across Hawai'i. Events such as **Queer Day at the Capitol**, taking place this year on February 17th, along with the Commission's monthly meetings, and collaborative initiatives we have sponsored or co-sponsored, have demonstrated the clear and growing need for strong, structured, and representative leadership within the Commission.

With that growth has come increased responsibility. The Commission is regularly called upon to provide policy recommendations, review legislation, and respond to emerging federal attacks impacting our community. Expanding the Commission's membership will ensure that this important work is sustainable, thoughtful, and reflective of the diversity of Hawai'i's LGBTQ+ communities.

Importantly, reserving one seat for a person under the age of 29 ensures meaningful youth representation. Young people—particularly māhū, transgender, gender non-conforming, and queer youth—are directly impacted by many of the policies the Commission addresses. Their lived experience, insight, and leadership are not symbolic; they are essential. This reserved seat creates a formal pathway for intergenerational leadership development and ensures that decisions are informed by those shaping the future of our state.

Providing appointment authority to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate further strengthens coordination between the legislative and executive branches while reinforcing the Commission's accountability and transparency. Broader appointing authority also supports geographic, cultural, and professional diversity among Commissioners.

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 STRONG Support of HB 1877

House Bill 1877 is not simply about adding seats. It is about strengthening infrastructure at a time when LGBTQ+ communities nationwide face unprecedented policy challenges. It ensures that Hawai'i continues to lead with intention, inclusion, and integrity.

The Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission respectfully urges your support and passage of House Bill 1877.

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,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)
Vice 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 mähū 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.

2nd Annual
Queer Day at the Capitol
Tuesday, Feb 17, 2026
Community Resource Fair
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM on 4th Floor

Everyone is invited to come OUT and experience Hawai'i's diverse Mähū, LGBTQIA+, QTPI+, MVPFAFF+ Community and our Allied Orgs

Panels in the Capitol Auditorium Chamber Level

9 AM - 10:30 AM
Healthcare, Not Politics:
The Case for Gender-Affirming Care 
HHRC

2 PM - 3:30 PM
From Policy to Protection:
Defending Queer Lives Against Federal Attacks. 
ACLU
Hawai'i

 **Advocating for the Hawai'i LGBTQIA+ community** 



February 28, 2026

House's Committees on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 2:00 PM

RE: **STRONG SUPPRT for House Bill 1877**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, 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. We write in **strong support of House Bill 1877**.

Pride at Work Hawai'i is proud to stand in strong support of House Bill 1877, which expands the membership of the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission from eight to eleven voting members, reserves one seat for a person under the age of 29, and provides appointment authority to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate.

As an organization representing LGBTQIA+ union members and working families, we understand that strong institutions are built on broad representation and diversity of thought. Expanding the Commission's membership is not simply about increasing numbers—it is about strengthening the range of lived experiences, professional expertise, geographic perspectives, and policy viewpoints that inform the Commission's work.

Our community is not monolithic. Māhū, LGBTQIA+ and QTPI+ people in Hawai'i span every industry, income level, ethnicity, island community, and generation. Ensuring that the Commission reflects this diversity strengthens its ability to provide thoughtful recommendations to policymakers and to respond effectively to emerging challenges that impact working people and their families.

We are particularly encouraged by the reserved seat for a person under the age of 29. Young queer people—especially those entering the workforce, navigating higher education, or organizing in their communities—bring critical insight into the realities facing the next generation. Too often, decisions that directly affect young people are made without their voices meaningfully included. This bill ensures that youth leadership is not symbolic, but structural.

At a time when LGBTQIA+ rights and worker protections are increasingly intertwined, expanding the Commission helps ensure it has the capacity and breadth of perspective necessary to meet

Pride at Work – Hawai'i's Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Re: HB 1877

the moment. A larger, more representative body strengthens collaboration between government and community and reinforces Hawai'i's commitment to equity and inclusion. Pride at Work Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to pass House Bill 1877.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

In Solidarity,

[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

February 28, 2026

House’s Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai‘i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 2:00 PM

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for House Bill 1877 HD 1**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, 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. We write in **strong support of House Bill 1877 House Draft 1**.

HOKU PAC was founded to build political power for Hawai‘i’s LGBTQIA+ community and to ensure that our voices are present where decisions are made. House Bill 1877 is a practical and necessary step toward strengthening the infrastructure that supports that representation.

The Hawai‘i State LGBTQ+ Commission has grown into a visible and active body that engages directly with lawmakers, state agencies, and the broader public. As community participation increases—through events like Queer Day at the Capitol and ongoing advocacy efforts—the demands on the Commission have expanded as well. Increasing its membership from eight to eleven voting members is a commonsense way to ensure it has the capacity to meet that growth responsibly and effectively.

We are especially supportive of reserving a seat for someone under the age of 29. Young māhū, LGBTQIA+ leaders are organizing, mobilizing, and shaping the political landscape in real time. They are not the leaders of tomorrow—they are leaders today. Formalizing youth representation ensures their lived experience informs policy discussions at the highest advisory levels of state government.

Additionally, allowing the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate to each appoint a voting member strengthens institutional alignment and reinforces the Commission’s connection to the legislative process. At a time when LGBTQIA+ communities across the country are facing coordinated political attacks, Hawai‘i must continue investing in strong, durable structures that protect and advance equality.

House Bill 1877 is about building capacity, expanding representation, and ensuring that Hawai‘i remains a national leader in inclusion and equity. HOKU PAC respectfully urges your support and passage of this measure.

For these reasons, HOKU PAC **strongly urges passage of House Bill 1875 HD 1**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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



STONEWALL CAUCUS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1877 HD1

Relating to the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission –
Membership Expansion

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 2026

TIME: 2:00 PM

PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE & Conference Room 325

To the Honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, we submit this testimony in strong support of HB1877 HD1.

HB1877 HD1 expands the membership of the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission from eight voting members to eleven. The measure adds one youth seat for a person under the age of twenty-nine at the time of appointment and creates two additional voting seats appointed respectively by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate. It also updates quorum and chairperson provisions to reflect the expanded membership.

The Hawai'i LGBTQ+ Commission plays an important role in advising the Governor and Legislature, coordinating across state agencies, and elevating the voices of LGBTQ+ communities statewide. Expanding its membership strengthens its ability to reflect the diversity of our communities and enhances its capacity to engage meaningfully with statewide policy development.

The addition of a youth seat is particularly important. Young LGBTQ+ people experience unique challenges related to education, healthcare access, housing stability, and mental health. Ensuring youth representation provides lived-experience insight and strengthens intergenerational leadership within the Commission.

The inclusion of legislative appointees also promotes collaboration between the executive and legislative branches, ensuring that policy conversations remain informed, transparent, and responsive to evolving community needs.

HB1877 HD1 does not diminish existing representation; rather, it builds upon the current structure to

Testimony in Strong Support of HB1877 HD1

broaden participation and strengthen governance. By expanding the Commission to eleven appointed members, this measure enhances inclusivity, accountability, and statewide engagement.

For these reasons, the Stonewall Caucus respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB1877 HD1.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued commitment to supporting Hawai'i's LGBTQ+ communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Abby Simmons (she/her)

Chair

Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i



March 3, 2026

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Re: H.B. 1877 HD1, Relating to the Hawaii State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission

Hearing: Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 2:00 PM, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and the Members of the Committee on Judiciary & 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 support of H.B. 1877 HD1, which would expand the membership of the Hawaii State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission from eight to eleven voting members, including the addition of a youth member and legislative appointees.

Inclusive governance structures support more responsive policymaking and reinforce Hawai'i's longstanding commitment to fairness and nondiscrimination. Strengthening the capacity and representation of the LGBTQ+ Commission helps to ensure that state policy development benefits from a broader range of lived experiences and community perspectives. Expanding Commission membership also supports more effective consideration of emerging issues affecting LGBTQ+ communities.

Increasing the number of commissioners can also improve the Commission's operational capacity. A more robust Commission structure will better equip the body to fulfill its statutory duties and respond to evolving community needs.

For the above reasons, we support H.B. 1877 HD1 and respectfully request that the Committee pass this measure.

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

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 12:13:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather McVay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I stand in strong support of this measure to strengthen the State LGBTQ+ Commission that is doing great work in our community.

Mahalo,

Heather McVay

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 2:45:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Duffy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respectfully **oppose** this measure to expand the membership of the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission.

Hawai'i is a small state. We operate differently than larger mainland states. Our commissions work best when they are focused, efficient, and grounded in clear purpose. Before expanding any state body, we should first ask: What problem are we solving?

This bill increases the number of voting members from eight to eleven and adds legislative appointees. However, there has been no showing that the current commission is unable to carry out its duties or lacks representation. The commission already includes:

- County representation from across the islands
- Department leadership participation
- Representation from the Department of Health's sexual and gender minority workgroup

If the current structure is functioning, growth for growth's sake is not good governance.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **hold this measure**.

Letter in Support of HB1877 HD1

February 27, 2026

To: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Legislature
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Strong Support for HB1877 HD1 – Expansion of the Hawai‘i State LGBTQ+ Commission

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Ryan K Gomes, and I am a resident of Honolulu. I write to you today in strong support of HB1877 HD1, which expands the membership of the Hawai‘i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission from eight to eleven voting members.

Why This Expansion Matters

Since its establishment, the LGBTQ+ Commission has worked diligently to advise the legislature and state agencies on policies affecting LGBTQ+ residents across our islands. As the scope and complexity of this work has grown, so too has the need for broader representation and increased capacity.

Expanding from eight to eleven members allows for:

- **Greater geographic representation** across all Hawaiian islands, ensuring that the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ communities from Hawai‘i Island, Maui, Kaua‘i, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, and O‘ahu are all heard in policy discussions.
- **More diverse representation** of identities within the LGBTQ+ spectrum, including transgender and non-binary individuals, bisexual and pansexual people, queer Native Hawaiians, and elders who have navigated decades of social change.
- **Increased capacity** to address the multiple issue areas affecting LGBTQ+ residents, including healthcare access, housing discrimination, educational equity, employment protections, and the intersection of LGBTQ+ identity with Native Hawaiian cultural practices.
- **Stronger engagement** with community organizations, advocacy groups, and kupuna who carry institutional knowledge about the struggles and progress of LGBTQ+ rights in Hawai‘i.

The Intersection with Native Hawaiian Values

Native Hawaiian culture has long recognized and honored gender and sexual diversity. The māhū tradition—individuals who embody both masculine and feminine spirit—has always held respected roles in our communities as teachers, healers, and cultural practitioners. Expanding the Commission strengthens its ability to center Native Hawaiian perspectives and ensure that policy recommendations align with our cultural values of inclusivity, respect, and aloha.

Meeting the Moment

LGBTQ+ individuals and families in Hawai‘i continue to face significant challenges—from discrimination in housing and employment to barriers in accessing affirming healthcare. Youth, particularly LGBTQ+ youth of color and those in rural communities, need strong advocates who understand their lived experiences. Kupuna who came of age before marriage equality and employment protections deserve recognition and support.

The Commission's work has never been more critical, and this expansion ensures it has the voices, perspectives, and capacity to meet the moment.

Conclusion

HB1877 HD1 is a straightforward, common-sense measure that strengthens an important body without significant fiscal impact. It reflects the legislature's ongoing commitment to ensuring that all residents of Hawai‘i—regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity—are heard, respected, and protected.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB1877 HD1.

Mahalo nui for your dedication to equity and justice for all members of our community.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Ryan K Gomes
Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 10:54:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Drake	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose reserving a commission seat based solely on the age of the appointee. Seats should be assigned/elected based on merit and not based on age. In addition, the committee currently has 8 seats, 1 of which is vacant, and doesn't show any real need for an expansion to 11 seats.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Chair David A. Tarnas Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe

Committee members

Representatives: Della Au Belatti, Jackson D. Sayama, Elle Cochran, Gregg Takayama
Mark J. Hashem, Diamond Garcia, Kirstin Kahaloa, Garner M. Shimizu

HB1877 HD1 Expands the membership of the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus Commission from eight voting members to eleven ...

My name is Rita Kama-Kimura, please note that I do not see the reasoning or necessity behind increasing the commission members from the current 8 to 11.

Going from (8) eight to (11) eleven, is based on what? I believe each county, is currently represented, so I do not see a need to increase the membership.

I can't help but notice that the critical Hawaii State Office of Election is able to function with 9 members!

As noted by a previous testimony, this committee is ..."dedicated to building queer political power" I certainly hope this is not what it's about.

Although I believe they have the right to choose their lifestyle, it should not be pushed on those that have a different point of view.

So again, I urge you to stop this bill from going any further ...

Respectfully,
Rita Kama-Kimura

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 1:50:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Representatives

I support the expansion of the number of Board members to 11. It is important to include a member who is under age 29. I urge you to support HB 1877.

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 10:02:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kay Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee,

I am testifying in strong support of HB1877 HD1. The LGBT+ community is highly diverse and includes individuals of varied experiences. Expanding the commission allows for a greater representation of the lived experiences of members of the LGBT+ community. The addition of a seat reserved for a member 29 years or younger is especially important. As a queer 20-something individual, my experiences are fundamentally different from those who were in their 20's a decade ago. I am sure this will be the same for the 20-somethings a decade from now. It is important to ensure that we also have representation as these decisions directly impact our futures.

Please pass HB1877 HD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:36:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support HB1877

Dana Keawe

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 7:59:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol England	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose---unnecessary growth of state bureaucracy

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 12:38:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Smart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1877 HD1.

There is no need to expand the membership of this Commission. Although it is supposed to represent a marginalized community, there are already several organizations that are in place to speak up for those included in this Commissions LGBTQ+ constituents that include the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, HOKU PAC's Hawaii's political action committee, PRIDE at Work, Hawaii, Rainbow Family 808, ACLU Hawaii, Indivisible Oahu, Hope for Hawaii (Hawaii Organization for Progress and Equity), The Commission on the Status of Women (no conservative women allowed), PFLAG, and I could go on and on.

This commission represents a small percentage of our residents. This Commission is not about equity or equality of expression. It has submitted testimony against people of faith assembling and praying in public spaces even though our Constitution protects those actions (e.x. HB 1875 H.D. 1).

This Commission is essentially a funded arm of the Democratic Party.

I object to my tax dollars funding the expansion of this Commission. If my support were desired, you would decommission this commission. It is not needed and is a waste of tax payer dollars. As previously stated, there are already a plethora of organization in the public square promoting their issues.

At a time when we have lost billions in federal funds and our Governor is delaying/eliminating the already approved tax cuts, and looking to increase other taxes, we should not be authorizing increases in a completely duplicative organization.

Do not pass HB1877 HD1.

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/4/2026 8:47:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mecca Monson-Gere	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members,

How amazing that there is LGBTQ+ representation at the state level, especially at this time when DEI voices are being stifled.

Generally speaking, the Hawaii State LGBTQ+ Commission is an essential advisory body to the Governor and the State Legislature, ensuring that the unique perspectives, needs, and challenges of the LGBTQ+ community are directly integrated into state policy and resource allocation.

This Commission is well attended and always makes a quorum, further showing it is a vital part of the community and is doing great work. Expanding seats to hear from more of the LGBTQ community ensures all facets of it are heard and appreciated.

Thus, I applaud the intent of this bill and ask for your support to diversify the commission even further, encouraging wider participation.

Mahalo,

Mecca Monson-Gere

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/4/2026 9:41:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Pollak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: STRONG SUPPORT for Expanding the Hawai‘i State LGBTQ+ Commission (HB1877)

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Pollak, and I am a resident of Kaua‘i. I strongly support expanding the Hawai‘i State LGBTQ+ Commission.

Hawai‘i’s LGBTQ+ community spans every generation, ethnicity, and island. A larger, more representative commission will provide thoughtful, intersectional guidance to policymakers and better address the evolving challenges facing our queer and māhū residents.

Expansion is essential to:

- **Elevate Youth Voices:** Reserving seats for people under 29 ensures meaningful input from the next generation.
- **Address Data Gaps:** Strengthening the commission’s capacity will help identify and combat discrimination and violence in housing, healthcare, and employment.
- **Strengthen Cultural Responsiveness:** Centering māhū and MVPFAFF+ perspectives ensures culturally grounded solutions.
- **Bridge Government and Community:** A more robust commission reinforces collaboration and accountability.

While Hawai‘i has led (and hopefully continues to) on LGBTQ+ protections, we must continue building infrastructure that ensures safety, dignity, and equality for all.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB1877.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and commitment to a just Hawai‘i for all.

Sincerely,
Lisa Pollak

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/4/2026 11:07:43 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Nakanelua	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for allowing me to share testimony here. I oppose HB1877 HD1.

The bill does not identify that eight voting members are insufficient or that any benefit to the people of Hawaii would result in adding four more members. Nothing documents a performance gap or justifies this large expansion.

The LGBTQ+ community that this commission represents already has an abundance organizations that speak up for those included in this commission's constituents, including The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, HOKU PAC's Hawaii's political action committee, PRIDE at Work, Hawaii, Rainbow Family 808, ACLU Hawaii, Indivisible Oahu, Hope for Hawaii (Hawaii Organization for Progress and Equity), The Commission on the Status of Women (*no conservative women* allowed), PFLAG, and more. All representing a minute percentage of our population.

It's seems that what is really happening here is an effort to grow the political power of this advisory commission by adding more bodies.

Currently, all voting members are gubernatorial appointments.

This bill inserts direct legislative branch appointments by Speaker of the House and Senate President - both of the Democratic Party - and in turn raises serious concerns over separation-of-powers.

It appears this group is merely seeking increased political influence by increasing their numbers by 50%, so that they can advocate in a most partisan way for bills and policies that their small groups wants to see passed.

I believe that this commission is not FOR equity or equality of expression, but rather AGAINST people and groups who do not "ally" with them. This is specifically evidenced by the fact that it has submitted testimony against people of faith assembling and praying in public spaces, despite constitutional protections.

We can assume that expansion of this Commission will increase administrative support needs, require additional staff coordination, travel reimbursement, meeting logistics costs... all at a time when Hawaii faces a worsening housing affordability crisis, public safety concerns and rising homelessness.

In our islands, we value balance. We value humility in governance. When we grow government bodies, even in small ways, we should do so only when there is a clear benefit to all of our people.

Expansion of this sort should not happen simply because you have the power to push it through.

Mahalo,
Laura Nakanelua

HB-1877-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/4/2026 12:44:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna P. Van Osdol	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am submitting my testimony late, and I apologize. I do not support this bill for the following reasons:

1. This measure benefits only a small percentage of Hawaii's population and not the majority of our citizens.
2. Adding several new members to the LGBTQ commission really has no purpose.
3. I am in opposition to my tax dollars going to fund causes that I do not believe in.

For the three reasons above, once again, I do not support this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.