



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



Advocating for the Hawai'i LGBTQIA+ Community

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March 25, 2026

House's Committee on Public Safety
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Friday, March 27, 2026, at 10:00 AM

RE: **Strong Support for House Concurrent Resolution 4/HR 3**

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and fellow committee members,

I am writing in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 4/HR3 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 House Concurrent Resolution 4, urging the Governor to take action to protect transgender members of the Hawai'i National Guard from discriminatory federal policy and to permit qualified transgender service members to continue their service.

HCR 4 responds to a deeply troubling federal policy that unjustly targets transgender service members for exclusion. As outlined in the resolution, the reinstated ban under Executive Order 14163 bars individuals with a history of gender dysphoria or those who have undergone medical transition from serving, and halts access to medically necessary, gender-affirming care for active-duty personnel. This policy is not rooted in readiness or effectiveness. Rather, it is rooted in discrimination.

Transgender service members have served honorably, competently, and courageously in every branch of the United States military, including within the Hawai'i National Guard. They meet the same rigorous standards, complete the same missions, and demonstrate the same commitment to duty as their peers. Removing them from service does not strengthen our military. Instead, this weakens the system. The forced discharge of trained and experienced personnel undermines force readiness, disrupts unit cohesion, and wastes valuable resources already invested in their training and leadership.

Moreover, the denial of medically necessary care to transgender service members is not only harmful but inconsistent with widely accepted medical standards. Such actions place service members' health and well-being at risk and send a dangerous message that some who are willing to serve and sacrifice are less worthy of protection and dignity.

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 HCR 4/HR 3

Hawai'i has long stood as a leader in advancing equality and inclusion. Our values are grounded in respect, dignity, and the recognition of the inherent worth of every individual. The discriminatory federal policy outlined in HCR 4 is fundamentally at odds with these values and with Hawai'i's commitment to supporting all who serve our communities and our country.

The Commission respectfully requests an amendment to HCR 4 to expand the resolved clause from “protect transgender members” to “protect māhū, transgender, and gender non-conforming members.” This amendment is necessary to ensure that the resolution fully reflects Hawai'i's cultural context and inclusivity. Māhū individuals have long held recognized and respected roles within Hawaiian society and may also be serving within the Hawai'i National Guard. Importantly, māhū and gender non-conforming identities are distinct from transgender identities, and failing to name them risks exclusion. Expanding the language affirms that all who fall outside the Western, false notion of gender as strictly binary, rather than a spectrum, particularly those rooted in Native Hawaiian cultural identity, are equally worthy of protection from discriminatory policies.

The State of Hawai'i has both the moral responsibility and the authority to act. By adopting HCR 4, the Legislature affirms that transgender and, with amendment, māhū and gender non-conforming members of the Hawai'i National Guard are valued, respected, and deserving of protection. It sends a clear message that Hawai'i will not stand idly by while members of our community are targeted by unjust policies.

We respectfully urge the Legislature to pass HCR 4 with this requested amendment and call upon the Governor to take all appropriate actions to safeguard the rights, health, and service of all impacted Guard members.

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

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.



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

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

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Hearing: Friday, March 27, 2026, at 10:00 AM

RE: Strong Support for House Concurrent Resolution 4/HR 3

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, 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 House Concurrent Resolution 4 and House Resolution 3. This measure is a necessary and urgent response to a federal policy that targets transgender service members for exclusion and strips them of the ability to serve their country with honor.

HCR 4/HR 3 is fundamentally about **leadership**. When the federal government advances policies rooted in discrimination, states must decide whether to remain silent or to stand firmly on their values. Hawai'i has never been a place that turns its back on its people. This resolution affirms that we will not allow members of our own National Guard—our neighbors, coworkers, and family members—to be pushed out simply for being who they are.

The current federal ban is not only unjust—it is reckless. It removes qualified, trained individuals from critical roles, disrupts readiness, and damages morale. It replaces merit with ideology and service with stigma. At a time when our state depends on the Hawai'i National Guard for disaster response, public safety, and community support, we cannot afford to lose dedicated personnel to discriminatory policies.

HOKU PAC also recognizes the broader implications of this policy. Today it targets transgender service members; tomorrow it could be used to justify discrimination against others. Allowing this precedent to stand without challenge puts all marginalized communities at greater risk. HCR 4 is a clear line in the sand: Hawai'i rejects discrimination in all its forms.

This resolution is also about **dignity and belonging**. Every person willing to serve should be judged by their ability, their commitment, and their character—not by their gender identity. Transgender individuals have always been part of our communities and our history. Their service is not new, and their contributions are not optional—they are essential.

HOKU PAC further **urges the Legislature to strengthen HCR 4 by expanding its language** to explicitly include māhū and gender non-conforming individuals. Hawai'i's identity is deeply rooted in cultural understanding of gender that extends beyond Western binaries. Recognizing

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HOKU PAC Testimony in strong support of HCR4/HR3

māhū and gender non-conforming service members ensures that the resolution reflects the full diversity of those who serve and protects individuals whose identities are culturally significant and distinct.

At its core, HCR 4/HR 3 asks a simple question: will Hawai'i stand up for its people when it matters? The answer must be yes. By advancing this resolution, the Legislature sends a powerful message that discrimination has no place in our state and that all who serve are worthy of respect and protection.

HOKU PAC respectfully urges the passage of HCR 4/HR 3 and calls on the Governor to take meaningful, immediate action to defend the rights and service of all impacted members of the Hawai'i National Guard.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support.



March 25, 2026

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Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Friday, March 27, 2026, at 10:00 AM

RE: Strong Support for House Concurrent Resolution 4/HR 3

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, 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 HCR 4/HR 3**.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i proudly submits this testimony in **strong support** of House Concurrent Resolution 4, urging the Governor to take action to protect transgender members of the Hawai'i National Guard from discriminatory federal policy and to ensure that qualified service members can continue their service.

As an organization representing LGBTQ+ union members and allies across Hawai'i, we view this issue through the lens of both **civil rights and workers' rights**. Service members are workers—highly trained, highly disciplined public servants—who deserve dignity, fairness, and equal opportunity in their workplace. The federal policy outlined in HCR 4 is a direct attack on those principles.

The reinstated ban on transgender service members is not about readiness or qualifications—it is about exclusion. It removes capable individuals from their jobs, interrupts careers, strips benefits, and creates instability for working families. Many of these service members have invested years into their training and service. Forcing them out wastes taxpayer resources and undermines workforce stability within the Hawai'i National Guard.

From a labor perspective, this policy is especially harmful. It sets a dangerous precedent that workers can be excluded not for their performance, but for who they are. That is fundamentally incompatible with the values we fight for in unions every day—fair treatment, equal protection, and respect on the job. No worker should fear termination or loss of healthcare because of their gender identity.

Additionally, the suspension of gender-affirming healthcare for active-duty members represents a denial of medically necessary care. Access to healthcare is a core workplace issue. When the

Pride at Work – Hawai'i's Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of Re: HCR4/HR3

federal government interferes with that access, it is not only discriminatory—it is an erosion of basic labor standards and human dignity.

Hawai'i's workforce is diverse, and our strength comes from that diversity. Transgender workers—including those serving in the National Guard—are part of our unions, our communities, and our families. They contribute every day to the safety, resilience, and well-being of our state. Policies that target them weaken not only our military readiness, but our broader labor force.

Pride at Work – Hawai'i also **supports expanding the language of HCR 4** to explicitly include māhū and gender non-conforming individuals. Hawai'i's cultural context demands that we recognize and respect identities that extend beyond Western frameworks. Ensuring inclusive language strengthens the resolution and affirms that all workers—especially those rooted in Native Hawaiian traditions—are protected and valued.

HCR 4 is an opportunity for Hawai'i to stand up for its workers, its values, and its commitment to equality. While federal policy may seek to exclude, Hawai'i can and must lead with inclusion. We respectfully urge the Legislature to adopt HCR 4, with inclusive amendments, and call upon the Governor to take decisive action to protect all impacted members of the Hawai'i National Guard.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

In Solidarity,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai'i](#)



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HR3 / HCR4
Committee on Public Safety (PBS)
Friday, March 27, 2026
10:00 AM

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

My name is Abby Simmons, Chair of the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i. I am writing in **strong support of HR3 / HCR4**, urging the Governor to protect transgender members of the Hawai'i National Guard from discriminatory federal policy and to allow qualified transgender service members to continue their service.

This resolution comes at a critical moment. As outlined in the measure, federal policy now excludes transgender service members, undermining readiness, cohesion, and fairness. This policy also stands in contrast to Hawai'i's values, which are rooted in dignity, inclusion, and respect for all people.

This issue is not only about civil rights, but also about readiness, economics, and the future of our state. We know that approximately 22 members of the Hawai'i National Guard are impacted. That is not an abstract number. That is the equivalent of half an infantry platoon, or an entire military police platoon. It represents experienced leaders - often non-commissioned officers and officers - who are disproportionately among the top-performing members of their units.

Losing these service members is not just a personnel issue, it is a leadership loss. It is the loss of institutional knowledge, training, and experience that cannot be quickly replaced. It means fewer experienced leaders available during natural disasters, deployments, and everyday operations that keep our communities safe.

It is also an economic issue. National Guard service often provides essential income that allows individuals and families to afford to remain in Hawai'i. Losing that income can force people to leave the islands. That is 22 households at risk of displacement, 22 contributors to our local economy, our workforce, and our communities.

Importantly, there is no additional cost to the State of Hawai'i to allow these service members to continue serving. The Hawai'i National Guard is not responsible for covering gender-affirming care, nor does it bear additional healthcare costs in this context. There is no fiscal justification for exclusion, only harm.

There is also a broader cost: brain drain. These are highly trained individuals, many in leadership roles, whose departure would represent a significant loss of talent and capacity for our state.

For LGBTQ+ people, and especially for transgender and māhū individuals, this resolution carries deep meaning. Hawai'i has a long and proud history of recognizing gender diversity. Supporting

Testimony in Strong Support of HR3/HCR4

transgender service members is not only consistent with our modern values, it is aligned with our cultural history and our commitment to inclusion and self-determination.

Hawai'i has challenged discriminatory federal policies before, and we have done so in coalition with other states to stand on the side of equality and justice. This resolution continues that legacy.

HR3 / HCR4 sends a clear message: that Hawai'i values those who serve, that leadership and ability - not gender identity - define readiness, and that no one should be forced out of service because of who they are.

For these reasons, Stonewall Caucus respectfully urges the Committee to adopt HR3 / HCR4.

Mahalo for hearing the resolution and for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Abby Simmons (she/her)

Chair

Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 8:08:07 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Nelson	Trans Military Hub	Support	In Person

Comments:

I support the resolution to allow the Governor to retain troops and protect against discriminatory practices.

The trans ban does damage by artificially shrinking the recruiting pool during a recruiting crisis.

“An estimated 1.4 million American adults are transgender. Of these individuals, 205,850 are of prime recruiting age, 18 to 24. Assuming enlistment at a rate proportionate to population representation (0.7 percent), 1,235 transgender individuals enter military service each year out of a total of 176,505 active duty accessions. This accession calculation is conservative, because demographic research reveals that transgender Americans are twice as likely to serve in the military despite policies designed to exclude them”**

It damages the reputation of the military by giving it the image of intolerance, hurts unit cohesion by encouraging harassment & undermining trust, and harms morale by stigmatizing transgender soldiers as a mission threat. More clearly related to the Trans Ban official memorandum, the ban denies proper medical care and discourages, or even punishes, honest conversation. Many trans service members don't realize they're trans or come out to themselves until they've enlisted or commissioned. Being raised a tomboy, I discovered the term doesn't suit me. I didn't have a word for people like me until I joined the military and experienced life.

This ban outsts readily trained service members who have already signed on for x amount of years in a contract they are willing to otherwise fulfill. Kicking them out is wasting tax payer dollars by having to bring up replacements or retrain and cover down from already tasked troops. It isn't practical financially.

Different from Active Duty or the Reserves, the National Guard is owned by the State and can be activated for state emergencies and disasters. Many service members join to help their neighbors and families this way. The opportunity to serve shouldn't be denied on the basis of perceived sex.

Allow the Governor to retain troops as needed. These are our neighbors and our family members who all volunteered to help us. During the first ban, we saw several states retain trans troops. Now it's our turn to do the right thing.

Kindly vote yes or clearly state your reservations.

**Arthur, D. C., Pollock, G., Steinman, A. M., Frank, N., Mazur, D. H., & Belkin, A. (2020, November). DoD's Transgender Ban Has Harmed Military Readiness. San Francisco; Palm Center.

With Aloha,

Robin Nelson

Army Veteran

TMH



TMH, 501(c)(4)
March 25, 2026

Re: Support for HR3 & HCR4 – URGING THE GOVERNOR TO TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT TRANSGENDER MEMBERS OF THE HAWAI‘I NATIONAL GUARD FROM DISCRIMINATORY FEDERAL POLICY AND PERMIT QUALIFIED TRANSGENDER SERVICE MEMBERS TO CONTINUE THEIR SERVICE

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Committee Members,

My name is Catherine Nelson. I am the founder & director of the Transgender Military Hub (TMH) & am writing in support of HR3/HCR4 on behalf of the organization.

For some background: TMH was founded in January 2020 as a community network for transgender servicemembers, veterans, allies, and family members. Since our inception, we’ve expanded to have a nationwide presence. We host chapters across the nation (with a significant population in Hawaii), and even a few abroad for overseas veterans & servicemembers. In our 6+ years of organizational existence, we’ve established critical community-based systems to focus on: mental health; social safety nets; advocacy; access to & continuity of care; and access to information. In the wake of the second Trump Administration and its policies targeting our key demographics, we have embraced our lack of UCMJ (Uniform Code of Military Justice) restrictions and are stepping into the spotlight to ensure that our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen & women, Marines, Coastguardsmen & women, Guardians, and Veterans are taken care of in the way that they deserve.

In the work that I do, I talk with dozens of trans servicemembers, veterans, and their families. At every level, in every corner of the country, the military trans ban imposed by the Trump administration has created lasting negative impacts. The affected servicemembers, their families, and their units all feel the ripple effect. That brings us to today’s topic. A resolution urging the Governor to protect current trans servicemembers in the Hawai‘i National Guard (HING).

This measure would affect about 22 members of the HING. To put that in perspective, that’s the same number as the daily estimates of veterans who die by suicide. That’s the equivalent of all US military combat casualties in Afghanistan over a given two month period. It’s more than we’ve lost in the Iran conflict. I use these statistics, not for the shock value, but because from a unit’s perspective, a loss is a loss. Whether it’s in combat or because of the trans ban, you still see a gap left in skill, manpower, leadership, unit cohesion, and morale. In the case of trans servicemembers, it’s a sizable gap, too. We’re consistently rated in the top 10% of our peers and tend to be Commissioned Officers (i.e. Lieutenants, Captains, Majors, etc.), Warrant Officers (widely considered to be extremely competent subject matter experts) or Non-Commissioned Officers (i.e. Corporals and Sergeants). This resolution would seek to protect that. 22 units would no longer lose a key leader and/or subject matter expert. That’s at least several hundred HING members that no longer lose their platoon leader, commander, squad leader, or personnel manager in an overworked section. These are servicemembers who are passionate leaders and are effective at what they do. Imagine that leadership in a natural disaster, a hostile environment, or “All Soldiers are entitled to excellent leadership”: Why deny that opportunity just because of the leader’s gender?

From an economic perspective, it’s more than just the 22 individuals who stand to benefit from this resolution, as well. For starters, the resolution costs nothing to the taxpayer. By default, the National Guard doesn’t pay for

healthcare in the same way that it does for active duty. For the most part, National Guard personnel go to civilian clinics & providers. The greatest benefits to the resolution, however, are derived from the protection against opportunity costs. Failure to pass this resolution opens up a risk of significant economic losses that ripple across communities. For many, the pay from HING service is enough to supplement household income & be able to afford to stay in Hawai'i. The majority of the HING is also part time & employed in civilian jobs. If these 22 households lose that income source, it may well mean leaving the islands. With that, we see higher unemployment in the state and brain drain away from the islands. If they stay, they continue to put money back into the local economy and help our businesses. Additionally, with the invested taxpayer costs to train these servicemembers and the potential costs of replacing them, it starts to add up to a six-to-seven figure opportunity cost; with years in the red before breaking even.

Hawai'i was one of several states that stood as a coalition in opposition to the first Trump ban, almost a decade ago. Hawai'i stood for its traditions of aloha, compassion, and inclusion of trans/māhū identities. The time has come once again to do so.

It is for these reasons that I urge you to vote in support of HR3 & HCR4. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Catherine Nelson
Veteran – US Army
Founder/Director
TMH, 501(c)(4)
1411 Kapiolani Blvd. Ste. 1114 #861281, Honolulu, HI 96841
Email: admin.tmh@gmail.com



www.AlohaILHawaii.org

Mar 27, 2026

MISSION

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) dedicated to providing independent living programs and services for persons with disabilities in Hawaii.

We work together with the community and consumers to improve the quality of life through individual choices and access to services.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Roxanne U. Bolden

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Scott Suzuki
Sheila Castaneda
Jennifer Hartssock

The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair
House Committee on Public Safety
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: HR3 – Urging the Governor to Take Action to Protect Transgender Members of the Hawaii National Guard from Discriminatory Federal Policy and Permit Qualified Transgender Service Members to Continue their Service

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) is a cross-disability, statewide organization that supports disabled residents to live in the community of their choice. AILH strongly **supports the intent of HR3**, which urges the Governor to take action to protect transgender members of the Hawaii National Guard from discriminatory federal policy and to permit qualified transgender service members to continue their service. Discriminatory policies that target transgender people, including bans related to gender dysphoria or gender-affirming care, harm not only individual service members but also their families, many of whom include disabled people, kupuna, and others who rely on them for financial and caregiving support.

From an Independent Living perspective, discrimination against transgender service members undermines the civil rights, autonomy, and mental health of a community that already faces high rates of violence, stigma, and barriers to health care, employment, and housing. HR3 recognizes that this ban is inherently discriminatory and inconsistent with Hawaii's values and needs, and that it wastes resources by purging members who are disabled, who acquire disabilities in service, or who care for disabled family members, because loss of career, health care, and affirming



www.AlohaILHawaii.org

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Member

Scott Suzuki
Sheila Castaneda
Jennifer Hartssock

support can directly impact their ability to live independently in the community.

AILH respectfully urges the Legislature and the Governor to ensure that any actions taken to protect transgender members of the Hawaii National Guard are trauma-informed, inclusive, and supportive of access to comprehensive, gender-affirming and disability-related health care. We further encourage collaboration with cross-disability, LGBTQIA+, and veteran-serving organizations to ensure that policies, benefits, and complaint mechanisms are safe, accessible, and responsive to the lived experience of transgender Guard members and their families. By affirming the right of qualified transgender service members to continue their service free from discrimination, Hawaii strengthens both its National Guard and the broader community it is sworn to protect.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Roxanne Bolden

Executive Director

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 9:10:50 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara H Sutton	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

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

I want to start by stating that I'm submitting testimony in my personal capacity as a resident affected by the Red Hill water contamination.

I support this resolution urging the State of Hawai'i to protect transgender members of the Hawai'i National Guard and allow qualified service members to continue their service.

As a mother of adult children, I often think about the impact of whether our institutions treat people with dignity and fairness. Everyone here knows someone who is able to glide through the world aligning easily with society's expectations, and everyone here knows someone who does not for whatever reason. I think we would all agree that every person deserves dignity and fairness. I argue that every person also deserves the opportunity to serve their community in the armed forces if they are capable, committed, and qualified.

Policies that remove individuals from service because of who they are do not strengthen readiness or cohesion. They simply push out people who have already demonstrated their capacity and willingness to serve.

Hawai'i has long valued fairness, respect, and community. These values shape how we live together and how we care for one another across differences. Trust in our institutions is strengthened when people know they will be treated with dignity and evaluated based on their ability to serve. This resolution reflects those values by affirming that capable and committed individuals should not be excluded simply for living authentically.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Tara Sutton

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 10:31:04 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard S Velasquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please protect our local service members who are serving their country and state

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 12:28:43 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HCR4
Tina Marie Even

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 2:32:22 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

It is essential for the State to protect ALL Hawai'i citizens and their rights to serve in the National Guard. As long as a NG member meets qualifications, they should be able to serve, especially since the NG's focus is LOCAL needs.

I urge you to support thus HCR. Mahalo for allowing me to share my thoughts.

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 7:12:50 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vesper D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

LGBTQ+ individuals have always been integral to Hawai'i, capable of serving and protecting the community before statehood. This instance is no different, as the basis of sex and orientation compromises a qualified member's ability to safeguard our communities. Opposing this bill will only create major loss in operational readiness and financial strain to replace fully capable members for the Hawai'i National Guard, especially during a time of heightened security posture against domestic and international threats. You are potentially endangering the entire State of Hawaii due to trivial and quite frankly, discriminatory, practices that will benefit no one besides those looking to exploit our vulnerabilities. It is imperative to protect the rights of these individuals who would gladly do the same for us.

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 7:26:28 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Sutton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HR3/HCR4.

My name is Ben, I am a 23 year old transgender man. I am testifying in support of HR3 / HCR4.

Action must be taken to protect transgender members of the Hawai'i national guard from discriminatory federal policy and permit qualified transgender service members to continue their service. It is not unreasonable to assume DoD officials will interpret policies like this in as unfavorable ways as possible. Especially in our current political climate where people like me are made a political hot topic it is exhausting to see my identity debated constantly. The removal of humanity from these arbitrary labels which have no weight on performance in any other aspects of life is extremely dehumanizing. These are people with lives, we need jobs, healthcare and hope for the future.

For a transgender person to choose to join the hawai'i national guard, despite the discrimination already present, despite the politicalization of your identity and life, and despite knowing they are swearing to protect those who reject their existence based on bigoted and close minded "facts" is a noble choice.

It is downright disrespectful this is even in question. This bill should go through.

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/25/2026 9:23:54 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sebastian Kirby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HR3/HCR4.

My name is Sebastian I am a 22 year old Nonbinary person. I am testifying in support of HR3 / HCR4.

Action must be taken to protect transgender members of the Hawai'i national guard from discriminatory federal policy and permit qualified transgender service members to continue their service. It is not unreasonable to assume DoD officials will interpret policies like this in as unfavorable ways as possible. Especially in our current political climate where people like me are made a political hot topic it is exhausting to see my identity debated constantly. The removal of humanity from these arbitrary labels which have no weight on performance in any other aspects of life is extremely dehumanizing. These are people with lives, we need jobs, healthcare and hope for the future.

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HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/26/2026 9:33:13 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvia Romm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of HCR4. I am a physician on Oahu who has provided care to transgender patients, and I submit this testimony as both a healthcare provider and a community member who believes deeply in the dignity and rights of all people in Hawaii.

Transgender service members have demonstrated their capability, courage, and commitment to our state and nation. Federal policies that exclude them from service are discriminatory and cause real harm to real people — including Hawaii residents who have chosen to serve. As a clinician, I see firsthand the toll that exclusion and dehumanization takes on transgender individuals. Policies like these do not reflect medical evidence; they reflect stigma.

Hawaii has long led on civil rights, and this resolution is an opportunity to reaffirm that commitment. I urge the Governor to use the full authority of his office to protect qualified transgender Guard members from discriminatory federal policy and ensure they can continue to serve. HCR4 sends a clear message that Hawaii values all who are willing to defend our communities.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your service to our state.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Romm, MD
Kailua, Oahu

HCR-4

Submitted on: 3/26/2026 4:18:05 PM
Testimony for PBS on 3/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

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Date & Time
Mar 27, 2026, 9:15 am

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shanda Brack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair and Members of the Committee Position: Strong Support

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Shanda Brack, and I am a primary care nurse practitioner with experience in hormone therapy, including care for transgender patients. I am writing in strong support of HCR 4.

This resolution recognizes an important and urgent issue: qualified transgender service members are being placed at risk of losing their ability to serve—not because of performance, readiness, or commitment, but because of discriminatory policy. HCR 4 appropriately urges the State of Hawai‘i to take action to protect these individuals and ensure they are treated with fairness and dignity.

From a healthcare perspective, there is no credible medical basis to categorically exclude transgender individuals from service. Major medical organizations recognize that gender-affirming care, including hormone therapy, is safe, effective, and supports overall health and functioning. In fact, stability in care is associated with improved mental health outcomes, resilience, and readiness.

It is also important to recognize that many service members take daily medications, including hormonal medications such as thyroid replacement therapy or contraception. The use of these medications does not reduce fitness for duty or readiness to serve. Targeting transgender service members for discontinuation of hormone therapy is inconsistent with both military practice and medical consensus. It does not enhance readiness or unit cohesion, and instead serves only to single out a specific group for unequal treatment.

Disrupting or denying medically necessary care—whether directly or indirectly through exclusion from service—creates harm. It increases risk for depression, anxiety, and disengagement from care. These are not abstract concerns; they are well-documented consequences of policy decisions.

From a workforce perspective, Hawai‘i cannot afford to lose trained, qualified members of the National Guard. These individuals have already demonstrated their ability to meet standards and serve their communities. Removing them weakens readiness rather than strengthening it.

Hawai‘i has long upheld values of inclusion, respect, and mālama for all members of our community. Supporting HCR 4 is consistent with those values and sends a clear message that discrimination has no place in our state institutions.

I respectfully urge you to adopt HCR 4.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Shanda Brack