



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Statement of
The Honorable Neil Abercrombie
First Congressional District of Hawaii
February 24, 2009
To The
Hawaii State Senate Committee on
Judiciary and Government Operations
Regarding
HB 444 HD1

Chairman Taniguchi & Vice Chair Takamine, I appreciate the opportunity to share my views on HB 444, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. I support this measure and urge its prompt passage.

The most basic reasoning behind my support is that this bill offers homosexuals equality under the law and ensures basic human rights. When we deny law-abiding citizens the rights and privileges offered to citizens based on an innate quality, we are committing discrimination. The gay and lesbian citizens of Hawaii are good citizens; they pay taxes, and follow laws. It is shameful that while they must give their equal share to the government, the government will not give them equal protection.

Hawaii is one of the most diverse places on Earth. We produced the nation's first minority President. We elected the first woman of color to Congress. How can we allow discrimination to a population based on who they love? Hawaii should be a beacon for the rest of the nation, and be among the few states who offer equal rights to all its citizens.

Beyond the equal protection of the law, passing HB 444 would enhance Hawaii's image of aloha and acceptance of all people, and increase tourism to Hawaii. States that have passed civil union laws have experienced increased tourism as couples looking for civil unions arrive in these states. This increases revenues for our tourism industry, and in turn revenue for the State. This bill makes economic and moral sense.

The economic argument is supplemental in my view. The more important result of this bill would be the granting of full rights to all Hawaii's citizens. I believe that you have a

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chance to change a policy in Hawaii that has created two classes of citizens: those with full rights and privileges and those without.

HB 444 ensures that Hawaii extends equal rights to all of its citizens. I believe it is the right thing to do and urge the committee to pass the bill.



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JAMES R. AIONA, JR.
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 444, H.D. 1
A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO
CIVIL UNIONS**

**James R. Aiona, Jr., Lieutenant Governor
Office of the Lieutenant Governor**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 A.M., State Capitol Auditorium**

Good Morning Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. The Office of the Lieutenant Governor strongly opposes the passage of H.B. No. 444, H.D. 1.

Throughout the 1990's, our community engaged in an emotional, decade-long debate over the legalization of same-sex marriage. The Legislature, for its part, had amended HRS §572-1 to clarify that marriage "*shall be only between a man and a woman[.]*" The Legislature also passed a Reciprocal Beneficiary law where it expressly found that "*the people of Hawaii choose to preserve the tradition of marriage as a unique social institution based upon the committed union of one man and one woman.*"

Ultimately, the decision was put to the public in the form of a constitutional amendment. On November 3, 1998, the people of Hawai'i overwhelmingly made their voice clear on this matter and decided that "the Legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples." Hi. Const. 1-23.

H.B. No. 444, H.D. 1 now attempts to circumvent the will of the people by authorizing the equivalent to same sex marriage, albeit under a different name. That is, despite not referring to a civil union as "marriage," this bill would confer all of the rights, duties, and obligations of marriage to participants in a civil union by declaring that "*[p]artners to a civil union . . . shall have all the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law, whether derived from statutes, administrative rules, court decisions, the common law, or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a marriage[.]*"

Furthermore, Section 3 of H.B. No. 444, H.D. 1 provides:

Except for part I of chapter 572, every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage", or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions", including:

- (1) Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to the status of partners in a civil union;*
- (2) Every reference to "husband", "wife", or "spouse" shall apply equally to a partner in a civil union; and*
- (3) Every reference to marital status, including without limitation provisions pertaining to parties and procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution, which shall apply equally and as necessary to civil unions and to partners in a civil union.*

In view of the above, this bill clearly seeks to modify all Hawai'i law so that the terms "marriage" and "civil union" are synonymous. If the public is on record as being overwhelmingly opposed to the concept of same sex marriage, how could one conclude that they would support its 'identical twin' just because it goes by a different name? Under this bill, all of the above would occur without the public ever having an opportunity to vote on the legalization of civil unions.

Hawai`i's Reciprocal Beneficiary law (HRS §572C) already confers significant benefits to same sex couples, including but not limited to: health care coverage; hospital visitation privileges; property rights (including tenancy in the entirety rights); worker's compensation; State employee retirement beneficiary rights; and automobile insurance coverage. If there are further rights and privileges the Legislature wishes to convey to same sex couples, we believe it should be accomplished through modification of the existing Reciprocal Beneficiary law, not through the creation of civil unions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

P. O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I submit testimony in my capacity as a Member of the Hawai'i State Board of Education because the legislation of equality, or discrimination, is a public policy issue that directly impacts our students, employees and their families.

The Board of Education has a Vision Statement for our Public Schools. One crucial element of this Vision Statement is that *all students become contributing members of society*. To this end, the Board has promulgated Administrative Rules and Policies that mandate the equal treatment of all students. One such policy, titled Philosophy of Education, explains the connection between education, equality and a democratic society:

The Board of Education believes that a democratic society is dependent upon the free, full growth of individuals who will participate in the creation and development of the institutions in that society. The institution of government in *this society is founded on a secular base*, which allows and encourages the development of a pluralistic society that contains many cultures within that society. . . . Students shall have an equal educational opportunity to enroll in programs regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities, or national origin. (Emphasis added.)

Let me illustrate the impact of discrimination on the school community using another set of factors. Imagine if the Board came up with a policy like: "Japanese are not allowed to participate in any athletic program. No matter how fast you run, or how hard you are willing to practice, if you are Japanese - you cannot play a sport."

We could imagine the devastating impact this exclusionary policy would have on Japanese students who dream of playing football, basketball, or baseball. However, this policy would be equally demoralizing to *all* Japanese students, Japanese employees, their families and friends. Regardless of the intent behind such a policy, no one would deny that it would send a clear message to the entire school community that something is "wrong" with Japanese people.

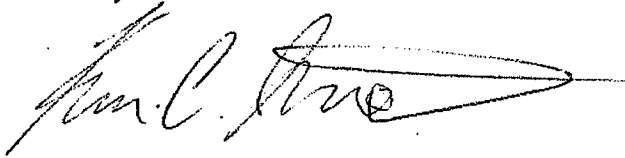
Likewise our state laws excluding gays and lesbians from civil marriage, is sending a similar message that there is something "wrong" with gay and lesbian people. This message is infiltrating our school community and hurting our students. Despite the Board's persistent prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, **13.3% of our high school students continue to report that they have been harassed because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual.**

To put this in context, **18.5% of our high school students seriously considered committing suicide.** (This is the highest rate in the nation.) It is undeniable that **the message that our discriminatory laws are promoting is taking a toll on our students' wellbeing.**

I am not only advocating for the safety and self-esteem of gay and lesbian students; we also need to recognize our heterosexual students, who may have gay parents or family members: What message have we been giving these students about their own families? Furthermore, we need to acknowledge the gay and lesbian employees of the Department and Public Library System: How do we expect our students to treat them with equal respect if our own State laws do not?

What are we, as elected officials, saying to our students, employees and their families when we perpetuate discriminatory laws out of passive ignorance or aggressive intolerance. In order for the Board to fully actualize its Vision Statement, that *all students become contributing members of society*, it is all of our responsibility to ensure that our society will value the contributions of *all* of its members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim C. Iwamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kim Coco Iwamoto, Esq.
Hawai'i State Board of Education Member



HAWAI`I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

February 24, 2009
State Capitol Auditorium 9:00 a.m.

To: The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

From: Coral Wong Pietsch, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai`i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.B. No. 444, HD1

The Hawai`i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over state laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state-funded services. The HCRC carries out the Hawai`i constitutional mandate that "no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights because of race, religion, sex or ancestry". Art. I, Sec. 5.

The HCRC supports H.B. No. 444, HD1 which establishes the statutory legal relationship of "civil union," conferring on those who enter into a civil union the statutory rights, benefits, and obligations attached to those who enter a marriage, as defined by HRS chapter 572. The proposed legislation will have profound, but not exclusive, impact on same-sex couples who are not allowed to marry under Hawai`i law.

Background

To our credit and consternation, Hawai`i is the first state to have seriously considered the issue of same-sex marriage, and more specifically, the denial of rights to same-sex couples that are recognized by law for married couples.

In *Baehr v. Lewin*, 74 Hawai`i 530 (1993), the Hawai`i Supreme Court held that denial of the benefits accorded to married couples to same-sex couples, who could not obtain a license to marry, was sex-based

discrimination in violation of constitutional guarantee of equal protection, absent the showing of a compelling state interest.

In reaction to the *Baehr* decision, the legislature enacted Act 217, Session Laws of 1994, which redefined marriage as being between a man and a woman. By Act 5, Session Laws of 1995, the legislature established the Commission on Sexual Orientation and the Law (Commission). The Commission was charged, in large part, with examining major legal and economic benefits extended to married opposite-sex couples but not to same-sex couples. On December 8, 1995, the Commission submitted its report to the legislature, identifying four hundred Hawai`i laws that bestow intangible, substantive, or general benefits on persons who are married, all of which are denied to same-sex couples who are statutorily barred from marriage.

In 1998, the State Constitution was amended to expressly empower the legislature to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples. Art. I, Sec. 23.

HCRC support for H.B. No. 444, HD1

H.B. No. 444, HD1 establishes the legal relationship of “civil union” and provides the couples in civil unions the same rights, benefits and obligations conferred on married couples, by applying all references to “marriage” in the HRS to “civil unions.”

While the legislature and the people of Hawai`i have acted to define marriage as being between a man and a woman, there remains a litany of rights and benefits identified by the 1995 Commission which are denied to same-sex couples. If not addressed legislatively, each of these can, and likely will be, the subject of litigation, each representing a precious right for an unpopular minority.

More importantly, the state has a fundamental interest in civil rights, non-discrimination, and equality. Article I, Section 5 of the State Constitution mandates that “no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights because of their race, religion, sex, or ancestry.” Consistent with this historical commitment, Hawai`i has expanded its civil rights laws to protect against many forms of invidious discrimination.

The legislature captured the spirit of this law and policy in the HCRC’s enabling statute, stating:

The legislature finds and declares that the practice of discrimination because of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, or disability in employment, housing, public accommodations, or access to services receiving state financial assistance is against public policy. HRS §368-1.

The legislature has extended protection against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation to the fair employment, housing, and public accommodations civil rights laws that the HCRC enforces. Enactment of H.B. No. 444, HD1 would extend current protections against marital status discrimination to include civil union status. The HCRC supports the establishment of the statutory legal relationship of civil union, and the application of statutory references to “marriage” equally to “civil unions.”

The HCRC supports H.B. No. 444, HD1 and urges your favorable consideration.



Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Co-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
February 22, 2009

Testimony of Professor Linda Hamilton Krieger,
on behalf of the Lambda Law Students Association,
of the University of Hawai'i,
William S. Richardson School of Law
In Support of House Bill 444, H.D. 1
Relating to Civil Unions

Honorable Chair Taniguchi, Co-Chair Takamine, and members of the Committee:

My name is Linda Hamilton Krieger, and I am a Professor of Law at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa, William S. Richardson School of Law. I testify today in my capacity as faculty advisor to the Law School's LAMBDA Law Students Association, an organization of the law school's lesbian, gay, and transgendered students and their friends. I come to speak for these remarkable young people, whose passion to serve the people of Hawai'i I see manifested every day, and whose human need for dignity, non-discrimination, and inclusion in the circle of moral community you now hold in your hands, as you deliberate about HB444.

In my testimony today, I hope to persuade you of two main points:

- (1) That it is the legislature's responsibility – not the responsibility of the electorate at large -- to protect the civil and human rights of Hawai'i's lesbian, gay, and transgendered people from discrimination by enacting civil union legislation; and
- (2) That the current system of reciprocal beneficiaries is constitutionally deficient, a fact which this legislature is constitutionally responsible for remedying.

Before I begin, however, let me tell you a little about the students for whom I speak today. Most are local – born and raised in the Islands – Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, South Pacific Islander, European, hapa. They give lie to the stereotype that gay rights are a “mainland haole issue.” Many are deeply religious people, whose faith plays a central role in their lives. Most of these students are already in deeply committed, loving, relationships, or aspire to be. All love their families and their communities, and deeply long to be accepted by them. All will be devastated if Hawaii once again denies them the basic human rights accorded to their heterosexual brothers, sisters and friends.

Over the past few weeks, we heard it said many times that, “the people should decide” about civil unions, or even that “the people have decided” and rejected civil unions, thus leaving the matter settled and out of your hands. But both of these contentions lack merit.

When I became a lawyer, I took a vow to uphold and defend the Constitution of my state and of the United States. Each of you took the same vow when you were sworn into the Senate. This is the same affirmation made by every state and federal judge when they take the bench. All of us – lawyers, legislators, and judges – have a co-equal responsibility to make legislative and judicial decisions in ways that uphold and defend constitutional rights and principles.

But, when an individual citizen registers to vote, he takes no such oath. The individual citizen can cast his vote for any reason at all, whether or not that reason is constitutionally permissible. No solemn attestation constrains an individual citizen from basing her vote on the most invidious and irrational prejudices against a class of her fellow citizens. Nothing constrains a voter from basing his vote on sectarian religious motives that, if they motivated judges or legislators, would effect an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

For this reason, the framers of the U.S. and Hawai`i constitutions wisely constructed a representative – not a popular or direct – system of democratic government. What you are doing now in moving forward this legislation -- taking testimony, rationally deliberating on the constitutional and public policy issues at stake, and then casting your vote in light of constitutional principles, reasoned deliberation, and input from colleagues and constituents, is not only permissible under the Hawai`i Constitution, it is precisely what that Constitution expects of you.

Hawai`i was wise, both originally when our state’s Constitution was drafted, and again in 1998, when it left the decision on same sex relationships to the legislature and not to the popular will. What do you think would have happened if, in 1954, it had been left to the popular will to decide whether segregated schools should be legal? What do you think would have happened in 1943 if Congress’ repeal of the Asian Exclusion Act had been put to a popular vote of the United States citizenry? Where the fundamental rights of a disparaged minority are at stake, the principle of “letting the people decide” can cloak the majoritarian tyranny. Representative legislatures, and judges exercising the power of judicial review, provide the checks and balances needed to avoid such undesirable ends.

The Hawai`i State Legislature should pass this civil union bill to remedy an ongoing, denial to lesbian, gay, and transgendered people – and their children -- of the equal protection of the laws relating to the many rights and privileges accorded heterosexual married couples and their children. As legislators, you have taken an oath to uphold and defend the Hawai`i State Constitution. The Supreme Court held in *Baehr v. Lewin* that laws that discriminate based on sexual orientation must be narrowly tailored to further a compelling state interest. Nothing about the 1998

Constitutional amendment invalidated this judicial holding, and as legislators, you are bound by the oath you took, to uphold and defend this constitutional principle.

No compelling state interest justifies withholding equal treatment under the tax or inheritance laws, or the laws regulating entitlement to pension and survivor benefits, or any of the approximately 1800 other legal rights and protections the appertaining to heterosexual marriage to lesbian and gay couples in committed relationships.

Let us bring this abstract principle to ground: If one of my lesbian, transgendered, or gay law students graduates, passes the bar, goes to work for an employer with a death benefit plan, and then dies, leaving a same sex partner and two children without a breadwinner, why should that partner, or those two children, be denied the pension to which a similarly situated heterosexual family would be entitled?

Sectarian religious convictions about the sanctity of heterosexual marriage most certainly could not provide such a compelling state interest, as this would violate the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 4 of the Hawai`i Constitution. As President Barack Obama stated:

Democracy demands that the religiously motivated translate their concerns into universal, rather than religion-specific, values. It requires that their proposals be subject to argument, and amenable to reason.

There exists no rational basis, subject to logically sound argument, amenable to reason, and based on a non-sectarian rationale, for denying to committed same-sex partners in solemnized relationships the rights that HB444 would accord. There exists no empirical evidence that civil unions – or same sex marriages for that matter – undermine heterosexual marriage, or lead to higher rates of divorce or domestic discord, or harm children. Let us be clear: homophobia harms children. Not being able to get medical insurance for your sick child because your partner's employer will not recognize her as the child's parent "harms children." Denying children the right to be adopted by or placed in foster care with responsible, ethical, devoted lesbian and gay families "harms children." Telling gay, lesbian, and transgendered youth that they are undeserving of inclusion in moral institutions, that there is simply no way that they will be able to live a personally, morally responsible life as a gay person, that their `ohana will never be recognized, or protected by the law, this "harms children."

You and I have taken an oath to uphold the constitution. I have taken another oath – albeit a private one – to do everything in my power to help make Hawai`i a place in which wonderful young people like these law students of mine can grow, flourish, and build and strong, loving families, as is each of our birthright in a community that holds `ohana – `ohana for everyone -- as first among our most cherished values. Please, please support HB444.

Chair Brian Taniguchi

Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

To: Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and the other committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of HB 444 on behalf of the Democratic Party and our 51,000 members across Hawaii.

We support civil unions because we stand for equality and justice. Our Party has a long and proud history of making progress on behalf of those who weren't being treated fairly under the law. This bill presents an opportunity for all of us to choose the right side of history.

As a former member of your esteemed body I am more than a little reticent to come here and to try to tell you what to do. I know how difficult these decisions are, and how the pressures of your constituents, both in and out of your district are often difficult to balance with the dictates of your conscience. It is hard. When you are in the middle of it to sort it all out.

I'd like to offer you my perspective: In a session, which will likely be remembered for budget cuts and a struggling economy, this is your opportunity to make history - to choose the right side of an issue that transcends all of us - that, in fifty years, will seem obvious to our children and grandchildren.

As President Obama, quoting Martin Luther King said in 2008, "The Arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice." Bend it today.

Mahalo,

Brian E. Schatz

Chair

Democratic Party of Hawaii



To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
For: Hearing on February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM in Capitol Auditorium
From: Democratic Party of Hawai'i
Re: STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Senator Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Senator Takamine, and
Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Democratic Party and our 51,000 members across Hawai'i. The Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports HB 444 HD1, and recommends you adopt it in the same language as passed by the State House. This testimony is submitted by Douglas Pyle & Rachel Orange, Co-Chairs of the Legislation Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i.

Our Party platform states, "The abiding values of the Democratic Party are liberty, social justice, compassion and respect for the dignity and worth of the individual. These principles must always be protected."

The White House offers this statement on its web site: "President Obama supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples."

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i agrees with President Obama. We support HB 444 HD1, because Civil Unions will correct inequalities in current law.

There are hundreds of rights and benefits currently not available to same-gender couples. This Civil Unions bill will establish equal rights for same-gender couples under Hawai'i law. It will NOT change marriage law. It is written to protect rights of all families, and to guarantee freedom for Hawaii's diverse religious communities. It is fair. It furthers Hawaii's values of supporting families, respecting diversity, and protecting all equally under the Law.

This is the time to pass Civil Unions legislation in Hawai'i. We note the

testimony of Hawaii's local unions supporting Civil Unions. Polls show a majority support Civil Unions. Hawai'i would follow other states that already adopted Civil Unions. This is not the 1990s. There has been a change in America's politics. The vision of Barack Obama showed we have risen above wedge politics and fear. In his inauguration address, President Obama said it is time "to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our politics."

"The time has come," he said, "to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea ... that all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness."

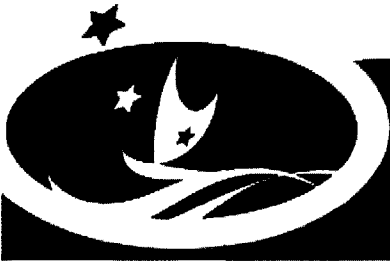
We can do that now, by passing Civil Unions legislation today. In current law, a "full measure of happiness" is denied to same gender couples and to religious communities that would choose to celebrate and solemnize civil unions.

A Democratic Party resolution describes Separation of Church and State as "the chief guarantor of our religious liberty." We agree it is not the role of the State to decide one religious belief right and another religious belief wrong. If we recognize and respect the range of testimony already heard, we hear that diverse religious communities differ; some would perform civil union ceremonies, others would not. Under Civil Unions law, the proper role of the State in this question would be to guarantee the freedom to differ. Hawaii's diverse religions – be they Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Unitarian or any other faith – will be free to choose their practice according to the dictates of their own creed and conscience. This protects religious freedom in our diverse community.

The Democratic Party at its 2008 State Convention, with overwhelming support of delegates assembled, declared its support for Civil Unions. The Party's resolutions and platform are the basis of this testimony. The membership declared support for the concept that same-gender couples should have the same legal rights and privileges of marriage. HB 444 HD1 is an important step toward full equality. We ask for your support and vote in favor of HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Orange & Douglas Pyle, Co-Chairs
Legislation Committee of the State Central Committee,
Democratic Party of Hawai'i



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus 1050 Ala Moana Blvd #D-26, Honolulu, HI 96814 Email: hidemocraticwomenscaucus@yahoo.com

February 24, 2009

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

From: Jeanne Ohta, Chair of Legislative Committee, Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus

Re: HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS
(9:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 24, 2009, Auditorium)

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Thank you for hearing this bill and for allowing me to present testimony today, in strong support of HB 444 HD1 which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic, and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawai'i's women and girls. It is because of this mission, the Women's Caucus strongly supports this measure which extends the rights of married couples to partners in a civil union.

Establishing a civil union provision is a big step to ending the disparity between the rights of opposite-sex married couples and those of same-sex couples. It is a step toward the goal of treating people equally under the law, as required by our Constitution. HB 444 HD1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Because there is no legal recognition for same-sex couples, many are unable to obtain employer sponsored health insurance for their partners, a benefit that is given to same-sex married couples. There are other economic benefits, given to married couples, such as in the filing of federal income taxes that same-sex families are unable to obtain. Enacting a civil union provision will help end this unequal treatment by government agencies and employers.

We urge the committee to pass HB 444 HD1 to extend rights to partners in a civil union so that equal protection under the law will not be reserved for some, but is available for all.



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO
February 24, 2009

H.B. 444 HD1 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 444 HD1 which would extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Same-sex couples deserve the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples who are entered into a legal marriage. Unfortunately, same-sex couples and their families are denied hundreds of protections and responsibilities offered by the state of Hawaii. As a result, by refusing to legally recognize same-sex relationships, Hawaii and other States deprive thousands of families the most important attributes of labor: the ability to take care of and provide for their family members.

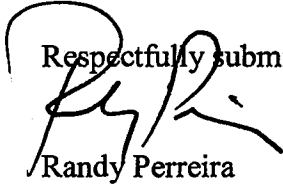
Furthermore, same-sex couples are our neighbors, police officers, firefighters, and teachers. Many keep us safe and educate our children. No longer should individuals who choose to have a same-sex relationship be discriminated against. In fact, it was not too long ago when interracial marriage was illegal in a number of states. Today, people would be in an uproar if interracial marriage was illegal. Therefore, it is time to move forward and accept civil unions to guarantee the same rights and protections as those entered into a legal marriage.

Without civil unions, the family truly suffers. When a partner in a same-sex relationship dies, their children and partner are not guaranteed their pensions and other survivor benefits. This is tragic and utterly unnecessary. It undermines their financial health and well being. The child's quality of life completely changes for the worse, and while the loss of a parent is without a doubt devastating, at least a civil union would have protected the child and partner financially.

Same-sex couples are just like you and me. They have children; they love each other, and work with us day in and day out. Many protect us as police officers or firefighters, while some educate our children or perform complicated surgeries to save someone's life. The point is, they are no different and it is time to recognize that. It is time to pass H.B. 444 HD1 and guarantee same-sex couples the same rights and benefits as those who are married.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,


Randy Perreira
President



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 24, 2009

H.B. 444, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO
CIVIL UNIONS

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.B.444, H.D. 1 which proposes to extend to partners in a civil union the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage.

The Hawaii Government Employees Association is the state's largest labor union, representing more than 29,000 public employees. In May 2008, the HGEA General Assembly, our union's highest policy-making body, resolved to support efforts to establish civil unions in Hawai'i in order to help fulfill the need for same gender couples to have the same benefits, rights and entitlements as all other working families in our society. Our General Assembly, comprised of delegates from all islands and all HGEA bargaining units, recognized that the adoption of civil unions in Hawai'i can offer many worker benefits – including equal protection, support and respect – to our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) brothers and sisters.

Without passage of the proposed measure, benefits gained in contract negotiations will not be equally shared by families of LGBT employees. For example, under our collective bargaining agreements, employees are allowed paid funeral leave after the death of "spouses/reciprocal beneficiaries" and other family members, including "parents-in-law." However, an employee is not entitled to paid funeral leave for the death of their reciprocal beneficiary's parent, as they are not a parent-in-law. A similar situation occurs with respect to the employee's right to family leave. Passage of this measure would correct these injustices for public employees covered under the HGEA collective bargaining agreements.

We urge passage of this bill to help fulfill the need for same gender couples to have the same benefits, rights and entitlements as all other working families in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of H.B. 444, H.D.1.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director



The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m.

H.B. 444, H.D. 1 Relating to Civil Unions

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly supports the passage of H.B. 444, H.D. 1 that will advance equal rights for all individuals and their families by recognizing civil unions between same sex partners.

UHPA has committed to ensuring that its members and their families are afforded legal rights that advance their security and protection without reference to their sexual orientation. UHPA has a history of negotiating non-discrimination policies and supporting reciprocal beneficiaries' legislation. UHPA believes that all citizens should be afforded respect and the promise of fair treatment.

H.B. 444, H.D. 1 continues the momentum to provide equal protection under Hawaii law for all citizens.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristeen Hanselman".

Kristeen Hanselman
Associate Executive Director

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
PROFESSIONAL ASSEMBLY

1017 Palm Drive • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 • Facsimile: (808) 593-2160
Web Page: <http://www.uhpa.org>



UNITE HERE!

LOCAL 5 HAWAII

Eric Gill, Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Hernando Ramos Tan, President

Godfrey Maeshiro, Senior Vice-President

Friday, February 20, 2009

The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
and Members
Hawaii State Legislature
Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street

TESTIMONY Submitted on behalf of UNITE HERE! Local 5

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations:

My name is Eric Gill, Financial Secretary-Treasurer of UNITE HERE Local 5, a local labor organization representing over 11,000 hotel and health care workers employed throughout our State.

I hereby register our Organization's strong support of House Bill 444, HD 1, relating to Civil Unions.

HB 444 is controversial. There are many strong feelings generated by the issue that is central to this bill. Some people come before this committee with great hopes, and look at this bill as a way to seek validation and recognition long withheld. Others come before this committee with great fear, seeing in this bill a threat to beliefs they hold dear. There will be much strong emotion, springing from many sources, expressed before you today.

But this bill is not about those things.

This bill is not about validating people's existence, nor is it about endangering social institutions. This bill is about economic justice, and the right of each of us to expect and receive fair treatment from our government.

Equality before the law is not a new concept. The notion that all people have a right to equal treatment from government is at the foundation of our democracy. It is written in our most fundamental law. It is the basic ideal that our government is expected to live up to.

This legislation is an attempt to make our laws live up to the cherished ideals of our society. But at its core, this bill is not about the laws or ideals. This bill is about people.

When my wife got sick, nobody questioned my right to be there in the hospital by her side. When her job was taken away from her, and she lost her health care, no one questioned my right to cover her under my medical insurance. If I should pass away, no one will question her right to her fair share of my retirement fund. I expect these things, because the law provides for them.

1050 Queen Street, Suite 100 • Honolulu, Hawaii • 96814-4130 • Phone (808) 941-2141 • Fax (808) 941-2166 • www.unitehere5.org

But this isn't true for all of my fellow citizens. In a society where our government has solemnly pledged to provide equal rights for all, we have failed to do so for some. This failure demeans us, and makes a mockery of our most cherished ideals.

Equal rights and equal treatment for all is not just the right thing to do. It is key to bringing our society together, so we can work toward a common purpose. Our union has learned this, not from any book, but in practice.

Our union is an organization whose mission, role and existence is founded on the solidarity and concerted activity of our members. Our most fundamental task is to build unity and common purpose among our members. To do this, we must overcome divisions of all sorts that exist among our extended family. We need to bring people whose ancestors have been here for centuries together with those recently arrived from many countries. In order to have the power to protect any of our members, we must unite people of different religions, different languages, different skin colors, different traditions.

And, different ways of living their private lives, and organizing their families.

In order for each person to commit to building our union, we have to fight for every person. Our members need to see us include everyone, for each individual to feel included.

That's why we fight for immigrant rights at the same time we fight for the rights of Native Hawaiians. We fight for equal treatment between men and women, between young and old, between races of people from all over the globe.

That's why we fight for the rights of those of us whose families are different, who have fallen in love differently. If we fail to fight for each, we undermine the unity and power of all.

This legislature is considering this bill at a great turning point in our nation's history. The people of America have once again affirmed our nation's unique commitment to bringing all of us together in our diversity. We have elected a President whose every action demonstrates his intent to ensure that each and every American is included in the American plan and the American dream.

The voters of our country have rejected eight years of division among us, of hatred and fear between us. America has decided to be a better place, the place where we live together, bound together by our common belief that human beings can be more than we have been, and strive for better than we are.

Now is Hawaii's chance to join this historic motion. Now is the time for Hawaii's legislature to take a stand. Bring us together. Care for all of us, equally. Pass HB 444, HD 1.



The Senate
The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Regular Session of 2009
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

February 24, 2009

Re: H.B. 444 HD1 - RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

The Screen Actors Guild Hawaii Branch strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.B. HD1 444 which would extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Labor has a long history of fighting for equal rights for working people. Same-sex couples deserve the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples who are entered into a legal marriage. Unfortunately, same-sex couples and their families are denied hundreds of protections and responsibilities offered by the state of Hawaii. As a result, by refusing the legally recognize same-sex relationships, Hawaii and other States deprive thousands of families the most important attributes of labor: the ability to take care of and provide for their family members.

Many same-sex couples are our neighbors, actors, artists, athletes, police officers, firefighters, and teachers to name a few. Many keep us safe, educate our children and entertain us. No longer should individuals who choose to have a same-sex relationship be discriminated against. In fact, it was not too long ago when interracial marriages were illegal in a number of states. Today, people would be in an uproar if interracial marriages were illegal. Therefore, it is time to move forward and accept civil unions to guarantee the same rights and protections as those entered into a legal marriage.

Same-sex couples are just like you and I. They have children; they love each other, and work with us day in and day out. Many protect us as civil servants, while some educate our children or perform and entertain us. The point is, they are no different and it is time to recognize that. It is time to pass H.B. 444 HD1 and guarantee same-sex couples the same rights and benefits as those who are married.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Glenn Cannon, President
Brenda Ching, Executive Director

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD

949 KAPIOLANI BLVD., SUITE 105, HONOLULU, HI 96814 ★ Tel. 808.596.0388 ★ Fax 800.305.8146

www.sag.org



Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i

<http://pd-hawaii.com>

2457 Lamaku Pl, Honolulu, HI 96816

email: info@pd-hawaii.com

tel: 808.265.1334

February 20, 2009

Relating to HB 444 HD 1
Testifying in Support
On Behalf of
The Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Mahalo for this opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 444, House Draft 1, relating to Civil Unions. My name is Josh Frost and I am the Co-Chair of the Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i (PDH). As the name of our organization suggests, PDH is made up of progressive minded individuals who share, among other things, a strong belief in equal rights for everyone, regardless of age, gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Our aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, friends and relatives are being treated as second class citizens. They are voters. They are tax payers. They are soldiers in our military. They are teachers and lawyers and laborers. Our government expects the same of them as it does of heterosexuals, but does not provide the same rights, privileges, or protections.

This bill is an enormous step toward equality for our friends and families.

Despite what some opponents of Civil Unions may claim, allowing same-sex couples to enter into a Civil Union is not the same as marriage, nor does this allowance in anyway infringe on the religious beliefs of any person or group. Allowing same-sex couples to enter into a Civil Union does not detract from, or lessen, the significance of marriage for opposite-sex couples.

Our gay friends and family members have a harder time obtaining health and life insurance for their partners and children. They pay more in taxes than we do. If any of them choose to adopt a child, they have a much harder time going through the process, plus that child has fewer rights than a child born of, or adopted by, opposite-sex couples.

Simply put, this is not right. It's not fair or just.

As a straight man, who has the ability to marry, and is afforded all the benefits such a marriage would confer, I do not feel that allowing Civil Unions for same-sex couples would in any way detract from, or lessen, the value or importance of my marriage. I can't help but wonder about those in our opposition who claim that not only is marriage at the cornerstone of our society and culture, but that to allow Civil Unions between same-sex couples would somehow erode that cornerstone. Are they so insecure in their marriages as to deny those same rights, responsibilities, and protections for others?

I have not seen, nor heard of, any study that supports the opposition's claim that same-sex families are weaker, or somehow less stable than same-sex families. I think we only need to look at the divorce rate among opposite-sex couples to begin to find flaws in that argument. They also claim the institution of

Labor and materials for this donated.



Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i

<http://pd-hawaii.com>

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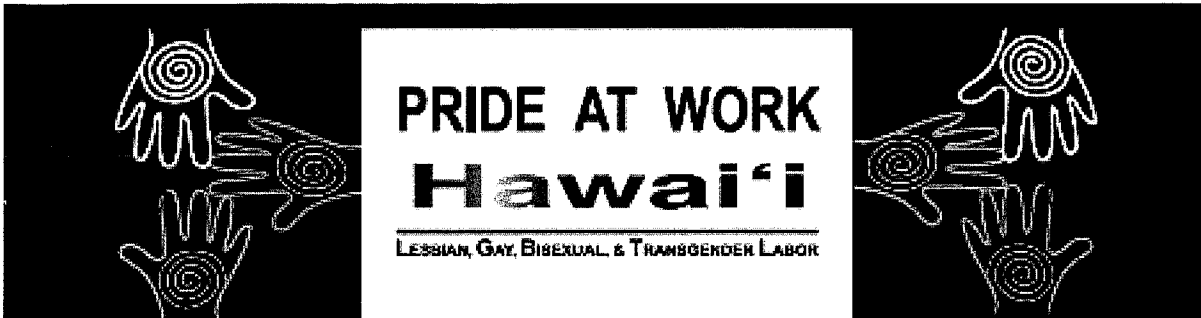
marriage is so established for procreation, though this is a stated religious purpose and not civil. There is no law requiring married couples to bear children and so such an argument has no place here.

Lastly, I'd like to comment on the opposition's position that the residents of Hawai'i decided this issue previously. They did not. This 'so called' decision our opposition likes to refer to was the Constitutional Amendment was not for the denial of same-sex marriage. The amendment gave to the *legislature* the authority to define marriage, which to this day, it has not done. That was over ten years ago and, frankly, times have changed. To say this issue was decided and should never again be discussed is narrow-minded and short-sighted. In a democracy, culture and society are progressive. We need look no further than the elimination of slavery, the elimination of the 'separate but equal' paradigm, or the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. Even more recently in our country's history can we see a shift in attitudes, with the passage of Civil Unions and Same-Sex Marriage in other states. Polls taken in this state as recently as two years show just how much attitudes have changed; a majority of those polled do in fact support the passage of Civil Unions. I suspect those numbers would be still higher if those polls were conducted again today. Our opposition clings to this notion because they know, deep down, the tide is turning against their out-dated and narrow-minded view of society and of families.

Above all, this is not a debate on same-sex marriage, but rather on Civil Unions and no matter how much our opposition insists the two are identical, they are not. It needs to be made clear; this Civil Unions bill is a step toward creating equality for families, not simply homosexuals or same-sex couples. Please support this bill both upon its own merits, but also as an incremental step toward full equality for same-sex couples and families.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Aloha,
Joshua R. Frost
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Honolulu, HI 96816



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prideatworkhawaii@hawaiiantel.net
www.hawafcio.org/PAWHI

February 24, 2009

Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Chair, Sen. Taniguchi
Vice Chair, Sen. Takamine

Testimony in strong support of H.B. 444 HD1 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

Pride At Work Hawai'i, an affiliate of the Hawai'i State AFL-CIO whose mission is to mobilize lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) workers and their supporters for full equality and to build mutual support between the labor movement and the LGBT community, strongly supports H.B. 444. As drafted and currently amended, the bill would create civil unions for same-sex couples in Hawai'i, providing all the rights, benefits, and responsibilities of marriage.

Recognizing that this is a matter of economic justice for working families, Hawai'i's labor movement is standing in support of civil unions. The 2007 convention of the Hawai'i State AFL-CIO, in endorsing civil unions legislation, declared that, "while civil marriage is the only true equality under the law, if the government is offering civil unions as a way to provide protection, support, and respect for GLBT families, unions should support those efforts." Other local unions and labor organizations have also endorsed civil unions, including the Musicians' Association of Hawai'i, HGEA, UNITE HERE Local 5, Screen Actors Guild Hawaii Branch, Hawai'i Alliance of Retired Americans and UHPA.

Unions across the country understand that until the government legally recognizes same-sex relationships, many thousands of families will be deprived of the most important attributes of their labor: the ability to take care of and provide for their family members. To change this, many national and international unions have passed resolutions in favor of marriage equality, including: American Federation of Government Employees, American Federation of Musicians, American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, American Federation of Teachers, Communications Workers of America, National Education Association, Office and

Professional Employees International Union, Service Employees International Union, United Farm Workers and UNITE-HERE. State and local labor federations which have endorsed marriage equality include the California Federation of Labor, the Connecticut AFL-CIO, the New York State AFL-CIO, the King County Labor Council (Seattle, WA), Northern Shore Labor Council (MA), Rochester and Genesee Valley Area Labor Federation (NY), San Francisco Central Labor Council, and Southeastern Massachusetts Labor Council.

In California, over 50 unions and labor groups have joined the latest effort to protect marriage equality there, pointing out that “unions often take political and legal action to protect their members, not only in connection with their employers, but in connection with broader social questions... [Unions] take the position that all... are entitled to be treated with equal dignity and respect.” In New York State, the labor federation noted that “the denial of marriage equality hurts not just individuals, but also family members, neighbors and co-workers who care about the well-being of same-sex couples and the children in their care,... and discriminates against them and relegates them to second-class citizenship.”

The labor movement knows that same-sex couples are devoted to each other and love their families, and that without official recognition, they are left vulnerable. In these difficult and uncertain economic times, it is more important than ever to give all workers a fair shake as they struggle to provide for their families. It is deeply unfair that same-sex couples and their families are forced to scramble to cobble together a patchwork of legal documents that still don't provide them with the security and protections they need and deserve. Passage of civil unions legislation is a step in the right direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 444. On behalf of all LGBT workers in Hawai'i, and their families, we hope you will support this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Dinion, President

Wayne Akana, Vice President

A JOINT LEGISLATIVE EFFORT

E-Mail: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Regarding: Senate JGO Committee

Hearing on: February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m in the Auditorium

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Tong, Myron
Yoshimitsu, Walter

Date: February 20, 2009

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations
Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair

From: Dennis Arakaki
Executive Director
Hawaii Family Forum / Hawaii Catholic Conference

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

1. Civil Unions = Same Sex Marriage without the Title

Civil Unions (CUs) are simply same sex marriages by a different title. The bill text reads: **"Same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as marriage.** Partners to a civil union lawfully entered into pursuant to this chapter shall have all the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law, whether derived from statutes, administrative rules, court decisions, the common law, or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a marriage validly entered into pursuant to chapter 572."

2. The People Have Spoken: NO to Same Sex Marriage

Civil Unions re-open the community controversy. The people of Hawaii have spoken on the same-sex marriage issue and have overwhelmingly rejected the idea. The decade of the 90s saw countless hours of debate to finally resolve this contentious issue. Let's not re-argue the same sex marriage fight via civil unions when the people have spoken so clearly (nearly 70% support for the constitutional amendment).

3. Hawaii Confers Significant Benefits through the Reciprocal Beneficiary Law

- a) Part of the compromise during the same-sex marriage debate was passage of Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary (RB) legislation. The RB law provides significant benefits to many more people in need — separate from their sex partner status.
- b) Under the current RB law, elderly siblings residing together can access important benefits. Under the civil unions proposal, only same-sex couples can access the benefits.

Some of the RB benefits include:

- health care coverage
- hospital visitation privileges
- uniform health care decision making rights
- property rights, including tenancy in the entirety rights
- probate rights, including survivorship rights
- worker's compensation
- state employee retirement beneficiary rights
- automobile insurance coverage
- mental health commitment approvals and notifications
- family and funeral leave
- disaster relief loans
- public lands leases
- legal standing for wrongful death
- legal standing for victim's rights
- domestic violence family status
- University of Hawaii facility use
- Anatomical gift rights
- Government vehicle emergency use

- c) If there is something the Legislature wants to fix with the current set of benefits, like the health insurance provisions, it should simply go ahead and fix the RB statute.

4. Reciprocal Beneficiaries were and are Progressive & Have Been a Model for Discussion Elsewhere - Vast Majority of States Grant NO Benefits

RBs were a progressive solution at the time and still provide many more benefits than the vast majority of states in the country. Hawaii remains progressive. Most states have neither CUs nor RBs. Most states simply provide NO SUCH BENEFITS.

5. Hawaii has many more Pressing Problems — Re-Arguing the Settled Same Sex Marriage Issue is an Unwise Use of Limited Resources

Hawaii is facing serious problems affecting many more people than this narrow, controversial and divisive issue. It is hard to understand why the Legislature would want to re-open this wound that divided our community for so many years without any clear identification of the need for it.

6. **Civil Unions Sought Now but Marriage Benefits WITH Title Change Will Be Sought Next**

It is absolutely undeniable: if you were to pass civil unions, gay marriage advocates WILL be back arguing "that everything is the same and fundamental fairness suggests you should simply change the title as well." In October of 2006, New Jersey established Civil Unions. Only two years later, December 2008, the New Jersey Civil Union Review Commission issued a report stating that civil unions are not working and that same-sex couples are not equal under current law. The commission is now recommending that New Jersey become the next U.S. state to legalize same-sex marriage. In other states that recognize civil unions, couples are already suing the state for equal marriage status. Right here in Hawaii, current supporters of HB 444 HD1 are already on record stating that nothing but same-sex marriage, including the title, will be acceptable and they will be back.

7. **Actual Reason for Bill Still Unclear**

Proponents should be clear about the primary reasons for this bill. Many of the items frequently mentioned are already available under the current law. Some benefits not currently available are limited state-only tax benefits and parenting rights.

8. **Legally Complicated and Socially Explosive — Children Adversely Affected**

The two most controversial aspects of this will be: parenting issues and what is taught to children about the law. How will the law confer parenting benefits and responsibilities to the same sex partner of a mother without adversely affecting the parenting rights of the mother and the parental rights of a birthfather? The civil union aspects related to children and parenting raise extremely complicated issues of family law and are unfortunately focused on the rights of the adults and not on the needs of the children.

This opens a nearly-unending number of legal possibilities, which will require complicated and expensive litigation to resolve. **Again, what justification exists to upend our legal system for a very small number of cases?**

Finally, what will be taught to children in public school? Will children be taught that the law says same-sex couples are just like married couples but with a different title? If not, why not? That would be the law. If it would be taught, then, we're right back to the heart of the same sex marriage debate and this issue is among the primary reasons people opposed same sex marriage in the first place.

Mahalo for your kind consideration we ask you to oppose HB 444 HD 1.

PRO-FAMILY HAWAII

P.O. Box 25158
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

Phone and Fax: (808) 396-6569

Sunday, February 22, FAXED 7:15 p.m.

Testimony on HB 444, HD1
Before Senate JGO
At Capitol Auditorium
Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.

Civil unions are the same as same-sex marriages, which your constituents oppose adamantly. HB444 calls for something that is neither civil, nor unions in the true sense of the word.

Moreover, wherever civil unions are granted, homosexuals and lesbians will tell you this is not what they wanted. They want same-sex marriage, as you'll hear this morning from some proponents of the bill.

But I wish to speak as president of Pro-Family Hawaii on a deeper aspect of this bill, if it becomes law. A week ago, I spoke with a high school principal, a long-time friend, who told me in their health classes they currently teach nothing about homosexuals and lesbians, because, he said, it was too controversial.

The repercussions of this bill include indoctrinating high school students in the so-called lifestyle. This would be demanded with the legal recognition of civil unions. Furthermore, at the elementary level, young children should remain innocent, not be confused by books referring in comic strip form to two daddies for a child, and other books referring to children with two mommies.

This committee, I believe, has the good sense to stop this bill here and now. If this door is opened, there will be no end to it. In other states and countries, gays have even forced the rewriting

PRO-FAMILY HAWAII

P.O. Box 25158

Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

Phone and Fax: (808) 396-6569

of history books to celebrate those they believe were gay.

Above all, this sexual activity is in God's eyes an abomination and has led to the destruction of societies and places. We know Sodom was destroyed for sodomy. The connection is very clear!

The Chair and members of this committee should not concur in a full Senate vote. It's not a civil rights issue. It has never been.

Let me tell you how bad it can get. In Canada, a person can be arrested and charged with a "hate crime" for speaking out against homosexuality, even a pastor in his own church.

Kill this bill. Let it die right here. Have the courage to do so, and the courage to not allow it to go to the floor vote. Let this be the last vote.

Thank You.

Submitted By:

Daniel P. McGivern
President
Pro-Family Hawaii

PLANNED PARENTHOOD® OF HAWAII

1350 S. King Street • Suite 309 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814 • Phone: (808) 589-1156 • Fax: (808) 589-1404

February 24, 2009

To: Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

From: Katie Reardon, Vice President of Government & Public Affairs, Planned Parenthood of Hawaii.

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444 HD1

Thank you for hearing this important bill and for the opportunity to testify in strong support of it. Planned Parenthood of Hawaii (PPHI) supports HB 444 HD1 and the Civil Unions it creates. We encourage members of this committee to pass this bill and courageously stand up for equality in Hawaii.

At PPHI, we believe that all people are equal under the law and should therefore enjoy the same rights and protections provided by our constitution, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Civil Unions are an important part of promoting that equality by ensuring that same sex couples receive the same protections afforded heterosexual couples in marriage.

Heterosexual married couples enjoy many protections in our state, including rights related to health care, insurance benefits, property rights, and taxation. The benefits of marriage are experienced on a daily basis and protect spouses in times of worry. Counter to our state's constitution, committed same sex couples and their families are denied these rights. No person is served by this kind of discrimination. Recognizing the rights of same sex couples in no way detracts from marriage. Rather, creating Civil Unions promotes stable, healthy, and loving relationships and gives Hawaii the opportunity to protect all of our families.

Discrimination does not have a place in our state. We are fortunate to live in a state where many different peoples and cultures can not just coexist, but can work together to make Hawaii a unique and wonderful home. Therefore, we ask you to pass HB 444 HD1 creating Civil Unions and to promote the equality of all Hawaii's citizens. Thank you again for the opportunity to be heard in support of this bill.

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Honolulu, HI 96814
(808) 589-1149

Kona Clinic
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Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
(808) 329-8211

Kahului Clinic
140 Hoohana Street
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Kahului, Maui, HI 96732
(808) 871-1176

(A Maui United Way Agency)

TESTIMONY
HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Capitol Auditorium

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the children of same-gender parents, some of whom participate in the activities of COLAGE O'ahu (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere), **I am urging your support for HB 444**, relating to Civil Unions.

It is incomprehensible that anyone supporting family values would oppose legal equality for families and their children. I am particularly disturbed that a few churches and members of their congregations are afforded the right to dictate how a family's rights are defined by American statute. These churches and their congregations directly oppose many other churches and their congregations who support equality under the law. Will the Legislature give oppositional churches the right to overrule churches who consider equality under the law sacrosanct? How is it that a church can have any say whatsoever regarding a family's statutory rights?

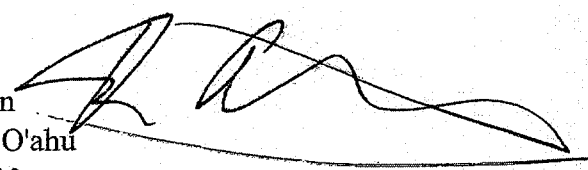
An April 16, 2008, article in the Honolulu Star Bulletin by Tim Finnegan quotes a Williams Institute study of the 2005 census identifying 3,262 same-sex couples (up 36.5% from 2000) and 1,164 children (up 132.8% from 2000) being raised in their households. You can now add new families daring to self-identify and children born in the years since the 2005 census.

I know how statistics can be manipulated, so I shall spare you further and make my point: My three babies do not have the legal status enjoyed by the majority of their peers in our State. I dare you to defend that, and I challenge you to correct it. Please support HB 444.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Tom Aitken
COLAGE O'ahu
PO Box 800
Kaneohe, HI 96744





Life Foundation

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Committee on Judiciary
and Government Operations

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 a.m. in the Capitol Auditorium

FIGHTING AIDS
IN HAWAII
AND THE PACIFIC

HB 444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chairman Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Life Foundation, Hawaii's oldest and largest AIDS organization, would like to be recorded **In support** of this important legislation establishing legal civil unions for same-sex couples.

While the devastating effects of AIDS have not been confined to gay people, it is fair to note that nearly three-quarters of the HIV positive people assisted by Life Foundation over the years have been gay men. This has provided us with a unique vantage point to observe gay couples as they confronted life with or death as a result of AIDS. We have seen how existing laws and practices have prevented gay partners from decision-making related to healthcare and end of life issues and have seen long-term partners excluded from funerals and property dispositions.

As an AIDS organization, we find that our ability to positively impact a person's health related decision making is in direct proportion to the person's self worth. A person who feels empowered and valued will tend to do things that are more beneficial such as wearing a seat belt, limiting cigarettes, drugs and alcohol and avoiding unsafe sexual practices.

Conversely, a person who is undervalued as an individual and a member of a class will have less self-regard with resulting negative consequences.

We strongly urge establishment of civil unions and the rights they confer because to do so will clearly send the message that no one in Hawaii should be considered less worthy of equal protection by the law and the government. To confer rights on some categories of citizens while leaving others out simply serves to reaffirm the perceived valueless nature of the omitted categories of people. Thank you for your consideration.

Paul S. Groesbeck
Executive Director

Phone: 853-3234
Email: pgroesbeck@lifefoundation.org

677 AIA MOANA BLVD.

SUITE NO. 226

HONOLULU

HAWAII

96813

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February 22, 2009

To: Senator Taniguchi, Chair
And members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

From: Renee H. Furuyama, LSW
Testimony on Behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Hawaii

Re: HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions

I am testifying on behalf of NASW in **VERY STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444** which will extend the same rights and responsibilities of spouses to partners in a civil union.

There has been too much discrimination for too long against people who identify themselves as being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Historically throughout the world, nationally in the news, locally in our streets and in our schools, we hear about or are witness to hate crimes. Discrimination is not only in the form of physical abuse or verbal abuse, but has its most widespread and long lasting effects when policies discriminate and deny a group their civil rights in employment, education, credit, housing and other public accommodations. We must bring an end to this discrimination!

Looking back at the heated atmosphere of past legislative hearings on this topic reinforces the importance of crying out for justice which can only be brought about when policymakers view this bill as a civil rights bill. If we are going to make any progress at all toward ending discrimination and bringing about socioeconomic and political justice for people who currently do not receive equal benefits and privileges, then civil unions is a crucial step in the right direction.

NASW believes that same-gender couples should be afforded the same respect and rights as other-gender couples. Discrimination and prejudice directed against any group is damaging to the well-being of society as a whole.

NASW strongly supports HB 444. Please pass this bill.

Thank you.

Renee H. Furuyama, LSW
Chair, Political Action Committee
NASW, Hawaii

CHRISTIAN VOICE of HAWAII

Standing for Righteousness in the Public Square
Post Office Box 23055 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96823

SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING:

FEBRUARY 24, 2009

9 AM, CAPITOL AUDITORIUM)

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 444 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI and MEMBERS

SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Aloha. I offer this testimony today on behalf of Christian Voice of Hawaii, a network of more than 800 ministers from many denominations throughout Hawaii. The network involves pastors and leaders of numerous faith-based ministries that are active in providing support services in communities throughout the islands — from homeless shelters, to food distribution, family counseling, medical care, elderly and hospice care, social and spiritual counseling, assisting un-wed mothers, problem pregnancies, child services, education and so forth.

The members of the Christian Voice of Hawaii network hereby register our **OPPOSITION** to HB 444 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS.

In 1998, after a drawn-out seven-year battle, the people of Hawaii decisively and conclusively said NO to “same-sex marriage.” The vote emphatically registered the voters’ disapproval of this attempt to radically alter Hawaii’s traditional family system. The people flatly rejected the insane notion of re-defining the institution of marriage to mean “same-sex” couples.

This legislature’s subsequent passage of Reciprocal Beneficiaries provided that civil benefits normally available to married couples, would be also available to many other types of couplings regardless of the sexual or non-sexual nature of that relationship. Because Reciprocal Beneficiaries includes “same-sex” couples, RBs are truly non-discriminatory. But RBs have been summarily rejected by homosexuals.

Instead, HB 444 is specific only to homosexual couples. It is therefore apparent that HB 444 is not really about equal benefits, it is about getting official state validation of homosexual partnerships, along with the government’s legal system to enforce acceptance and compliance on the rest of society.

HB 444 is really asking you legislators to recognize homosexuality as a specifically protected class of people. HB 444 is really asking you legislators to recognize “same-sex marriage,” only this time around calling it “civil unions.”

The mark of a civilized society is not how much evil and depravity it can tolerate or accommodate, but how much good it can promote for the protection and benefit of the society. Pushing for the approval of special rights based on sexual deviancy constitutes a serious breach of the foundational principles of this society. If you

legalize "civil unions" based on homosexual behavior, why not give similar approval to those who practice other sexual aberrations? How about recognizing and legalizing the "rights" of child molesters? Or recognizing and legalizing the "rights" of rapists? Should those behaviors be considered equal to those that maintain our society's time-honored standards of moral behavior?

Legalizing "civil unions" or any other so-called "rights" based on sexual identity will only serve to further destroy a basic pillar of a wholesome society — the family. Many of Hawaii's families are already seriously threatened and dysfunctional from other aberrant behaviors such as drugs and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, parental abandonment, infidelity, sexual promiscuity and so forth. Add to that financial pressures and the basics for survival, designer diseases, social maladies and pop-culture hedonism and the entire social order is already in extreme crisis. Legalizing "civil unions" would only exacerbate the situation and further contribute toward the degradation of society.

HB 444 is clearly an act of provocation. Because the public knows that "civil unions" is the same as "same-sex marriage," this issue will be just as highly divisive and volatile as it was 11 years ago. If this committee passes this bill you will once again be engulfed in a firestorm of community outrage that will utterly cripple this legislative body, keeping you from the truly urgent matters you should be dealing with this year. The history of the past 15 years shows that the careers of many legislators who backed special homosexual rights were cut short over this issue.

The state's crises in plunging tourism, job losses, foreclosures, falling revenues, homelessness, energy instability, high taxes, education, health care, "ceded lands" and so forth, are much more crucial to your constituents than getting needlessly bogged down in another pitch battle over an issue that the people of Hawaii decisively addressed eleven years ago.

Please do not waste taxpayer's time and resources by starting another "same-sex marriage" war. We the members of the Christian Voice of Hawaii network urge you the members of this committee to vote NO on HB 444.

Respectfully submitted,



Leon Siu
Director,
Christian Voice of Hawaii

Ua mau ke Eā i ka 'Āina i ka Pono.
The Sovereignty of the Land is perpetuated in Righteousness.

FAMILY EQUALITY COALITION

TO: Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

FROM: Alan Spector, LCSW
Co-Chair, Family Equality Coalition
PO Box 11444, Honolulu, HI 96828
Alan@familyequalitycoalition.org
www.familyequalitycoalition.org

RE: Strong Support of HB444 HD1, Civil Unions

DATE: February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Thank you for allowing me to testify before this committee in strong support of HB444 HD1. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and resident of Kaneohe.

I am testifying on behalf of **Family Equality Coalition**, a non-profit network of individuals and organizations dedicated to securing equality for same-sex couples and their families in the State of Hawaii.

Family Equality Coalition is like a rainbow representing the true diversity of Hawaii.

We are currently working with over 80 organizations in Hawaii with memberships in the tens of thousands of people representing labor, faith communities, social service organizations, the GLBT community, health care organizations, ethnic associations, political groups, and advocacy groups. The breadth of our movement includes the support of President Obama, and now in Hawaii by a resounding 33-17 vote, HB 444, HD1 has earned the support of the House of Representatives.

Civil Unions are consistent with the values held by Hawaii's residents.

Family Equality Coalition walks hand and hand with the people in Hawaii, including many who may have voted against same sex marriage in 1998, but now believe strongly that their gay and lesbian family members and friends are entitled to equal legal rights and all the protections that a family deserves. A recent survey of Hawaii residents by QMark Research and Polling confirms that the majority of Hawaii's residents actually support equality for same-sex couples and support civil unions.

Civil Unions will protect families in these difficult economic times.

During this global economic crisis, more than ever each of us has to take a personal responsibility for meeting our needs and those of our families. It is imperative that gay and lesbian families have the same protections as our heterosexual peers during this time of great economic insecurity and instability. The people of Hawaii would find it unconscionable to leave their gay and lesbian friends, relatives, and neighbors without basic protections that civil unions offer such as: such as access to health care: equal treatment under the Hawaii tax

Family Equality Coalition, cont'd

code; and the ability to provide children of same-sex couples with the same legal family protections that are available to households headed by married couples.

Times have changed.

Once Hawaii was poised to be the national leader for civil rights equality. Today, nine states plus the District of Columbia provide equal rights to same-sex couples in the form of either civil unions, domestic partnerships, or marriage. Hawaii is one of three states that offers ONLY a limited subset of defined legal rights rather than comprehensive equality under state law. Across the nation there is a growing awareness of the importance of equality. Just last week, on 2/17/09, a comprehensive domestic partnership bill offering equal rights passed out of the New Mexico Senate Judiciary Committee and is expected to become law this year. Additionally, in 2009, the State of Washington is expected to expand its current limited domestic partnership rights to include full equality. Importantly, President Obama supports civil unions with both state and federal rights. The majority of the US public also now supports civil unions for same-sex couples according to a recent Newsweek poll taken in late 2008.

Civil Unions are not marriage.

Civil Unions are a legal mechanism to extend to civil union partners the same legal rights associated with marriage, without actually allowing same-sex couples to marry. Chapter 572, Part 1 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes, defines marriage as being between a man and a woman. HB444 HD 1 explicitly states that HRS, 572-1 is not impacted and this is reconfirmed in the committee report. Additionally, the legal relationships of same-sex couples from other jurisdictions whether they be called civil unions, domestic partnerships, or marriage would only be recognized in Hawaii as "civil unions." While the public remains very divided on the issue of marriage for same-sex couples, the fact that the majority of the public is supportive of civil unions is proof that the two statuses are perceived differently. If civil unions were truly the same as marriage, would married couples be willing to trade in their marriages for civil unions? If not, why? On a personal level, I can attest to the fact that civil unions and marriage are not the same. My partner, now spouse, and I have had both a civil union and a marriage. Our civil union had little meaning and was poorly understood by our families. Our marriage, however, was fully accepted and recognized. After we were married, my parents hugged my husband, cried, and said, "Now you are one of us, welcome to the family."

Civil Unions are good for the Hawaii economy.

Civil unions will actually help the Hawaii economy by stimulating businesses, tourism, and tax revenues. I refer you all to the testimony of Sumner La Croix, Professor of Economics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

The Hawaii Constitution requires civil unions.

Article 1 section 3 states,

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the State on account of sex. The legislature shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this section."

Family Equality Coalition, cont'd

Civil unions are the appropriate legislation that comply with the equal protection clause AS WELL AS the 1998 Amendment which reads:

“The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite sex couples.”

Notice what is **missing** in the amendment. It does not say the will of the people is to deny equality. It can only be interpreted as a definition of the word marriage. Since it expressly does not mention civil unions, domestic partnerships, or the provision of equal legal rights we must take the voters at their words. Their words provide only that they were entrusting their Legislature to define marriage. It is simply false to say that this issue has already been decided by the people in 1998. No voter in 1998 ever had to decide anything with regards to civil unions.

Notice too that the amendment also says, “shall” instead of “must.” The voters did not require their Legislature to act on marriage, they merely extended to the Legislature the authority to define marriage. Today’s discussion and my testimony is about civil unions, not marriage.

Reciprocal Beneficiaries provide inadequate protections and cannot be “fixed.”

Though opponents claim that same-sex couples already have equal rights under the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Act, this is simply not true.

Per 572C-6 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes, “Upon issuance of a certificate of reciprocal beneficiary relationship, the parties named in the certificate shall be entitled to those rights and obligations provided by the law to reciprocal beneficiaries. Unless otherwise expressly provided by law, reciprocal beneficiaries shall not have the same rights and obligations under the law that are conferred through marriage under chapter 572.” Reciprocal Beneficiaries are currently denied extensive rights including access to health care, fair treatment under Hawaii’s tax laws, and anything to do with family court including spousal support, joint adoption, and judicial dissolution (divorce).

Further, the R.B. statute groups into the same category any two single adults who are legally unable to marry including same-sex couples in spousal-like relationships, two siblings or a widowed mother and her son. The needs of these various types of reciprocal beneficiary relationships are very different. It simply is not feasible to impose on blood relative reciprocal beneficiaries full spousal obligations, otherwise two sisters who were RBs would be required to divorce one another. More importantly, there is no current advocacy campaign or groups of blood relative reciprocal beneficiaries asking for full spousal obligations. The way to “fix” reciprocal beneficiaries is by complimenting it with a civil union law as is the case in Vermont where both a civil union law and a reciprocal beneficiary law exist side by side.

Mahalo for allowing to me testify before this committee. I appreciate your careful consideration and hope you will support HB444 HD1.



American Friends Service Committee

Hawai'i Area Program

2426 O'ahu Avenue • Honolulu, HI 96822 • Phone 808/988-6266 • Fax 808/988-4876
Website: www.afschawaii.org • Email: afschawaii@afsc.org

Date: February 24, 2009
To: Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations; 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium
From: Kyle Kajihiro, Program Director
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Aloha Kakou. Thank you for hearing this very important human rights legislation. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that works to promote peace and social justice based on values of nonviolence and equality.

We **strongly support HB444 hd1**, a bill to create a class of civil unions that would confer equal rights to same-sex couples as enjoyed by married opposite sex couples.

The AFSC has a long history of standing with oppressed groups in their struggles for justice and equality. During World War II, the AFSC assisted persons of Japanese ancestry in Hawai'i who were victims of racist war-time policies that forced many from their homes and into concentration camps. During the Black Civil Rights movement in the U.S., the AFSC worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights pioneers to overturn racist segregationist policies in the south. In Hawai'i, we march with Native Hawaiians in their struggles to regain sovereignty, land, and human rights.

Today, we are here to stand with our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) 'ohana members to win equality for their relationships and families. This is one of the foremost civil rights issues of our time.

Sadly, the current marriage laws in Hawai'i and much of the United States constitute an apartheid system, with same-sex couples excluded from the basic protections of the law, and LGBT persons relegated to second-class status. The discriminatory and unequal treatment of same-sex couples and families will one day be looked upon with the same abhorrence we hold for racist Jim Crow laws.

Legalized discrimination such the ban on same sex marriage also has a negative multiplier effect on our society by inciting more overt acts of hatred and bigotry. Through AFSC's work with LGBT youth, we witnessed a sharp rise in anti-gay attitudes and violence in the schools in the aftermath of the 1998 anti-gay campaigns. Shockingly, in recent hearings on HB444, some opponents of civil unions have used the rhetoric of war. It is they who have declared war on members of their own families and communities. We cannot allow this hatred and bigotry to prevail.

This civil unions bill will not interfere with anyone's religious beliefs or practices. It will not

undermine the institution of marriage. Leave the sacred act of marriage to the realm of personal belief and religion. But take the necessary steps to ensure equal rights and responsibilities for all civil contracts between committed life partners. You have an opportunity with HB444 to repair some of the harm that was done to our community in 1998, when one part of our community was cast out, separate and unequal. Make our family whole again. I urge your support for this bill. Thank you for your consideration.



GREGORY HOUSE PROGRAMS

Hawaii's Statewide HIV/AIDS Housing and Support Services Provider

DATE: Tuesday February 24, 2009

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Auditorium – State Capitol

HB 444, HD 1

RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS.

Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Board of Directors

David Andreoli
President

Guy Merola
Treasurer

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Secretary

Board Members

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Jaimie Kahale

Cecile Kendrick

Joe O'Mealy

Donald Munro

Gennitt Simons

Les Ueoka

Leighton Yuen

Dear Chair Senator Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Senator Takamine, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony before this committee. My name is Jonathon Berliner, Executive Director of Gregory House Programs – Hawaii's Statewide HIV/AIDS Housing Organization. I am pleased to have the opportunity to express strong **support for HB 444, HD1 - Relating to Civil Unions.** We believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444, HD1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

The large majority of the individuals we serve are gay, and HB 444, HD1 would go a long way in supporting the emotional, mental and physical well-being of many of these individuals. It is demeaning and very demoralizing to the one group who has little rights afforded them in their relationships.

While the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS have not only been confined to gay people, and Gregory House Programs serves all people – gay and straight, it is fair to note that nearly approximately 75-80 % of the HIV/AIDS cases Gregory House Programs is serving are gay men. This provides us with a unique vantage point to observe gay couples as they confront life with or death as a result of AIDS. We see how existing laws and practices have prevented gay partners from decision-making related to healthcare and end of life issues and have seen long-term partners excluded from funerals and property dispositions, and enflamed family fights in a time of grief. We also believe that if this bill, HB 444, HD1 is enacted there is a better chance that access to private health insurance may be afforded to many of these individuals thus reducing the impact on government funded health insurance.

As a housing provider of persons living with HIV/AIDS, we find that our ability to positively impact a person's health related decision making is in direct proportion to the person's self-worth. A person who feels empowered and valued will tend to do things that are more" beneficial in health and sexual practices, thus reducing risk of infecting others. We see this as an important healthcare issue.

This unequal treatment that many of our clients experience is unfair and unjust. Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. On behalf of Gregory House Programs and the many clients we serve, we ask that you support HB 444, HD 1 and appreciate your careful consideration in this important legislation. Let us join the other forward thinking states that have moved forward on this issue.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Jonathon Berliner
Executive Director

Executive Director
Jonathon Berliner
jonb@gregoryhouse.org



Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii
Office of the Chancellor
6301 Pali Highway
Kaneohe, HI 96744-5224
Phone: (808) 203-6735

DATE: February 23, 2009

TO: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
(JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

FROM: Walter Yoshimitsu, Chancellor

RE: Strong opposition to HB444,HD1
Hearing: February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and members of the committee, I am Walter Yoshimitsu, Chancellor of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii. Along with the Hawaii Catholic Conference of which I am a member, **I am testifying in strong opposition to HB444,HD1 regarding Civil Unions.**

A decade ago the people of Hawaii voted their intention that marriage is between one man and one woman. The civil union bill before you is same sex marriage under a different name and blatantly ignores the will of the people.

Marriage is not private affair and society has a stake in it that's why a license is required. We believe that one of the purposes of marriage is the procreation of children which is not possible in a same sex union.

Marriage is not just about two consenting adults – it is also about the wider community. There is a societal benefit to the complementarities of the sexes. Studies continue to show that the raising of children in a home with BOTH a loving father and a loving mother is the best environment for our keiki. This, in and of itself, compels us to maintain the special status of marriage between one man and one woman.

Finally, we should call marriage a marriage and not the guise of Civil Unions. I urge you to say NO to same sex marriage---say NO to Civil Unions. By doing so, you will uphold the will of the majority of the people in Hawaii.

Please HOLD HB 444 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Diocese of Honolulu • Office of the Vicar General • www.catholicahawaii.org
1184 Bishop Street, Honolulu, HI 96813-2859 • 808.585.3345 • malexander@rcchawaii.org



SENT VIA EMAIL TO: JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

DATE: February 22, 2009

TO: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

FROM: Rev. Dr. Marc R. Alexander
Vicar General and Diocesan Theologian
Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii

RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee, I am Rev. Dr. Marc R. Alexander, vicar general and diocesan theologian for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I also thank you for your very difficult work on this and other issues that impact our community.

I register my strong opposition to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

Since you have heard and read many pages of testimony already on this issue, I will keep my remarks here brief.

This bill should not be allowed to clear your committee for the following reasons:

1. Civil unions, especially as crafted in this bill, are the same as marriage, except for the name. As I said many years ago, if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it may be called a "canard" in French, but it's still a duck! Please do not let us be insulted by advocates playing a name game which we all know (and advocates for "same-sex marriage" have said publicly) is only a prelude for actually going after "same-sex marriage" – again!
2. In 1998 the people of Hawaii confirmed the power of the legislature to define marriage as between one man and one woman – with some 70% of the vote. This was in reaction to a Hawaii State Supreme Court decision which would have forced "same-sex marriage" on the people of Hawaii. In the true spirit of Hawaii, the compromise concept

of “reciprocal beneficiaries” was created to afford certain benefits to those unable to marry. This was a very forward thinking idea. Perhaps it needs tweaking. Then please tweak it. The fact that “same-sex marriage” advocates are not interested in tweaking it indicates that what they really want is not certain benefits but ALL the benefits and recognition that marriage carries. To this, the people have already said “NO”! And I ask that you, as our elected officials, respect this decision.

3. The reason why society has recognized, endorsed, benefited and supported marriage (between one man and one woman) is precisely because it is a special and unique relationship which benefits the common good and larger community in a special way. The anthropological concept of sexual complementarity AND the intrinsic capacity for procreation underpin society’s respect and need for this institution. Marriage is not just about the two individuals – it’s about our community. Male and female in marriage have the opportunity and potential to humanize and catalyze each other in a way no other relationship can offer. In addition, the biological possibility for children and the social fact that having both a loving father and a loving mother is the best environment for the raising of children, argue for the special status of marriage between one man and one woman.

Of course, there are many further arguments against this legislation. I respectfully ask that you dismiss this bill, listen to the will of the people of Hawaii, and focus your energies on the many clear problems that must be addressed. Do not inflict another social experiment on our community.

Mahalo for your kind attention.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Dr. Marc R. Alexander". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Rev. Dr. Marc R. Alexander
Vicar General and Diocesan



VIA EMAIL: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: State Capitol, Auditorium
Re: *Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Support of H.B. 444, HD 1, Relating to Civil Unions*

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii (“ACLU of Hawaii”) writes in support of H.B. 444, HD1, Relating to Civil Unions because it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

- **Civil Unions are an important step towards marriage equality**

The ACLU of Hawaii commends those members of the Senate, who, by supporting this bill, have recognized that it is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1, will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate — there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

The ACLU of Hawaii strongly supports the current bill; however, we want to be clear that our ultimate goal is to obtain full marriage equality for lesbian and gay couples. Marriage is a unique legal status that is conferred and recognized by governments all over the world. Marriage brings with it a multitude of reciprocal obligations, rights, responsibilities and protections. In addition, marriage is a cultural institution, one that conveys to all the level of love and commitment between two people. Civil unions are not, and cannot be, the same as marriage because they create a separate institution for lesbian and gay couples. As history has taught us, separate is never truly equal. Thus, the ACLU of Hawaii will continue to press the Legislature for full marriage equality in the future.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i
P.O. Box 3410
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E: office@acluhawaii.org
www.acluhawaii.org

Chair Taniguchi, Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
and Members Thereof

February 24, 2009

Page 2 of 2

- **Technical Observation and Suggestion for the Language of H.B. 444**

As currently drafted, H.B. 444 may inadvertently prohibit those couples who have entered into valid civil unions or marriage in another jurisdiction from entering into a civil union in Hawaii. We suggest that the following language be added to the end of §-2(1) “with anyone other than his or her intended civil union partner.”

The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii 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 Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 40 years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Laurie A. Temple
Staff Attorney
ACLU of Hawaii

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
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T: 808.522-5900
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Lambda
Legal

making the case for equality

Stefan Johnson
HELP DESK ATTORNEY
sjohnson@lambdalegal.org

February 23, 2009

Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Honorable Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hawai'i State Capital
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Lambda Legal Supports House Bill 444 — Hawai'i Civil Union Bill

Dear Senators Taniguchi and Takamine:

I write on behalf of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. ("Lambda Legal") to offer our strongest support for House Bill 444 ("HB 444"), which would greatly expand the important but modest protections and responsibilities that Hawai'i confers upon committed, loving same-sex couples. Lambda Legal is the nation's oldest and largest legal organization advocating for the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people. Lambda Legal's family protection advocacy has included providing technical expertise to legislators across the nation on dozens of bills relating to marriage, domestic partnership, civil unions, and parenting rights and duties for same-sex partners, including primary drafting of the California Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2003. Lambda Legal also litigates cases addressing these issues, and over the years has served as counsel or *amicus curiae* in relationship recognition cases in the Hawai'i courts, in addition to offering information through our Legal Help Desk to many Hawai'i residents about the legal rights and vulnerabilities of lesbian and gay couples under the state's current laws.

Lambda Legal believes firmly that the right way to remedy the inequality same-sex couples face under Hawai'i law is to offer them the same legal status as the state offers to different-sex couples, which means an equal opportunity to marry. HB 444, however, would serve an important role in reducing the harms that loving same-sex couples face when the law refuses to acknowledge that they are family. Hawai'i's reciprocal beneficiary law does provide some important rights that protect non-married partners in times of medical crisis and death. But, Lambda Legal is all too aware that the gaps in the law are terribly confusing and leave these partners without critically-needed basic rights and responsibilities that HB 444 would afford them. Lambda Legal is regularly contacted for assistance through our Legal Help Desk by same-sex couples in Hawai'i who face

Western Regional Office

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Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi
Honorable Dwight Y. Takamine
February 23, 2009
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uncertainty, vulnerability and tragedy when their committed relationships are not recognized. As supervisor of our Help Desk staff, I have seen that the lack of comprehensive legal protection usually falls hardest on those who are most vulnerable, including those who are poor, have less education, are older, and/or have dependent family members. HB 444 would help mitigate some of the harms and increase family stability by, for example, providing that during times of crisis, these couples would be protected by the laws recognizing community property, ensuring mutual-responsibility for community debt and enforcing parental obligations and rights.

Until the State of Hawai'i fulfills its core constitutional promises of equal rights and liberties to its law-abiding, tax-paying gay and lesbian residents by permitting them to marry as their heterosexual neighbors can, measures such as HB 444 serve as critical stop-gap protections that reduce the daily harms that afflict same-sex couples and their dependents. Lambda Legal urges that HB 444 be provided the strong legislative support and quick passage that it deserves.

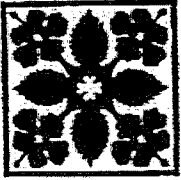
Thank you for your kind consideration of this important matter.

Very truly yours,

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.

Stefan Johnson
Help Desk Attorney

cc: Senator Robert Bunda
Senator Mike Gabbard
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara
Senator Sam Slom



Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus

P.O. Box 11946
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Director

Alice Tucker
Director

A State Chapter of the
National Women's
Political Caucus

February 23, 2009

TO: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair and
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

FROM: Faye Kennedy, President, Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus

RE: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
(Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00am in Capitol Auditorium)

POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT

Good morning, Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations. I am Faye Kennedy representing the Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus and submitting testimony in strong support of HB444 HD1 which extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Through civil marriage, couples are granted more than 1,000 federal rights, benefits and responsibilities under law, along with hundreds of state level rights and protections. The government uses the legal recognition of civil marriage to grant these rights, which include Social Security survivor benefits, hospital visitation rights and the ability to inherit a spouses' property without being taxed.

"In 1948, 19 years before the Supreme Court's ruling in *Loving v. Virginia*, the California Supreme Court ruled on an interracial case, *Perez v. Lippold*, with a four justice majority affirming the right of interracial marriages. The majority opinion said that each person seeking a license to marry the 'wrong' kind of person, 'finds himself barred by law from marrying the person of his choice and that person to him may be irreplaceable. Human beings are bereft of worth and dignity by a doctrine that would make them as interchangeable as trains.'" (*Human Rights Campaign website*)

Hawai'i lawmakers had the courage to pass out the Hawai'i Reciprocal Beneficiaries law which was enacted July 8, 1997. This law provides limited state rights to same gender couples, relatives and friends. At the time of passage, this law represented a commitment to provide substantially similar government rights to those couples who are barred by law from marriage.

HB 444 HD1 is the next step for Hawai'i to take to bring equality and justice to people who wish to enter into same gender civil unions.

The Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus was established in 1981 and is a multi-partisan organization committed to increasing women's participation in the political process and increasing their representation in elected and appointed office. HWPC also supports male candidates committed to its goals. HWPC is dedicated to equality in employment, stopping all violence against women, and improving the health and well-being of women and families.

On behalf of the Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus, I urge your Committee to pass this equity measure. Let's be civil and equal to all. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of HB444 HD1.



AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

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February 22, 2009

TO: Chair Brian Taniguchi, Dwight Takamine Vice-Chair and
Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii
Barbara Polk, Legislative Committee Chair

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB444 Relating to Civil Unions

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii has long supported equal rights for all people. At our Annual Meeting on Jan. 31, 2009, we considered the issue of civil unions and passed unanimously the following Resolution:

WHEREAS: "Each individual's journey through life is unique. Some will make this journey alone, others in loving relationships - maybe in marriage or other forms of commitment. We need to ponder our own choices and try to understand the choices of others. Love has many shapes and colors and is not finite. It cannot be measured or defined in terms of sexual orientation." (*From the Statement of Affirmation and Reconciliation by the Quaker meeting in Aotearoa.*)

WHEREAS: The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America states: "All men are created equal, endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights."

THEREFORE: Americans for Democratic Action, Hawaii (ADA/H) concurs with the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund: "Because marriage is a basic human right and an individual personal choice,

RESOLVED, the State should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage."

Yet ADAH recognizes that the current political climate is unfavorable to true and full equality. Therefore a logical step on the path to true equality would be the passage of a civil unions bill granting all rights of marriage without the title.

In light of this position, Americans for Democratic Action/Hawaii strongly urges you to pass HB444.

Hawai'i Alliance for Retired Americans

An affiliate of the Alliance for Retired Americans
c/o AFSCME · 888 Mililani Street, Suite 101 · Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

*AFT Hawaii Retirees
HGEA Retirees
HSTA – Retired
ILWU Retirees
Kokua Council
Machinists Union Retirees
UPW Retirees
ADA/Hawaii
Hawaii Family Caregivers Coalition*

(Submitted by email to: JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov February 22, 2009)

Statement of Al Hamai, President, Supporting HB 444, HD 1, Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

February 24, 2008, 9 a.m. Auditorium, State Capitol

Chair Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair Dwight Y. Takamine and members of the Committee,

I'm submitting testimony on behalf of HARA in support of HB 444, HD1.

The purpose of this bill is to establish civil unions for same-sex couples and provide such partners with the same rights, benefits and responsibilities granted to spouses in a marriage.

We concur with the purpose of this bill. Approval of this bill will be a big step toward eliminating discrimination against same sex couples and toward recognizing that they, as citizens and our neighbors, and our friends and our relatives, should have the same rights, benefits and responsibilities that married citizens have been granted by law.

HARA, with a growing membership of 21,000, urges this Committee to support and approve HB 444, HD1. Mahalo.

HARA is a strong voice for Hawaii's retirees and seniors; a diverse community-based organization with national roots; a grassroots organizer, educator, and communicator; and a trusted source of information for decision-makers.



**WORKING TOGETHER
TO HELP OTHERS**

Please don't be intimidated by the campaign of the far right that opposes HB444. There are many supporters in the community who support this bill who are not gay and do not have gay children. I am one of them. The organizations that I belong to also support this issue as a matter of civil rights and equality. -Kokua Council, Hawaii Alliance of Retired Americans, (21,000 members). Laura Manis, 597-8838



**Kauai Wedding
Professional Association.**

**PO Box 662344
Lihue, HI 96766**

WEBSITE

<http://www.kauaiwedpro.com/>

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House of Representatives

25th Legislature, 2009

State of Hawaii

Hearing Date: Thursday, February 24, 2009, at 9:00AM

Attention: Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

Speaking in SUPPORT of Bill HB 444 HD1

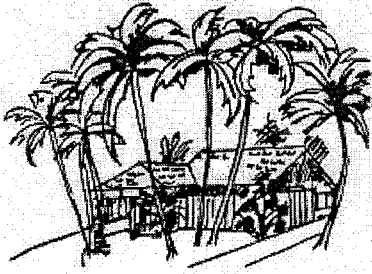
Speaking on behalf of all members of the Kauai Wedding Professional Association who voted in a poll to support this bill, and having taken that poll of all our member companies, in which 100% of all members who voted approved with a yes vote, our association fully supports this bill because it recognizes that we have a responsibility to treat all couples in a similar manner, without discrimination. Offering a Civil Union with the same benefits as heterosexual couples is the right thing to do.

Secondly, with the huge deficit we are facing in Hawaii, this will be a stimulus that attracts more business to all of our members, and to the State in general. It's a good thing for everyone in the state.

Sincerely yours,

Mike Dandurand. President

Kauai Wedding Professional Association.



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TESTIMONY ON HB 444 HD1
FEBRUARY 24 – 9AM

SENATE JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
COMMITTEE

CHAIR TANIGUCHI, VICE CHAIR TAKAMINE, MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

MY NAME IS DONALD MUNRO. I AM AN INDEPENDENT
REALTOR WHO HAS BEEN LICENSED IN HAWAII SINCE 1987. I
AM SUBMITTING THIS TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE
BILL 444- CIVIL UNIONS.

I AM AN AMERICAN CITIZEN WHO BELIEVES FULLY AND
SINCERELY IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA. THAT MEANS THAT I BELIEVE THAT ALL CITIZENS
OF THE UNITED STATES ARE ENTITLED TO EQUALITY UNDER
THE LAW. ALL MEANS ALL, REGARDLESS OF RACE, SEX OR
SEXUAL ORIENTATION. THAT IS NOT NOW THE CASE WHERE
GLBT CITIZENS ARE CONCERNED

MY PARTNER AND I HAVE LIVED TOGETHER FOR 43 YEARS,
WE ARE VETERANS, WE ARE BUSINESS OWNERS, TAXPAYERS,
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS AND WE VOTE IN EVERY
ELECTION. WE ARE NOT ASKING FOR ANY RIGHTS OR
PRIVILEGES THAT ARE NOT ALREADY ENJOYED BY
HETEROSEXUAL PARTNERS NOR DO WE EXPECT, OR WISH,
ANY RELIGION TO “BLESS” OR APPROVE OF OUR UNION. BUT I
DO EXPECT THAT OUR GOVERNMENT HONOR THE
CONSTITUTION..

HB 444 DOES SO HONOR THE CONSTITUTION. EQUALITY IS A
VERY SIMPLE CONCEPT AND THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS IN
THE CONSTITUTION. I ASK THAT YOU SUPPORT HB 444 AND
GRANT TO US THE EQUALITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS TO WHICH
WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ENTITLED BUT WHICH HAVE BEEN
DENIED IN GROSS VIOLATION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

46-251 Ikiiki Street • Kaneohe • Hawaii 96744

From: Dr. John Heidel [jheidel@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 4:13 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony for HB 444

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
For: Hearing of HB 444 for an Act Relating to Civil Unions
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00am
Place: State Capitol Auditorium
From: Rev. Dr. John R. Heidel, President, The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii

Thank you for holding this hearing on House Bill 444 for an Act Relating to Civil Unions.

My name is John Heidel and I am a minister of the United Church of Christ. I began my ministry here in the islands as the Minister of Youth at Central Union Church in 1962 and then served as a Chaplain at Punahou School for 32 years. Today I am representing The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii and offer this testimony in strong support of HB 444.

We affirm that people of faith and good will are bound together by shared principles of compassion, civility and mutual respect for human dignity for all people; we are different branches of a pluralistic society that weave a common thread through the fabric of our nation. The Interfaith Alliance is committed to the guarantee of civil liberties and religious liberties, though they may not always coincide. Civil unions will affirm what kind of interpersonal associations are subject to protection of law within its jurisdiction, civil liberties that should be extended to all Americans. The Interfaith Alliance has neither standing nor intent to evaluate the religious teachings and practice of any particular faith tradition, but affirms its respect for the religious liberties that honor the diversity of approaches to human relationships.

Some of our faiths perform and recognize same-sex marriages, some officially bless unions, and others do neither. We find our diversity to be a source of strength. We firmly believe that the State and Federal Governments have no place in defining the sanctity of some traditions to the exclusion of others, as pertaining to our diverse practices of unions. We affirm the human dignity and worth of all people and we also affirm that civil unions will not endanger our religious traditions nor the stability of our families.

We thank you for considering this significant, civil rights legislation and urge it's passage from this committee.

From: Kathleen Sands [kmsands@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 4:35 PM
To: taniguchi6 - Wayne
Subject: Re: JGO Committee Testimony

Kathleen Sands

Kathleen Sands
Interfaith Alliance

Home Address: 3670 Hawaii Kai Drive #34
Hawaii State Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee February 24, 2009 Testimony
in support of the Civil Union Bill

Thank you, Chairman Taniguchi and the JGO Committee for hearing my testimony. My name is Kathleen Sands. I have recently moved to Honolulu to take a position as professor at UH; my spouse Linda Hamilton Krieger is a professor at the Richardson School of Law. In Massachusetts, Linda and I are legally married. There, we could share the basic legal rights that all life partners need and deserve - buying, owning, and inheriting property, sharing health and life insurance benefits, public employee retirement benefits, parental and step-parental rights and so forth. In Hawaii, we deserve and expect the same. But under the Reciprocal Beneficiaries statute we cannot have it. On a purely personal level, that's why I ask you to support the Civil Union Bill.

But I also appear before you in my professional capacity as a Christian theologian, with a Ph.D. in systematic theology and research expertise in American religion and law. If anything has become clear during this debate, it's that for many citizens of Hawaii the question of same sex unions is a religious and moral question. That is the heart of the problem, and it is also the key to the answer. Precisely because this disagreement is religious and moral, the state of Hawaii is constitutionally bound to pass the civil union bill.

Let me explain why. Religious opponents of this law imply that religion is monolithically opposed to civil unions. But that is demonstrably false. Hundreds of clergy and religious leaders support this bill, as evidenced by the statement just released by the Interfaith Alliance. Religious opponents of civil union also may tell you that anyone who supports civil unions cannot be a "real" Christian, or a real Jew, or Muslim and so forth. And on the other side, as you know, religious supporters of civil union will say that their opponents are misinterpreting scriptures or distorting religion.

You've listened for hours to those kinds of arguments and as you listen you probably reflect on your own judgments about what is true and good. Those sorts of judgments are essentially theological - they are about ultimate truths and values. In our personal lives, we have to make those kinds of judgments. But we can't really prove them in an objective way - because they are just too basic, too fundamental. It would be like proving the existence of the ground on which your own life stands. All any of us can do, at the end of the day, is simply to stand that ground - to choose, live, and witness to our most fundamental beliefs.

Now, if anything is clear about the religion clauses of the U.S.

constitution, it's that the government may NOT make theological judgments of this sort. There is a lot of disagreement over what the Free Exercise clause means. But there is no disagreement that, at a bare minimum, no citizen may be denied civil rights on account of expressing a conscientious belief, provided that they do not harm anyone else. And everybody also agrees that being offended or upset by somebody's belief does not count as harm! There is also a lot of disagreement about what the Establishment clause means. But again, there is no disagreement that at they very least it FORBIDS the government to take a position on a religious belief that is hotly and widely contested. Instead, government is simply obligated to create an environment in which all citizens can express their beliefs, disagreeing as vigorously as they want but NOT taking away each other's civil rights.

So I disagree with those supporters of gay rights who characterize religious opposition as bigotry. Provided that people do not engage in defamation or violence, they deserve the presumption of moral seriousness. But I also disagree with the claim, made by some opponents of this bill, that to pass the civil union bill is to endorse, accept or celebrate homosexuality. Does the Free Exercise clause require Mormons to endorse Buddhism, or evangelicals to celebrate Hinduism, or Wiccans to agree with Catholicism? Of course not! But the Free Exercise clause, as interpreted by the US Supreme Court, absolutely does demand that each of these is entitled to the dignity of the word religion and to the religious rights our constitution guarantees.

Here in Hawaii, disagreement about homosexuality are deep and serious. But I ask you: is this MORE serious than disagreement about the existence of God, the nature of salvation, the path to enlightenment, or the meaning of the universe? Yet those are disagreements we live with all the time. And nobody is denied inheritance rights, health insurance, or parental privileges on account of them. Why then can people be denied those things on account of a conscientious, lifelong commitment to a same sex partner?

There are some who say that THEY can live with these differences, but they worry about their kids. What will children in public schools be taught about sexuality if civil union becomes law? Well, what do we teach kids about differences of religion, of ethics, of political ideologies? Obviously, the answer changes with age. When kids are very young, what they most need to know is that adults agree on the things that are most crucial for young children - for example, that families should be free from violence and abuse, that families should be places where everyone is loved and where children especially are nurtured and protected. As they grow older, kids learn that there are also big disagreements about marriage and family, just as they will learn that there are big differences between Buddhists and Christians, Republicans and Democrats and so forth. Educators can and do reflect carefully on the pace and the style of learning about these differences. But in a state that regularly educates, side by side, Christian kids and Jewish kids, children of Buddhists and atheists, kids whose parents are libertarians or Republicans or Democrats - this is something we can handle. It is well within the ability of any skilled, mature educator.

So again, I ask you to pass the civil union bill. Disagreements over same sex union are no less serious, but also no more serious, than all these other religious disagreements with which we live quite well. The federal and state constitutions give clear guidance about how government should handle such differences. I urge you to apply that clear guidance right now, and I thank you for hearing my testimony.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 5:46 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: thirr33@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Categories: Red Category

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Arvid Tadao Youngquist (Spokesman)
Organization: The Mestizo Association (Est. 1982 in Honolulu)
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: thirr33@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/20/2009

Comments:

The Hawaii State Senate
Chair Brian T. Taniguchi
Vice Chair Dwight Y. Takamine
The Right Honorable JGO Committee Members:
Sen. Robert Bunda (Senate President Emeritus) Sen. Mike Gabbard (Chair, State EDT Committee)
Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara (Chair, TSM Committee) Sen. Sam Slom (Senate Minority Floor Leader:
Also Member, EDT, HRE, LBR, TSM Committees)

Good morning!

Please accept this written testimony in support of HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. This testimony in support continues my previous testimony in the House Judiciary where after a 4 hour hearing, a modest but appropriate amendment was added at House Draft 1 which addressed the reciprocal Beneficiary overlap coverage.

As you know the current RB coverage for partners applies to only 49% of what is entitled for the traditional marriages. R.B., simply put is not equivalent or identical to heterosexual unions.

Some alarmists site the various sexual health risks for same sex partners, but the very same risks apply to heterosexual partners and spouses.

As I have communicated with all members of your JGO Committee, it's gratifying to see that this measure will see the light of day just six(6) days after referral to the Senate JGO Committee.

Wish you the most cordial discussions and an well informed, up or down decision. Personally, I'd like to see this bill voted on by the full Hawaii Senate. That presently is in your collective hands. It's almost eleven years(11) since the 1998 general election decision which overturned Hawaii Supreme Court Associate Justice Levison's majority opinion regarding the subject matter. If the Court's decisions generally agree with the exclusive portion of this community, I am sure there would be no fuss raised.

Please remember that the Hawaii Constitution & the Hawaii Revised Statutes don't provide for referendum, initiative, or "recall". Why would the Vox Populae insist perennially to have a say so in the final Statewide decisions.

Would the very same activists and silent partners want a general election ballot items in making Hawaii a 100% legalized gambling State? I don't think so. Those who wanted a voice at Con-Con were defeated at the November 2008 General Election. The Vox Populae, it seemed to me, was loud & clear that they did not want a Con-Con anytime soon for at least another 10 (ten) years. If the activists still insist that the Capitol capitulate through its prayers, often hostile language, and "show of force" any form of a rally or a march, let the very same people work for the welfare of a safety net for the keiki and the kupula and those victims of domestic violence, both male and female, and both heterosexual and homosexual.

A living human life is infinitely more precious according to our Constitutions than the "unborn human life form". Both sides of these controversial issues would support legislating from the Bench if it agreed with the Decisions, and oppose the Bench if the Decision were unfavorable to their causes.

Please encourage all your colleagues to uphold both the current US Constitution and the Hawaii Constitution which all of you either swear or affirm to do with your collective honor as office-holders.

It's hoped that we can keep from exclusively dwelling on our creed, ethos and mores, and focus on the social justice, fairness, and the various real merits of this measure.

The US Constitution does not require elected officials "to pass a religious test to hold office". I feel that it is also understood that the no test applies to people who seek re-elections and upward mobility.

The use of the phrase "Same Sex Marriage" is a red herring issue & a misnomer, and only promotes demonization or marginalization. Remember that Hawaii only participates at a 45% of the registered eligible voters, and the Vox Populae has been evolving constantly over this 11 year period.

It's no longer a matter of the silent majority sticking to a long held mantra of tradition, convention, and the "pro-life" values. It has evolved to a "Pro-Family Values" generation of not simply acceptance, but more importantly acceptance of differences in which people approach community, relationships, and commitment.

I appeal to your individual sense of humanity, tolerance, understanding, & acceptance of the diversity amongst our population here and abroad. If we were all alike, looked alike, spoke the same language, with the same phraseology & accent, what a boring and unstimulating place this world could become.

There will be no free will, no discussion because there will be total acceptance of a single standard and value system. No distinctions does not equate to democracy or what Providence and the Founding Fathers envisioned this Republic to empower its citizenry & promote proactive involvement for service to Mankind.

Would you like to tolerate a Theocracy? Did we tolerate it in Afghanistan? Would you tolerate any person or organization to force-feed their belief systems, or else? Independence of mind, choices that we make, and the yea or nay we stake our "fortunes" on makes us all human & make life worthwhile.

Let your conscience be a guide, but let it err on the side of differences and acceptance of unconventional & sometimes non-traditional points of view.

I remember the 42nd President of the USA spreading the "1,000 Points of Light" in the Nation. Was that only meant for those that think alike? Or was it meant for all human beings of good will, service, and individuals that often "pay forward" ,"practice random acts of kindness" or "work for whirled peas". If you want peace, let's all work for justice...social justice!

Mahalo,

Arvid T. Youngqguist
Spokesman
The Mestizo Assoc.
(est.1982 in Honolulu)
E-Mail: thirr33@gmail.com

Gary H. Okino
98-1315 Kaonohi Street
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
Phone (808) 488-0830
Email: gary-o@hawaii.rr.com

Testifier: Gary H. Okino
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM
Hearing Location: Capitol Auditorium

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I appeal to your sense of duty to the people of Hawaii to do what is right.

Please read the following before you make your decision. In fact, I would insist that if you wish to make a fair decision on this extremely serious issue, then you must read and consider the following before doing so.

It's a little long, but includes documented information and logical and rational arguments that show how dangerous passing this legislation would be.

If you insist on considering this kind of legislation, you must give the people of Hawaii time to consider this proposal. Like the rail issue at the City, because of its significant impact on everyone, it was put to a public vote. Do likewise and move legislation that will put on the ballot a constitutional amendment that will resolve this issue once and for all.

The Truth about Civil Unions

For Christians, everything begins with God. Our whole purpose in life is to follow God's commandments; and according to God's word in the Bible, homosexuality is immoral and contrary to God's will.

I don't know if you are familiar with the Bible, but here are a few key passages just for your review...

Leviticus 18:22 NKJV

*You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an **abomination**.*

Romans 1:24-27 NKJV

²⁴ Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

*²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged **the natural use for what is against nature.** ²⁷ **Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.***

So we see in these two Scriptures that God sees homosexual unions as an **abomination, as unclean, dishonorable, a deceitful lifestyle or a lie, idolatry, unnatural, against nature and error.** Homosexual's so-called "love", God calls **vile passion and lust.** The homosexual lifestyle is a sin in the eyes of God. Whether Civil Unions is legalized in Hawaii or not, in the eyes of God, it will always be an abomination and a sin.

Genesis 1:27-28 NKJV

²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

From this Scripture, we see that God created them male & female. A civil union is not male & female as God intended it to be. Secondly, God cannot bless civil unions. And thirdly, we see from these Scriptures that civil unions are not physically able to be fruitful and multiply. Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible was a sterile environment and could never be fruitful. Eventually, God had to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of its wickedness. Every society that promotes homosexuality will also be sterile and eventually destroyed.

HB 444, while entitled civil unions, should really be entitled homosexual or same sex marriage, as civil unions will only apply to persons who are of the same sex as their proposed partner.

And, as clearly stated in the bill, every reference to "marriage" in Hawaii law will apply equally to "civil unions." In essence, this puts the legal stamp of approval on homosexuality and imposes it with force throughout the social and political institutions of our society.

Not an "Equality" Issue

Despite how it is being portrayed, civil union is not an equality issue. It is not a civil rights issue. Civil unions, if passed would give a special privilege to a special interest group, overlooking the rights of the people of Hawaii who already voted for traditional marriage.

Civil unions would only be a civil rights issue if homosexuals were born that way. To this day, no one has ever offered solid scientific evidence that homosexuals are born that way. Being homosexual is not at all like being Black or Japanese. There is no scientific evidence of the existence of a homosexual gene in anyone's genetic makeup.

Homosexuals choose their sexual lifestyle. They were not born that way. Thousands of homosexuals have successfully left their homosexual lifestyle by choosing to do so. See Exodus International for real stories of changed people...

<http://www.exodus-international.org/>

Not about Equal Rights

It is also not about equal rights as Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law gives the same rights to same sex couples as married couples.

We know that God loves us fully and unconditionally; but God also warns us of immoral lifestyles that will hurt us. God warns us of homosexuality because He loves us. God loves homosexual individuals, as we all do, but the homosexual lifestyle is a sin in the eyes of God, and it is the sin that we must oppose.

It is because of God's great love and warning that we are so strongly against civil homosexual unions. We are deeply concerned about what it will do to those who embrace that lifestyle, and the impacts it will have on our communities, our families and our children. When God tells us that something is bad, He has good reason to do so.

DIRE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS LIFESTYLE ON A HOMOSEXUAL

From a medical point of view, homosexual unions are unhealthy and would bring unwanted diseases to Hawaii. For starters, homosexuals who are active die on the average of 20 years premature. In fact, homosexuals are at greater risk of premature death than smokers.

Here is other documented evidence of what the homosexual lifestyle will do to the individual.

Medical Dangers

From a Medical point of view, Civil Unions would bring unwanted diseases to Hawaii.

As of December 31, 2007, a total of 3,011 AIDS cases were reported by health providers

58.2% or 1,752 of these individuals are known to be deceased

73% of these individuals with AIDS are Men who have sex with men (MSM).

7% of these individuals with AIDS are Men who have sex with men and use drugs by injection (IDU)

Men who have sex with men (MSM) account for the majority of Hawaii's AIDS cases

If Civil Unions were passed, these already high percentages of people with AIDS would increase. There is also reason to be alarmed about the increase in STD's in our beloved State of Hawaii. At the recent STD Conference where the State of STDs in Hawaii & the US: Trends, Risk Groups, and Public Health Issues were presented (held in October 2007) by Dr. Al Katz, MD, MPH from the Department of Public Health Sciences at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii.

They found that of all the primary and secondary cases of Syphilis in Hawaii from 2001-2006:

The Total cases were 74

Of these 74 cases, 96% of these were Males with Syphilis

83% of these males are MSM (Men who have sex with Men)

38% of these MSM (Men who have sex with Men) with syphilis were self-disclosed

These MSM (Men who have sex with Men) were also co-infected with HIV

Some MSM (Men who have sex with Men) are at high risk for HIV and other viral and bacterial STDs

The epidemiology of syphilis in Hawai'i is changing. The number of primary and secondary syphilis (P&S) syphilis cases has gradually increased from 2 cases reported in 2000 to a high of 14 cases (all men) reported in 2003 ([Table 3](#)). In 2003, Hawai'i ranked 30th state in the US; Hawai'i P&S syphilis case rate was 1.1/100,000 population as compared to the US P&S case rate of 2.5 per 100,000 population. The Healthy People 2010 objective for P&S is 0.2 cases per 100,000 population. Prior to 2000, most of the P&S syphilis cases were heterosexuals who acquired their infection from Asia.

From 2001 through 2004, 96% (43/45) of reported P&S syphilis cases were males

Seventy-seven percent (77%) (33/43) of these cases were Men who have Sex with Men of whom 75% (24/32) acquired their infection locally

The median age is 42 years (age range 22 years old - 63 years old) and of those whose HIV status is known, 41% (11/27) were HIV positive/AIDS.

[These statistics are from the Hawaii Department of Health web site.]

In addition, here is an alarming list of diseases found with extraordinary frequency among homosexual practitioners. Sexual transmission of some of these diseases is so rare in the exclusively heterosexual population as to be virtually unknown. Others while found in both populations, are clearly predominated by those involved in homosexual activity.

- Anal Cancer
- Chlamydia trachomatis
- Cryptosporidium
- Giardia lamblia
- Herpes simplex virus
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- Human papilloma virus
- Isospora belli
- Microsporidia
- Gonorrhea
- Viral hepatitis types B & C
- Syphilis

Mental Health Dangers

Serious mental health problems are also associated with same sex relationships. A government study of 5,998 Dutch adults ages 18-64 was published in the January 2001 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Specifically, the study found that compared to heterosexual men, males who engage in homosexual behavior are...

727% more likely to have suffered bipolar disorders at some point in their lives, and 502% more likely in the last twelve months

718% more likely to have suffered obsessive-compulsive disorder in the last 12 months and 620% more likely at some point in their lives

632% more likely to have suffered agoraphobia (fear of leaving home or being in the public) in the last 12 months, and 454% more likely at some point in their lives

421% more likely to have suffered panic disorder, and 229% more likely to have suffered social phobia at some point in their lives

375% more likely to have suffered simple phobia in the last 12 months and 361% more likely at some point in their lives

311% more likely to have suffered mood disorders as some point in their lives and 293% more likely in the last 12 months

261% more likely to have suffered anxiety disorders in the last 12 months, and 267% more likely over the course of their lifetimes.

270% more likely to have suffered two or more psychiatric disorders during their lifetimes

235% more likely to have suffered major depression at some point in their lives

Compared to heterosexual women, females who engage in homosexual behavior are...

405% more likely to have suffered a substance use disorder.

241% more likely to have suffered mood disorders during their lifetimes

DIRE CONSEQUENCES ON SOCIETY

Incidence of Crime and Aberrant Behavior

Statistics show that in Non-Traditional Homes, where a Mother and a Father are not present that:

There is an Increase in Violent Crime by almost 90 percent

The murder rate is the highest among children raised in Non-Traditional Homes

Gang involvement is almost twice as high

75 percent of juvenile criminals come from those raised in Non-Traditional Homes.

Furthermore, the children raised in Non-Traditional Homes are more likely:

To be abused (abuse is up to 40 times more likely if children are in a home without a mother and a father)

To end up in jail as adults

To suffer depression, suffer mental illness, and need psychiatric treatment

To be expelled from school, repeat a grade, have behavior problems

To use drugs and be sexually active

Prevalence of Child Molestation among Homosexuals

And finally, here are shocking facts that tops it all.

Although homosexuals account for less than 2% of the population, they constitute about a third of the child molestations. Further, as noted by the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH)...

“...since homosexual pedophiles victimize far more children than heterosexual pedophiles, it is estimated that **80% of pedophilic victims are boys who have been molested by adult males.**”

Judith A. Reisman, Ph.D. and Charles B. Johnson, Ph.D., conducted a content study of the personal ads in the Advocate, the "national gay and lesbian magazine" and discovered that "chickens," a common term for underage boys sought for sex were widely solicited.

In 1985, Dr. Paul Cameron found that...

The average pederast molested an average of 150 boys, and each heterosexual pedophile molested an average of 20 girls, a ratio of 7.5 to one.

This means that homosexual pedophiles commit 750% more child molestations than the heterosexual pedophile.

Damaging Effects on Children and Families and on Society in General

For those who think that civil unions, which is same sex marriage merely called by a more euphemistic name is just a benign eccentricity which won't affect the average person, consider what is happening in Massachusetts.

It's being taught and promoted in its schools at every level, from kindergarten and up. It is being shown increasingly in blatantly lewd, obscene and pornographic ways. It's being forced down the throat of their children without the consent and notification of the parents (parents are not allowed to opt-out their children from these classes or events). It is being done without the counterbalancing of the moral, traditional marriage and family advocacies which are being silenced into submission by laws that are being passed to make homosexuals a special protected class, a privilege not given to any other class of people in today's American society.

In Massachusetts, it is having serious effects on public health. Homosexuals' relationships are becoming increasingly violent and dysfunctional. Businesses are being forced to accommodate homosexuality in unreasonable ways against their wishes.

You must look at what's happening in Massachusetts as chronicled by Brian Camenker, *What same-sex "marriage" has done to Massachusetts.* You can find the article at the following link...

http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html

Here's how Camenker concludes his article...

"Homosexual 'marriage' hangs over society like a hammer with the force of law. And it's only just begun.

It's pretty clear that the homosexual movement's obsession with marriage is not because large numbers of them actually want to marry each other. Research shows that homosexual relationships are fundamentally dysfunctional on many levels and

“marriage as we know it isn’t something they can achieve, or even desire. (In fact, over the last three months, the Sunday Boston Globe’s marriage section hasn’t had any photos of homosexual marriages. In the beginning it was full of them.) This is about putting the legal stamp of approval on homosexuality and imposing it with force throughout the various social and political institutions of a society that would never accept it otherwise. To the rest of America: You’ve been forewarned.”

Conclusion

In 1998, an overwhelming majority of the people of Hawaii proclaimed by their vote that marriage must remain as one that is between one man and one woman. By passing HB 444, the Legislature will be circumventing the will of the people to preserve traditional marriage

We are opposing HB 444 not because we hate homosexuals, but because of our heartfelt concern and compassion for them and our deep concern for the future of our State. We are concerned over the physical, mental and emotional problems that will beset those who choose the homosexual lifestyle, and we object to what this will do to our community, our children and to our traditional family life. Evidence clearly show that children must be raised in a traditional family environment to thrive and to grow.

If the Legislature passes this extremely dangerous legislation, it will place our State in great jeopardy. We are not any different from other States or other countries. In every instance around the world where same sex unions have been made legal, you see the same negative effects. Hawaii will not be immune to these detrimental impacts.

Because of our love for all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, we, as Christians and as citizens of this great State and nation must continue to stand in strong opposition to civil “same sex marriage” unions.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 4:24 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: elisabethkit@juno.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: 2009-CivilUnion_PositionPaper.pdf

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Kent T. Kitagawa
Organization: Individual
Address: Pearl City
Phone: 8084568985
E-mail: elisabethkit@juno.com
Submitted on: 2/20/2009

Comments:

The basic building block of any vital society is a nuclear family unit consisting of a male, a female and the offspring of that union. Studies have shown that children do best with in a stable family with a father and a mother raising the children in a loving environment. Those who say government should stay out of 'marriage' are the one's trying to overturn traditional family values using the government, and this bill is a blatant example of that. Leave what has worked for time immemorial since creation of the institution of marriage and families alone, and oppose HB 444!

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATONS

TWENTY-FITH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

24 February 2009 9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

My name is Carlos Munguia and I am a resident of Ewa Beach, and I am in strong opposition of HB444 Civil Unions.

I learned that the civil union bill passed the House on Thursday 12 Feb, and is now being transmitted in the Senate. The people of Hawaii have already made our voice clear by voting against same sex marriage in 1998. The Representatives and Senators are elected by the people and are supposed to vote for the people; since the people have already made our vote known, I would expect all the elected officials to support our decision and voice. Please vote NO on HB444, the people of Hawaii want to preserve marriage between a man and a woman. The attempt to undermine the voice of the people of Hawaii by trying to call it something else (Civil Union) is not appreciated. I am sure you are already hearing from people in opposition to this bill and I pray that with due diligence, as a elected officials, you will do what we the people of Hawaii have and are asking, to VOTE NO!

Very Respectfully
Carlos Munguia
91-500 Maohaka Pl
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY in SUPPORT of HB444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

February 24, 2009

Bart Dame

710 West Hind Drive, Honolulu HI 96821

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for hearing this bill.

My name is Bart Dame. I am testifying as an individual in strong support of HB444.

Like many others, I have watched as this issue has been debated—and avoided—over the years. I have watched as tempers have flared. And as hearts have been broken. In the current social climate, I believe most people of good will are able to have a reasonable discussion of the issues without getting all “hot and bothered.”

I support full equality of marriage rights for gay and lesbian couples. I think most people’s attitudes towards gays has evolved and become more accepting over the years, but I recognize a significant portion of the public draws the line at calling longterm, committed same-sex relationships “marriage.” So many times I have heard the statement, “I am not opposed to them having equal rights, but why do they insist upon calling it ‘marriage’? Let ‘em call it ‘civil unions’ or something else. Anything they want, but don’t call it ‘marriage.’” I regret there is no bill for full marriage.

I believe we have only gotten to this point because of the struggle for full marriage rights. So today, the compromise position is to allow for civil unions, with equal rights to opposite-sex “marriage.”

We are at a point where the key activists in the gay and lesbian community appear to recognize civil unions as a significant step forward towards full marriage equality. I suspect civil unions will lead to increased acceptance of gay relationships as longterm fears continue to subside and we come to realize our gay friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members are full, loving—and lovable—human beings, deserving of complete civil equality. I believe passage of this bill is a MAJOR step forward towards a more just, more accepting society. For the benefit of all of us.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter.

From: revkiana@aol.com
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 3:43 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Civil Union

Please vote NO for civil union bill HB 444 Senate bill 458 based on biblical principals alone.
Pastor Diane Cenicola

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TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

TUESDAY, FEB 24, 2009
0900

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

My name is **Dennis F. Dutton** and I am writing you this day to make it known that I firmly **oppose HB-444, Civil Unions**, and ask you to vote **NO** to this Bill.

Rep. Mark Nakashima, Feb 11, 2009 (see at bottom), through email response has stated, "As you know, the civil unions bill **seeks to provide rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities** as provided in law to partners in a civil union. **Marriage as defined by law is still between a man and a woman and this will not change** (bold highlighting mine not his)." I fail to see that in my reading of this Bill.

If this is a matter of "**rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities**" as Rep Nakashima states then the legislature can seek to amend the existing law, **Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiary law (HRS §572C)**, which currently addresses rights and benefits for this type of need. In addition, as I understand the Reciprocal Beneficiary law, this law goes beyond "same-sex" situations and actually extends provision to other non-married conditions such as elderly siblings (sisters) that share residence in a non-sexual manner. Therefore, HB-444 would discriminate against these other persons in the gaining of benefits and rights in order to seek marriage-like status for a single class of people, those of the same sex.

The Voice of the People: In 1998 the people of Hawaii voted for Traditional Marriage with a clear resounding 70% majority. HB-444 is a veiled means to impose "same-sex" marriage upon the people of Hawaii, against their stated will. By the recognition of:

- Partners to be equal with traditional “spouses,”
- The solemnization being performed by same persons licensed to perform “marriage,”
- Planned recognition of “same-sex marriages” performed in other states as a “civil union” in Hawaii,
- Proposed extension of chapter 572, Family Relations (except part I) every reference to:
 - “marriage” as equal to civil unions and
 - “husband”, “wife”, or “spouse” as equal to partners,
- Every reference to marital status, including...procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution, shall apply equally...to civil unions and to partners in a civil union.

In summary, whatever your position, I ask you to be honest and open with the people of Hawaii on the real intent of this law. If this bill is as Rep. Mark Nakashima states – seeking **“to provide rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities”** then the existing law should be the means to address this need and have such rights widely conferred to all. While I recognize “civil union” would not confer federal marriage benefits, this bill will elevate “civil union” to the full status of “marriage” in the state of Hawaii. Stand with the intent of the people of Hawaii and do not justify support through slick semantics. Please acknowledge this bill will equal “marriage” status for same-sex couples in the state of Hawaii; as such I challenge you to not stand behind a play of wording. I ask you to **respect** the stated expressed will of the people of Hawaii and, as Rep. Mark Nakashima also stated in that Feb 11 email vote **NO** and ensure **“Marriage as defined by law is still between a man and a woman and this will not change.”**

As the Assistant Pastor of Calvary Chapel West Oahu, I am thankful for this stated commitment of Rep Nakashima and the voice of the people of Hawaii to protect this institution my Christian faith and God’s Word holds to be sacred and between a man

Testimony of Dennis F. Dutton
H.B 444
Friday, February 20, 2009
Page | 3

and a woman. Please do not discard the voice and the intent of the people with clever wording.

Thank you for your time,

Dennis F. Dutton
Ewa Beach, HI

----- Nakashima Email-----

-----Original Message-----

From: Rep. Mark Nakashima <repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov>

Sent: Wed, 11 Feb 2009 4:42 pm

Subject: RE: *****SPAM***** Vote NO to HB444

Thank you for your e-mail to my office expressing your concern for traditional marriage.

As you know, the civil unions bill seeks to provide rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities as provided in law to partners in a civil union. Marriage as defined by law is still between a man and a woman and this will not change.

The Civil Unions bill was heard by the House Committee on Judiciary chaired by Representative Jon Riki Koramatsu and is expected to be on the order of the day for final passage in the House of Representatives later this week.

Please be assured that I will have your thoughts in mind as this measure comes to the floor for consideration by the full house.

Mark M. Nakashima
State House of Representatives
District One

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2009

20th, February, 2009

4:53pm

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

My name is Sue Sowders and I am testifying against HB444.

You were elected by the people of Hawaii, and the people of Hawaii

have already sent a clear message that we do not want same sex

marriage in Hawaii when we voted NO against same sex marriage in

1998. **More than 70% of Hawaii voted against same sex marriage**

and I'm sure many of the residents in your area were among them.

Marriage is an institution that has existed since the beginning of

civilization and must remain between one man and one woman. The

people of Hawaii have put this issue behind us and the legislature

should not re-open controversial battles that have already been settled

by the people.

Some try to tell us that this bill is not about same sex marriage but

rather it is about equal rights, but that isn't true. Civil Unions is just

another name for same sex marriage. It is clear when you read thru

the bill and see that only same sex individuals can enter into a civil

union, and a civil union can only be created thru a solemnization

process by a licensed person (sounds like marriage ceremony to me),

Testimony of (name)

H.B 444

Date

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and that all the rights granted to a spouse in marriage will be granted to a partner in a civil union, and same sex marriages made valid in another jurisdiction shall be recognized as a civil union in the State of Hawaii (i.e. same sex marriage = civil union), and that any reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to civil unions, including "husband", "wife" or "spouse", to now mean the same as "partner" in a civil union. If this bill was about rights, why is there so much talk about sex and marriage? If the legislature really only wants to convey additional rights, you should amend the existing Reciprocal Beneficiary Law that already grants rights to two persons who are legally prohibited from marrying one another under state law by granting them a reciprocal beneficiary relationship by filing a notarized declaration with the state director of health? To say this bill is about rights and not same sex marriage is a lie! **Civil Union is just another word for Same Sex Marriage!**

The very fact that this bill was pushed thru the House and is about to be pushed thru the Senate in a matter of days is evidence that the legislature is trying to sneak it thru without the people of Hawaii even knowing what is going on and hoping to have little or no opposition. Elected officials are supposed to vote the hearts and minds of the people they represent. When the people learn that you voted for this outrageous, sneaky bill, knowing full well that the people of Hawaii

Testimony of (name)

H.B 444

Date

Page

are against it, you will not be re-elected. **Are you willing to lose your job over this vote?** It is not too late.

The children of Hawaii need examples of right and wrong and good and bad, and if this bill passes, it will be just one more layer of righteousness being peeled away from them. Slowly but surely they are being de-sensitized to right and wrong, and good and bad. Too many of our children are already incorrectly being led to believe that alcohol is okay; drugs are okay; domestic violence is okay; sex before marriage and children born out of wedlock is typical; and now same-sex marriage will become acceptable and taught in our schools as an acceptable alternative. Our children ... your children ... will be encouraged to experiment with same sex relationships. Eventually, same-sex marriages could be commonplace. Next you'll be voting to legalize five or six wives, and maybe marriages between brothers and sisters! Where will it end? You could help end it here and now –

Vote NO on HB444.

Prayerfully concerned, about you, and Hawaii.

From: Prayer Center of the Pacific [prayercenterpacific@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 5:11 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fw: Opposition to HB 44HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Importance: High

----- Original Message -----

From: Prayer Center of the Pacific
To: JGOTtestimony@capitol.hawaii.Gov
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 5:04 PM
Subject: : Opposition to HB 44HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Date: February 18, 2009

To: House Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Senator Brain Taniguchi (Chair) Senator Dwight Takamine (Vice Chair)

Dear Senator Clarence Nishihara

Re: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI RELATIONS TO CIVIL UNIONS

Dear Representatives of the Judiciary Committee & Government Operations

I appeal to you as a citizen, a register voter and a community servant.

I am strongly opposed to the proposed Civil Unions HB 444 I come today in behalf of the families of Hawaii. We live in a democratic nation our government is for the people by the people. **The people have spoken in 1998, 70% of the people made their voice heard marriage in Hawaii must remain between a husband and wife.** Since the beginning of civilization in every society a man and a woman becomes an institution through marriage. This is only obvious being that only a male and a female can reproduce. Every other way is unnatural and unproductive and is a breeding ground for diseases. Men who have sex with men account for the majority of Hawaii's AIDS cases. The median age of homosexual men dying of AIDS is 39 the median age of lesbians at death is 45. The population at large the men median age of death is 75 and for women 79. Only one percent of homosexuals die of old age. This statistics speaks for it self.

In Hawaii we have a population of 1,283,388 in 1977 the Department of Health has a registry approximately 1,577 Reciprocal-beneficiary relationships. Obviously this a minority group that desires to change the very fabric of our traditional families. **In 1977 the Reciprocal Registry Act became law, this law allows two persons who are prohibited from marring one another under state law to register beneficiary by filing a notarized declaration with the State Director of Health. Our beloved State of Hawaii has afforded gay couples their rights through reciprocal benifits. This reciprocal benefits is distasteful to the gay couples** because it clearly states it is for those who are **legally prohibited to marry** and you and I know that is their ultimate goal according to their verbal and written testimonies they desire to be legally married. Be not deceived they have an agenda.

I took the time to testify because I am very concern about our children. Once you allow this gay lifestyle to infiltrate our society our educational system **will be forced to teach our children that this is a normal.** We as parents are responsible to raise up our children in a way of morality, teaching them other wise would infringe on our rights as citizens of this great nation. In closing my testimony I would like to say **I am not a bigot nor am I ignorant** which I was insulted with either do I have any **bit of hatred in my heart towards** any one who chooses to live this gay lifestyle. However I am concern that this **lifestye will be forced upon my rights as a citizen by a law that 70% of the people have spoke "Marriage in Hawaii must remain between a man and a woman".**

Your decision will forever effect the fabric of our families. You have seen our heart and heard the voice of our Island people.

It's not about rights it is doing what is right since the beginning of civilization. Vote No for HB 444 HD 1.

God Bless you, Jesus loves you and we are praying for you daily especially in this hour that our nation faces so many crises.

Virginia Domligan
941 Kam Hwy Suite 202

**Submit for Hearing in the Judiciary Committee and Government Operations Feb. 24
at 9:AM**

From: Ron Yoshida [ronyoshida@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 5:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Categories: Red Category

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1

From: Ronald Yoshida
Bill Number and Title: **HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**
Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my serious and strong opposition to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

After reading the bill in its entirety, as well as reading the present law on "Marriage" as stated in the Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 572, it is very clear to me that this is simply Same Sex Marriage, the only exception being that it will not be called "Marriage" but "Civil Unions". The rest of the present marriage law will apply "equally" to same sex couples that become a Civil Union.

The key part of HB 444 is the following:

SECTION 3. Except for part I of chapter 572, every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage", or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions".

Part I of Chapter 572 states:

572-1 Requisites of valid marriage contract. In order to make valid the marriage contract, which shall be only **between a man and a woman**, it shall be necessary that: etc, etc.

In HB 444 "spouses" are called "partners"; partners must apply for a license at the Dept. of Health where they issue marriage licenses, partners must participate in a solemnization ceremony performed by a licensed clergy or judge to become a civil union; on income taxes, partners will be able to file joint tax returns; and on and on. **Make no mistake about it, it's "Marriage" by another name, and that name is "Civil Unions."**

In 1998, the majority of the people of Hawaii (70%) voted to keep marriage between one man and one woman. As a registered voter, to **ASSUME** that in 11 years, the **majority** of the people of Hawaii no longer support traditional marriage between one man and one woman, with all due respect, I believe would be very irresponsible on the part of lawmakers. You as a lawmakers represent the people on this issue. I believe to do the right thing on this issue, would be to give this decision back to the people, by allowing the people of Hawaii to vote on it, as was done in 1998. **THE QUESTION ON THE BALLOT SHOULD BE:**

"Shall the constitution of the State of Hawaii be amended to allow "Civil Unions" for Same Sex Couples, where by all the rights of married couples will be afforded to same sex couples in a "Civil Union".

Regarding the issue of "Equality", Hawai'i's Reciprocal Beneficiary law (RRS §572C) already confers significant benefits to same sex couples, including but not limited to: health care coverage; hospital visitation privileges; property rights (including tenancy in the entirety rights); worker's compensation; State employee retirement beneficiary rights; and automobile insurance coverage. If there are further rights and privileges the Legislature wishes to convey to same sex couples, this should be accomplished through modifying the existing Reciprocal Beneficiary law, not through the creating Civil Unions.

A final thought. I believe in the political and democratic process. however, it is clear that the ultimate goal for legislators who support this bill is to establish "Marriage for Same Sex Couples" without being fully upfront about it. I believe a more responsible way to achieve this goal would have been to introduce this bill but call it "Marriage" and NOT "Civil Unions." That way, it would be very clear to everyone.

Lawmakers who supports this bill, must be assuming that the majority of the people in Hawaii now support same sex marriage. That is the only way, in good conscience that they would be working toward overturning a decision that was made in 1998 by the people's vote. So why don't the legislators put it to a vote before the people? Why are the legislators afraid to do this if they feel they have the support of the majority of the people of Hawaii? I believe it is because they are NOT SURE IF THEY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE, and therefore are using this tactic of "Civil Unions" to pass Same Sex Marriage.

THIS IS EXTREMELY IRRESPONSIBLE! IN 1998, THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII VOTED ON THIS ISSUE. PLEASE DON'T OVERRIDE THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. PLEASE, IF YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT EQUALITY FOR THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII, LET THE PEOPLE VOTE ON THIS ISSUE OF "CIVIL UNIONS."

I therefore strongly speak in opposition of HB 444 and humble ask that you oppose this bill as well. Thank you for this opportunity to share my testimony.

Sincerely submitted,

Ronald Yoshida
909 Belser Street
Honolulu, HI 96816

HB444

Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Tuesday - Feb 24, 2009, 9:00am

Aloha Senators,

My name is Nanette Sciulli and I am a resident of Waipahu, HI. **I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB444** (SB458). The people of Hawaii, 70% of us including myself, have already made our voice very clear by voting against same sex marriage in 1998. This new bill is being pushed through as a means to supposedly expand the benefits of same sex couples, when in fact, HB444 contains unmistakable language that would give civil unions between same sex partners equal footing with traditional heterosexual married couples. When I learned that HB444 passed the House last week I realized that our legislature took a huge step in moving against the will of Hawaii's people. Your solemn responsibility as an elected official is to listen to and do the will of the people you represent. I would expect you and all of the Senators representing our fair state, to **vote NO on HB444** (SB458). I, along with the vast majority of the people of Hawaii, voted to preserve marriage between a man and a woman in 1998. We do not appreciate attempts to undermine our overwhelming decision to preserve traditional marriage. This is what the House has crafted into HB444: calling same sex marriage by another name, i.e. a civil union between same sex partners. It purports to extend to that new title of "civil unions" all the same rights and privileges afforded to traditional married couples. If extending the benefits of same sex couples is the real driving issue behind HB444, I ask you to please refer to the Hawaii Domestic Partnership Law regarding Reciprocal Beneficiaries, where you can review the fact that many rights and benefits are already in place for those who are legally prohibited from marrying under state law. I am sure you are already hearing from many other people in the state of Hawaii who join me in opposing this bill. Again, I respectfully request that you will do what is right as a true representative of the people's will and VOTE NO on HB444.

Sincerely,

Nanette Sciulli

From: Beth and Lee Garrow [b.andl.garrow@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 5:48 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

Categories: Red Category

Attention Committee on Senate Judiciary and Government Operations:

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations will hear our Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) at a public hearing on Tues., Feb. 24, at 9 a.m., in the auditorium of the State Capitol (415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu)-----

I wish to officially urge the Committee to vote YES on HB 444 HD1. This is a bill that is long overdue in the State of Hawaii (as well as in the entire country). It will protect families that are equal citizens of this State. It will offer the same legal civil rights that should have been offered to the Gay Community for many, many years. The Gay Community has been treated as 2nd class citizens for far too long in this country, even though they have been tax-paying, productive citizens of this country. Gay couples (and families) MUST receive the same legal rights, benefits, and responsibilities that heterosexual couples have long taken for granted.

Mahalo for your YES vote on Feb. 24th!!

Lee Garrow
110 Kaanapali Shores PL
#212
Lahaina, HI 9676(808-662-7392)

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Da Moms – Josephine Chang
Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Support for HB 444, HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions

Da Moms is a support group for parents of GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender) persons. We strongly support HB 444, HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions which would give couples of the same sex the opportunity to enter into state licensed civil unions. My name is Josephine Chang. I am a co-founder of Da Moms. Like many senior citizens, I am a retired public servant, a long-time community volunteer, and a family care-giver. Most important, I am the mother of three sons, and a grandmother. I am thankful that all of my sons are good and productive adults, but especially thankful that my oldest and gay son is successfully coping with the terrible discrimination he faces daily as a gay man. But this discrimination also burdens families and extended families and others who love each gay person. HB 444, HD 1, is a bill against discrimination, and for equal protection for all families in Hawaii.

For a gay person- a gay youth, a gay adult, a gay parent, a gay senior, life is far more difficult and hazardous because of wide-spread discrimination against gays. Many gays live in fear of harm every day just because of who they are. They may try to keep their gayness a secret from those that matter most to them, their parents and siblings, extended family, friends, and co-workers, because they fear rejection or worse, just because of who they are. They are a vulnerable and at-risk population that often goes undetected and underserved by our social services system because they are afraid of discrimination from them too.

Because of discrimination, when parents learn that their son or daughter is gay, they often experience similar fears for their child and themselves. Some parents speak of traumatizing emotional upheavals, family crises, family secrecy, and depression. Parents may withdraw from each other, from their extended families, and their support systems, because they do not know how to cope with the confusion they feel knowing their child is good and does not deserve the discrimination surrounding them. Parents also go into the closet.

Parents often seek outside support for this very personal matter of a gay child, because they are afraid to risk rejection from family and friends. We believe that the best a parent can do for their gay child is to love them unconditionally and to educate themselves. However, a parent's love cannot dispel the very real, harmful discrimination in our society. And a parent's voice can often be drowned out by the derogatory messages all around us.

It is for that reason we appeal to you, our lawmakers. The only antidote for unwarranted and harmful discrimination against minorities is leadership from the highest levels. As we have seen, government can contribute to discrimination by passing discriminatory laws that exclude gays, or it can pass laws to include gays and treat them equally. H.B. 444, HD 1, would provide equal rights and protections for same-sex families under Hawaii law and thereby do much to disperse the discrimination that harms so many families and extended families in Hawaii.

Some say that the civil unions bill is actually about marriage and would legally recognize same-sex relationships to the detriment of marriage in Hawaii. This is simply not true. The civil unions bill will not change Hawaii's marriage law that says marriage is between a man and a woman. And the civil unions bill would not be breaking new ground in giving legal status to same-sex relationships in Hawaii. Same-sex relationships already have legal status under the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law with some of the same rights as marriage. The decision to legally recognize same-sex relationships in Hawaii through the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law was made over a decade ago, and life has gone on in Hawaii without the dire consequences that were predicted.

The problem today is that under the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law, same-sex couples and their families are left without all of the same legal protections that other families have in Hawaii. And the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law cannot be amended to correct these inequities because family rights and protections are not appropriate for the non-family relationships also included in this law. HB 444, HD 1, is therefore needed to correct the inequality of rights and protections in Hawaii's laws for same-sex couples and their families.

We all need to recognize that the social, emotional, and family problems caused by discrimination against gays is a problem for all of us. Gays are part of so many families, and extended families. They are among our valued friends, neighbors, co-workers, in every profession and line of work. When we hurt the gay members of our community, we hurt ourselves. For the health and well-being of all of us, and of all families, please kokua and do justice and fairness by passing HB 444. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: Reshel [resharias@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 5:58 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Categories: Red Category

Testifier: Reshel Arias

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

DEAR SENATORS,

Thank you for your willingness to work tirelessly in behalf of the people of Hawaii. We seek your courage and wisdom to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii and our district will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Should it ever come to a vote again, please vote NO on HB 444.

With grace and respect,

Reshel Arias
92-1021 Luawainui Street
Kapolei, HI 96707

resharias@hawaii.rr.com

From: durell douthit [ddouthit@mac.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:12 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support for the Civil Union Bill

Categories: Red Category

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present written testimony to the Committee; health prevents my appearance in person.

Please report out HB 444, the Civil Union Bill, with a favorable recommendation. I would like to see the Bill become Law.

My name is Durell Douthit. I am retired from the army and my law practice; I am getting up in years; and soon enough the time may come, as it comes to all of us, when I am unable to make important decisions for myself.

I know from my law practice that living wills are not always available, effective, or sufficient. Living wills, like the Laws you enact, are always subject to interpretation. You do not always like the way courts interpret your enactments; and I cannot know who will do the interpreting of my living will when my last days come, nor what their biases and prejudices may be.

That is why I need the reassurance that Abraham Kanamu, my long-time companion, will be able to make decisions that I cannot make. Passage of the Civil Union Bill will give me that assurance.

This is an equal protection matter, not a religious one. Abe and I have been together long enough, we have been close enough, and we have been good enough citizens of Hawaii, that we deserve to have the assurance this Bill will give us, just as long-married couples have.

I note that giving Abe and me this assurance will harm no one.

Please do not let our civil rights be confused with religious matters which we in no way threaten. In fact, most of my professional life has been devoted to encouraging marriage, and to mitigating the tremendous harm that divorce causes children.

The breakup of marriages and the harm it does to children deserves attention by the religious community more than this equal protection Bill does. Especially the unintended harm that vigorous litigation does to children is worthy of attention and it is not getting it. I would happily join any legislator who is concerned to protect marriage in efforts to reform certain litigation practices. However, I feel an entitlement to the peace of mind that a civil union would bring to my last years, and I urge all of you to support the Bill.

There are other equal protection matters that don't directly concern me but that deserve the Committee's attention: the person who sacrifices his career to put his partner through school if the partnership breaks up deserves the protection of the law that a married partner has. Problems with property acquisition and distribution during the partnership; the inability to get temporary relief that married partners can get; the powers and rights that Family Court gives to married partners that are denied to partners who cannot, by law, get married. This is unequal treatment of persons similarly situated, and the Civil Union Bill would remedy the inequality.

But my plea to you remains personal: I want your help, and believe Abe and I have worked together long enough and hard enough to protect Hawaii's children of divorce to deserve it.

Please feel free to call if I can offer any further information.

Durell Douthit
3423 Francis Street

From: mpeary1947@aol.com
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:12 PM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Clarence Nishihara
Subject: *****SPAM***** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Categories: Red Category

FROM: Margaret Peary

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

HEARING DATE: February 24, 2009

TIME: 9 AM

MEASURE NUMBER: HB444 HD1

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

Please do NOT follow in the footsteps of your colleagues in the House Judiciary Committee who unanimously approved HB 444 on February 5, 2009. I was appalled there was not one dissenting voice or vote among them ... no not one! Did their unanimity truly reflect the voices of the constituents for whom they serve, or did they bow to the pressure of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender) voices that day? In reality the LGBT community represents a tiny minority of the Hawaii community at large.

Subsequently the full House voted to approve HB 444 but thankfully, a few brave representatives chose to reflect their opposition to the bill by voting no and I thank them for their vote.

I am going on record as STRONGLY opposing HB 444 HD1 related to Civil Unions for the following reasons:

- 1) Hawaii voters have already voted NO to civil unions. I echo Lt. Gov. Iona's testimony at the February 5, 2009 hearing wherein he requested the Committee to NOT vote on HB 444. Instead, he asked that it be placed on the ballot for the voter's to decide. This is NOT something that should be pushed through the legislature because the issue is too important to family values.
- 2) The Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS 572C (RBA) is already law. As such, it addresses important issues that concern same sex partners (i.e. health care decisions, rights to workers' compensation benefits, rights to family leave under state law, etc.). As I see it, what is being proposed now in the Senate is nothing more than a smoke screen to promote same sex marriage. Please protect traditional marriage and say "NO" to civil unions.
- 3) In the State of California, New Jersey and Vermont where the legislators enacted "domestic partnerships" to address the problems encountered by same-sex couples relative to health care decisions, etc, ultimately the same-sex advocates demanded legislation to impose same-sex marriage. Likewise, in Maine, New Hampshire and Washington where domestic partnership and civil union legislation was adopted, those states are now facing the demands of the LGBT advocates as well. The California voters have twice opposed same-sex marriage referendums. The first time it was overturned by the 9th District Court of Appeals who ruled it to be "unconstitutional." As recently as November, 2008 the California voters again defeated the same-sex

marriage referendum; however, there is a movement afoot in the legislature to push it through the House and Senate. Shame on them!!!

4) Can the State of Hawaii fiscally afford the high cost of the legal battles that will ultimately ensue in the event this Civil Union law is enacted? We're being told by Governor Lingle of the need to drastically slash budgets in every area including health care benefits to the needy and those who are handicapped. Yet the legislature has glibly voted, thus far, to swiftly push this ill-conceived Civil Union legislation through the House? Senators ... I'm imploring you to STOP, LOOK and LISTEN!!!

If the constituents you represent ... and their previous vote/voice on this issue have meaning and value to you, then you MUST OPPOSE HB 444 HD1. If you care about family values and the keiki of your family and the State of Hawaii ... then you MUST OPPOSE HB 444 HD1. If you are concerned about the future fiscal ramifications this legislation will have on a budget that is already burdened by deficits and taxpayers who can ill afford higher taxes ... then you MUST OPPOSE HB 444 HD1. If you take the time to study the current history of the aforementioned states and do NOT want that for the wonderful people of Hawaii whom you serve ... then you MUST OPPOSE HB 444 HD1

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Margaret Peary
91-1010 Kelau Street
Kapolei, HI 96707

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Arnel Bautista [arnel.bautista@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Categories: Red Category

Good morning,

This is Arnel Bautista. I live on 94-1203 Heahea St, in Waipahu.

Please let Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee know that I strongly oppose HB 444 Civil Unions Bill.

I would like to encourage them to protect traditional marriage and say "NO" to civil unions. I want my children to know that a marriage based on how God created us that is between a man and a woman and of the same sex. How can the two of the same sex procreate and continue populating the earth. If they want to raise children how will they explain to that child about procreation and the lifestyle they are living is example they are showing their child. Parents are the greatest teacher or influence in a child's life. Proverbs says "train a child the way he should go, and even when he is old, he will never depart from it." It does not make sense to have a civil union without procreation unless they cannot medically. Just a reminder that the people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage.

*Very respectfully,
Arnel Bautista*

--

As for me and my household we will serve the Lord!

From: Russell Reynolds [struess@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:13 PM
To: JGO Testimony

Categories: Red Category

Testifier: Russell Reynolds
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions !

I believe that "Civil Unions" already has a law in place for benefits.(The Reciprocal Benefits)

I believe that they want to use this for their own purpose to further marriage of same sex. I am a father and I don't want my child exposed to unions other than what God intended.

Please Don't pass this Bill.

Please put me on the list to testify at the hearing.

Thank you,

Russell Reynolds

Gerald Curtis Clay, Jr.
1415 Liholiho Street #1203
Honolulu, HI 96822

February 20, 2009

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1

To The Committee of Senate Judiciary & Government Operations,

I am writing this letter in support of the HB 444 HD1, the Civil Unions Bill. This bill should be passed in order to guarantee all of Hawaii's citizens and taxpayer's equal rights. This is not a marriage issue, nor should it be viewed in religious terms, after all our government was founded on the separation of Church & State. Anyone who is arguing in opposition to this bill due to religious reasons has no right to impose their views on others and their viewpoints should not be taken in to consideration when making a government decision.

Civil Unions and all GLBT rights are the Civil Right's Movement of this time period. All across the country people are making their voices heard, and thankfully in many places progress is being made.

I would like to commend those who authored this bill, as well as those who have already stood up and pledged their support. Again, I strongly urge all members of the House & Senate to do what is right and vote for HB 444 HD1, the Civil Unions Bill.

In all sincerity and with much respect,

Gerald Curtis Clay, Jr.

Date: February 20, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Chair Senator Taniguchi
Vice-Chair Senator Takamine
And Committee Members

From: Chair of the GLBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii – Lance Bateman

Re: HB444 HD1 regarding Civil Unions, hearing on February 24, 2009
Capitol Auditorium
Testimony in Favor of HB444 HD1

I do not intend to repeat my testimony to the House, as this is already part of the record. I would like to thank the House members for their actions – and this committee for their consideration of this important bill.

I would like to address certain aspects of the consideration of HB444 that have been tossed around. I'd also like to repeat that support for Civil Unions in Hawaii has been provided through resolutions approved by the State Democratic Party Convention Delegates in 2006 and 2008, and is given as a supported issue at the federal level by President Obama on the White House web-site.

Some comments have been made that the gay, lesbian and transgendered communities are not discriminated against. I'd simply point to some of the attacks and slurs as evidence of the actual discrimination that exists, besides the often painful experiences many in our communities have undergone. This discrimination is also why the Legislature has in recent years passed laws regarding housing and public accommodations. Discrimination does exist – and must be addressed by the Hawaii government.

History has shown the need, and our government is structured, to protect minorities from the “tyranny of the majority”. Majority opinion has traditionally not been shown to support extension of civil rights to those shut out of full participation in society. This sometimes leads to requiring difficult decisions by elected officials, who are called on to provide equality to all citizens under jurisdiction of the state. It is notable that recent polls show there is a majority support in Hawaii for extension of equal rights to same-sex couples, even though vocal groups continue to oppose.

Consideration has been given as to whether the existing Reciprocal Beneficiary law could be modified to provide equal rights to the GLBT citizens of Hawaii. This is not possible without removing other types of relationships from RB, such as a mother and daughter, and addressing the 541 statute references to responsibilities and rights that come from the State of Hawaii when a civilly licensed relationship is recognized under current marriage laws. An example of the problem areas would be dissolution of a relationship. Currently, this can be done within RB by one party simply notifying the State – the other party (and

children in the household) have no rights, and neither party has any remaining responsibilities to the other. Yet under HB444, this problem would be fully addressed.

The word "marriage" has emotional content that comes into the debate over of HB444. Much consideration was given in the drafting of HB444, and due to the number of statutes that would require modification and reference (541 of them), it was felt the current wording is the clearest. Also, for those who feel the GLBT citizens of Hawaii do not deserve equal rights and responsibilities, even such a change to the wording of HB444 would not be sufficient. It is incumbent on the State of Hawaii to not apply certain religious viewpoints as a reason to deny equal rights and responsibilities to all citizens.

Again, on behalf of the GLBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, and from myself, I deeply appreciate your favorable consideration of HB444.

Lance Bateman
Chair, GLBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii
3070 Holua Place
Honolulu, HI 96819
808-537-2000

Bill Waring

Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Hearing: February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM

Testimony Supporting HB 444 HD1

Aloha,

My name is Bill Waring and I would urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 444 HD1 that grants same-sex couples equal civil rights through the Civil Unions Bill.

As the co-head of our household with my partner William and our two teenage children, we deal every day with the same issues as our heterosexual friends. We have a mortgage and struggle to pay tuition bills for our kids. We participate in community service activities, work hard to do our jobs ethically, vote, do our best to keep our family healthy and even treat ourselves to a movie now and then. And yes, we pay our taxes as responsible citizens. In other words, we are no different than you. And just like you, I didn't "choose" my sexual orientation. It is as natural to me as my brown eyes and my rapidly graying hair. Unfortunately, we have to do all of this under a different set of rules. The State of Hawaii allows heterosexual individuals to form legal, civil partnerships with the person they love and confers rights to that couple that are not available to my partner and I and our family. These are basic protections for our family that are recognized by a growing number of fair-minded states and countries. We are not asking for special rights, we are just asking that you codify equal rights for all families under Hawaii law.

I understand that many people have religious issues and find it difficult to support same-sex marriage, but Civil Unions have nothing to do with forcing any religious entity into condoning my family. I would not want anybody dictating to my church how to define marriage in our faith, and I would not be so presumptuous as to expect I have a right to force that on someone else's church either. But I would also remind you that in our country, and in our state, we are not supposed to be subjected to the religious beliefs of any one group at the expense of our civil liberties. Civil Unions are recognition of the inherent equality of our relationship and family in the eyes of civil law and should not be based on religious doctrine.

There are faiths that celebrate our family and we feel welcomed by them. I wish for the day when all religions recognize that my relationship has no bearing on someone else's marriage. As you are deciding how to cast your vote, I would encourage you to ask yourself the question: "How does recognizing Bill and William's lifetime commitment to each other and their family threaten **YOUR** marriage, or anybody else's marriage?" I believe you will come to the conclusion that it is the moral, fair thing to do and I encourage you to support the bill.

In conclusion, I would respectfully remind you that Civil Unions are supported by our President and Vice-President and more and more of our elected officials nationwide. Recent polls also indicate overall support across the country and here in our home state. Hawaii, as a land of tolerance and diversity, should be leading on this issue. I have faith that you will do the right thing by casting your votes in favor of HB 444 HD1 here in Committee and again when it gets to the floor of the Senate. I believe that you know in your hearts it is the right thing to do.

Mahalo for your time, your consideration and your vote.

Bill Waring
1212 Nuuanu Avenue, #1108
Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: 927-9241
Email: alohabillw@aol.com

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

FEBRUARY 20, 2009

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Our name is Jerry & Karen Mancao and a Makakilo resident. I am in **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444**

On November 3, 1998 the people of Hawaii decided to reserve marriage between opposite sex couples. And as Senators for the people I encourage you to vote for the **PEOPLE'S WILL NO TO CIVIL UNIONS.** (Please Vote no to HB444)

I am also a member of HGEA and **DO Not** agree with their position.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444**

Respectfully submitted

Jerry Mancao

Karen Mancao

From: Patricia Foley [alexanmaui@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:54 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: pafol@clearwire.net
Subject: Civil Union recognition bill

To Whom It May Concern,

I am emailing to make my opinion heard that I oppose homosexual civil unions in the upcoming HB 444 HD1. I feel marriage is supposed to be between a man and a woman, not between people of the same gender. Please do not legally sanction, recognize or condone same-sex unions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Patricia Alexa Foley, MA, CSAC

808-242-9733 X 29

alexanmaui@earthlink.net

Being Forced to Accept Men as my equal

I find it hard to believe that many of our elected officials have accepted same sex marriages, civil unions, and domestic partnerships as an acceptable life style in our society. The House of Representatives voted in favor of House Bill 444 Civil Unions. I strongly oppose this bill, because morally it is not right, and we should not be forced to accept a group of people because they have decided their life style is morally ok.

I KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THAT SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORALLY WRONG AND DEMONIC. I KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THAT IF SAME SEX MARRIAGES ARE ALLOWED, WE ARE GIVING APPROVAL FOR THIS DEMONIC SPIRIT TO CONTROL OUR CHILDREN, OUR SOCIETY, AND OUR FUTURE. I know this to be true, because I am guilty of the action. It is a behavior that torments your conscious, even in the midst of the act, that this is not right. It is a feeling of being controlled by another force, and if you give in to the pleasure you receive, you can be controlled by it. It is an action, like any other sinful act, that must be confessed. I made the decision to try it. My reason for consenting does not change the fact that what I was doing was wrong, and regardless of the feeling, it did not change how I felt within. It is a natural awkwardness and uneasiness. I was not saved, but inside I felt like I was doing something wrong and I felt like I was being violated.

The Senate was created to protect the rights of individual states and safeguard minority opinion. Their decision to pass that bill affects my future, the future of my children, and the future of my grandchildren as well as every other individual that believes in the moral principal of marriage being a union between man and woman.

In 1975, the Legislature enacted ethics laws regarding standards of conduct for legislators (1 MRSA §§1011-1023). The Legislature cannot legislate morals and the resolution of ethical problems must indeed rest largely in the individual conscience. This law makes it illegal for legislators to legislate morals. **Morals**- is defined as pertaining to character and behavior from the point of view of right and wrong; concerned with the principals of right and wrong. **Character** is defined as the combination of qualities or traits distinguishing any person or class of persons. **Behavior** is defined as the manner or action of a machine, substance, or organism. The number one behavior that most find repulsive and disgusting is having a knowledge and understanding of the sexual nature that these individuals practice.

Our moral values concerning marriage should not be changed, or compromised, devalued, or disgraced by the sight of seeing men together with men or seeing women together with women, I know that God created humans in His image, intentionally male and female, each bringing a uniqueness with they join as one. And Marriage is a sacred covenant designed and blessed by God representing the love Christ has for us.

I am not against anyone having the right, to decide, and then deciding to live with their partner. They can do what ever makes them happy, but I am strongly against them comparing how they live as being acceptable, or equal morally or ethically in any way to the relationship I have with my husband. I am against them comparing what they do as deserving of the same respect and the same benefits that my husband and I receive.

It is wrong when legislature, are accepting their demands and forcing me and millions of other people to accept their sinful lifestyle, legalize their sin, support their sin, and say that their sin is right and equal to what I have within my marriage. You are wrong, and you are violating my constitutional rights. You are imposing their immorality and their sinful life style on me, my family, and my right to live in accordance to what I know to be true.

These individuals are demanding the elected official's **diminish and destroy the standards of marriage and my position as a wife and as a women within my marriage. You are trying to pass a law that forces me to accept a man, who cannot have children, as my equal within a marriage. You are saying that it is ok for a man to represent me as a woman, and it is ok for a woman to represent a man within a marriage.**

I hate the life style they have chosen to live, do I have the right to impose my belief and seek legal actions to stop them from being in a same sex relationship? No Do I have the right to say they cannot drink, smoke, or eat apple pie? No; Then why is it right for them to impose their belief on me?

Many of you do not believe as I do, many of you do not believe that sin and especially this sinful act is an abomination to God. I have rights also. Why have the legislators accepted their lies as having validity?

The gays and lesbians want benefits, tax write off, parental rights, the list of benefits is over 1400 state and federal benefits that gays and lesbians would be entitled to if they were able to marry. The government and business owners are in control of who receive theses benefits, It is not right for these people to infringe on my belief and my rights, just because they want to protect their money and receive benefits.

If they want benefits, then the government should enact a law to give them benefits. Their wants and their sexual preference as a life style should not take precedence over the truth, what is morally right, and what was established at the beginning of creation. **Marriage : the union of man and women.** Be not deceived, the very act of accepting their sin causes great damage to everyone, those involved and those not involved. Truth never changes, does not compromise, and will always be honored by God.

There are many of you who have accepted words that are untrue. You have been deceived into believing sin has rights. I bind that spirit of deception in the name of Jesus. I take authority over this spirit of deception. Lord you are my God, and the only true and living God, and it is your will to honor your word and give to those who have been taken captive by the devil a spirit of repentance to acknowledge the truth.

I share with you the truth.

Demons control people by encouraging them to depart from the truth. Take heed and do not let your hearts become evil and unbelieving in the truth and in God. Demons seduce people and entice them to surrender their virtue (any admirable quality or merit, our general moral goodness). Demons entice people to surrender their chastity (pure and modest, as in conduct). Demons influence people to operate against the word of God (e.g. the sanctity of marriage) and to meet the demands of their sex

through perversions and permissqueity. Demons influence people into believing they are in control and are doing what is right.

The agents of demons urge people to accept doctrines that will damn the soul. False teachers are agents of demons (2 Cor 11: 14-15) Every religion and every person who denies the reality of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Sin, Sickness, Satan, Demons, Hell, Heaven, and the fundamental doctrine of Scripture are as much of Satan and demons, as the Bible and Christianity are of God. Take heed and hear.

The word of God speaks of these very acts in 2 Timothy CH 3. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, fond of money, proud, no reverence, living in unnatural affections (homosexuality), and despisers of truth and of good men, lovers of pleasure. Denying the truth and having no faith that one can live a holy life in this present time. The word of God also states that they, those who resist the truth shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifested unto all men.

Why are we being forced to compromise our rights, our morals, our belief, and our values and accept the unrighteous ways of others? Same sex marriages, civil unions, or domestic partnerships' is a life style that individuals choose to live, and I agree that this is a matter that everyone including the government should butt out. Don't infringe on my rights. This is however a matter of importance to everyone when the gays and lesbians' want society to accept their belief even when it is morally wrong.

Be not deceived, the very act of accepting their sin causes great damage to everyone, those involved and those not involved. Truth never changes, does not compromise, and will always be honored by God.

I am a Christian. I cannot make anyone accept God or live as I believe. I cannot force my beliefs on individuals. This is a life style that I have chosen to live, and like wise no one should be allowed to force their belief on me. It is an insult to me, for a man to be allowed as my equal. I am appalled at the thought of a man even acting as a women.

Moral issues should not be mixed with legal issues.

Tyzenia R Williams

From: Balarranaga@aol.com
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 7:06 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

From: Beverly Larranaga
To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)
Measure Number: HB 444 HD1
Subj: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I would like urge you to vote in **opposition to HB444**. I believe this bill will open up a Pandora's Box for the people of Hawaii now and for future generations. As an active member in this community and Administration Assistant for a non-profit foster/adoption agency I see what happens to children who do not have the nuclear family to raise them in a balanced environment with a mother and father. I am afraid of the "slippery slope" that HB444 will start.
Mahalo for your service to our state.

Beverly Larranaga
91-1010 Kelau St
Kapolei, HI 96707

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Judy A Daniels [judydaniels@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 7:09 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Please support HB444

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify by email. My name is Dr. Judy Daniels and I am a professor of higher education in the state of Hawaii and a resident of 19 years. I want to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept, yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Thanks you,
Dr. Judy Daniels
47-185 Iuiu Street
Kaneohe HI 96744

--
Dr. Judy Daniels,
Professor

From: Peter Ehrhorn [ehrhornp001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 7:34 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in favor of HB 444

My name is Erick Peter Ehrhorn and I support this bill. While I really favor gay marriage I view this bill as a first step towards full equality aka gay marriage. Thank you for considering this bill and I hope you pass it.

This bill will basically allow gay couples to enter into a commitment similar to marriage. This does not mean that everyone has to enter into same sex relationships. It only applies to those gay couples who have a strong commitment. Heterosexual couples would not be affected. Churches need not be affected if they don't want to acknowledge the gays in their church. Some of the opponents of this measure seem to believe that it would apply to everyone and everyone has to become gay.

From the early nineties I have been in favor of gays forming a committed relationship. I felt that this would reduce the spread of aids and it would allow loving same sex couples to run normal lives. Without such a union, parents could prevent a lover from visiting their mate in a hospital or attending a funeral.

My mother used to be a member of the NAACP because she felt that no one should be denied freedom and the pursuit of happiness just because of their color. If she could speak today I know she would approve of this bill as equality and fairness were at the center of her soul. Since she can't I will. This country has trampled on civil rights during the past 20 years and this has to stop.

Hawaii used to be in the forefront of individual liberty. We were among the first to pass the ERA and to allow a woman's right to choose. Hawaii has one of the most liberal state constitution which I think is partly due to how the Japanese were treated during WWII. We should not make the same mistake in this new century by denying a group of people equal rights.

Again thank you for considering this bill and please support this bill so that Hawaii will truly be known as the Aloha state.

Best Regards,
Erick Peter Ehrhorn
254 Kaha St.
Kailua Hawaii, 96734

Via E-mail: JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Daniel Gluck Supporting HB 444 HD1,
Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of HB 444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions.

Although I believe the Legislature should allow same-sex couples the right to marry, I believe that HB 444 is a significant step in the right direction. This is clear and simple: it's about equal rights for all of Hawaii's people. Please pass this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel Gluck
Resident of Senate District 13

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 7:56 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: thomas-paine1948@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Thomas Paine
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: thomas-paine1948@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/20/2009

Comments:

This bill is a repeat of the old "same sex" marriage amendment that was defeated by popular vote in a past election. The name has changed but the intent is the same.

Who introduced this bill? It appears that he/she/shim does not care about what the people of this state voted.

As a member of the DCP, I feel the those of you who run for public office serve the party and not the people.

February 20, 2009

To: The Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Margaret Scow
Hearing Date & Time: Tuesday, February 24th at 9 am
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium
Measure Number: HB 444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions
Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB-444 HD1**

Aloha my name is Margaret Scow and I am writing to you today about the tragic bill that you are voting on: HB-444 HD1. This bill is a travesty in that it would recognize 2 men or 2 women in the same way as a married male & female couple.

In the Jewish Torah, and in the Old Testament in the Bible, in the book of Leviticus, it says:
Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.
Leviticus 18:22 KJV

The word "abomination" in the original Hebrew, in which the Torah and the Old Testament in the Bible were originally written, the word abomination is to-ebah (pronounced to-ay-baw). To'ebah means: something disgusting, an abhorrence; espec. Idolatry or an idol – abomination, abominable thing; abominable. To'ebah means abomination; loathsome, detestable thing. So if you think the Bible has changed, it hasn't. Homosexuality is still an abomination.

HB-444 HD1 is **not** about Civil Rights or the "respect for the lives and beliefs of others". And Civil Unions **does change the definition of marriage** - it extends the definition of marriage.

1. In Section 1- 10 of the bill, it would allow homosexual couples that were married in Canada or a Scandanavian Country or wherever Same-sex Marriage is legal to move to Hawaii and be recognized as a legally married couple.
2. In Section 1 - 9 of this bill, it gives homosexual couples the "Same benefits, protections and responsibilities as marriage." The Hawaii Marriage Law (chapter 572) would extend the definition of family.
3. Section 3 of this bill, gives homosexuals the right to adopt children.

In addition, this bill will not end discrimination against homosexuals. Rather, this bill will **begin discrimination against Christians and those who believe in traditional marriages and families**. This bill will not end hate. Rather this bill will **promote homosexual behavior** and sexual lewdness in Hawaii's children and teenagers. This bill will not give all men and women "**equality**", rather, this bill will give a special privilege to a small group of people whose behavior is an abomination in the eyes of God.

First of all, the obvious, is that 2 men or 2 women cannot produce a child, naturally. The nature of their relationship being unnatural should be enough to stop us from going forward to consider legalizing such a relationship. But since it is obviously not enough, I will go on.

Our nation consists of 50 States and within each of these 50 States are cities and within these cities are communities and neighborhoods. This bill will effect not just Hawaii, but all 50 States, all cities within those States and all communities and neighborhoods. This bill will affect all people in the

United States just as Same Sex Marriage in Massachusetts has affected us, not directly but indirectly as a group of people (70%) who are for Traditional Marriage.

As I read the documentation of how Civil Unions has affected the State of Massachusetts, at first, I was alarmed and then I cried for our nation's children. The truth and the bottom line is that the homosexuals want to infiltrate our children's minds. I am parent who will not allow that to happen to my children. Homosexuals are not going to tell me how to raise my children and teach them perverse sex education, either by example, innuendo or in reality. Homosexual Activists' first step is to legalize Civil Unions. But it doesn't stop there as the State of Massachusetts has found out.

Every Senator needs to read "What same-sex "marriage" has done to Massachusetts, It's far worse than most people realize" (October 20, 2008) by Brian Camenker before voting on this Bill HB-444 HD1.

www.hawaiifamilyforum.org/documents/2008WhatSSMhasdonetoMass.pdf

This legislation will affect our children not only in the Public Schools but every where they go. This legislation will affect society as we know it today. Even the High School children know the ramifications of this bill. I can't believe we are even considering this bill. If I was the Chair of this Committee, not only would I vote against HB-444 HD1 but I would question if anyone voting for this bill had Hawaii's best interest at heart.

Economy

IF this bill were to pass, taxpayers would be giving an additional approximate \$1 million dollars in HIV and AIDS treatment, alone. Of course, this number does not include the cost of the treatment of STD's, Viral Diseases, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. The State also gives taxpayer money for providing prevention services to at-risk populations consisting of "Men who have sex with Men" and "transgender individuals". We would have to give additional money to the Department of Health, Communicable Disease Division, and the STD/AIDS Prevention Branch to provide HIV prevention services in the state of Hawaii. Of course **\$1 million additional dollars** for HIV & AIDS treatment alone is a low estimation because this bill HB-444 HD 1 would also open the doors for homosexuals from other countries to come to Hawaii. So homosexual couples that were united in Canada or a Scandanavian country could reside in Hawaii and receive the services that I mentioned above according to Section 10 of HB-444 HD 1. On behalf of the many Traditional Couples and Families in Hawaii, **why should we have to pay for the homosexual perverse lifestyle or "abomination" as God calls it in the form of Civil Unions?**

Hawaii has already faced hard economic times and only God knows what we will face in the upcoming months. But the Senators and other Legislators who support this bill HB-444 HD1 want to spend taxpayers dollars legalizing Civil Unions and as a result will have to use more of Hawaii taxpayer's money on **programs to prevent HIV, AIDS, STD's, Viral Diseases, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B**. Why would you want to allow Same-sex couples into our State with their Diseases when we already had on Dec. 31, 2007, - **3,011 cases of AIDS**. And of those cases of AIDS that were reported to the Hawaii Dept. of Health, over **58% of these individuals are deceased**. It's just 14 months since these statistics have been released and the individuals with AIDS are no longer with us today. That is really sad that they are not around any longer, yet people don't love these homosexuals enough to tell them that their lifestyle is endangering their lives. I am one person who will tell them the truth. Homosexuals, your lifestyle is not healthy for you and because I love you as a person, I will ask you to change your lifestyle so that you will be around in the next 14 months. The millions of dollars it will cost Hawaii directly or indirectly to legalize Civil Unions is just the tip of the Iceberg. Because in Massachusetts where Same-Sex Marriage was legalized, **Domestic**

Violence has skyrocketed and cost Massachusetts taxpayers \$350,000.00 in 2008, just to deal with the "extreme dysfunction" and violence resulting from same-sex relationships. This bill would be the beginning of an avalanche of "changes" that will all **cost taxpayers lots and lots of money**. We would be paying for books that don't represent the Traditional Family. We would be paying for programs and seminars indoctrinating people on how to "accept homosexual marriage". I for one don't want to use my tax dollars on that. I believe we should use our tax dollars to help Hawaii's homeless and to stimulate our economy, not crush our economy by legalizing Civil Unions. **The state of Massachusetts gave \$700,000 of taxpayer dollars to the Massachusetts Commission on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth....**I emphasize the word **Youth**. The Commission on GLBTY is a radical, militant homosexual group who target **children in the schools**. Once again, I emphasize the word **children**. **Don't you see an agenda here?**

Business

Also, if Civil Unions were passed, many business owners will move their families and their businesses elsewhere. That would cause Hawaii's economy to suffer even more! At a time where Hawaii needs to strengthen our economy, we don't need businesses closing down. And although groups like HGEA are backing this legislation, they are backing it as a group and not as individuals. There are many members of the HGEA who are against Civil Unions. I could go on and on about the affects of this bill on businesses but I will go on to the most important people this bill would affect, our children.

Children's Best Interest is NOT Civil Unions

The Children would be the ones to suffer the most if Civil Unions were passed. As I stated at the Hearing with the House Judiciary Committee, children's best interest is **NOT** Civil Unions. The majority of our society is made up of traditional families. Without traditional families, we would not have a stable society. As the owner of a Day Care Center, I have a passion for nurturing children and for promoting what is best for them. Civil Unions is not best for Hawaii's children. Even, The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers programs to strengthen Traditional Marriages for the sake of the children. Statistics show that in Non-Traditional Homes, where a Mother and a Father are not present that:

- There is an Increase in Violent Crime by almost 90 percent
- The murder rate is the highest among children raised in Non-Traditional Homes
- Gang involvement is almost twice as high
- 75 percent of juvenile criminals come from those raised in Non-Traditional Homes.

Furthermore, the children raised in Non-Traditional Homes are more likely:

- To be abused (abuse is up to 40 times more likely if children are in a home without a mother and a father)
- To end up in jail as adults
- To suffer depression, suffer mental illness, and need psychiatric treatment
- To be expelled from school, repeat a grade, have behavior problems
- To use drugs and be sexually active

God's Warning

In addition, homosexuals are not able to produce children, God's way. So they want to adopt our children, teach our children homosexual behavior (just as they have done in Massachusetts where Same-Sex Marriage has been legalized) and turn our children into homosexuals. Our children are innocent and anyone that wants to pervert them should hear God's warning in Matthew 18:5 & 6:

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. **But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

Don't rebel against God. Don't pervert our children. Don't pass HB-444 HD1!

Strongly Opposed to HB-444 HD1,

Margaret Scow

From: Suzanne Maurer [suzanne.maurer@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 8:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: NO to HB 444 HD 1

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members
Roland E. Maurer
123 D Maunalua Avenue
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821
808-395-9527

Re: HB-444--PLEASE VOTE NO

Aloha to each of you,

I am writing to urge you to use your vote on HB 444 to vigorously oppose civil unions. The people of Hawaii have spoken clearly about this in 1998, affirming that a clear majority of Hawaii residents believe that marriage should remain between one man and one woman. We do not need this new law to re-open divisive and controversial battle already settled by the people.

You are aware that we already have a reciprocal beneficiary law, passed in 1997. HB 444 is unnecessary to protect rights, and Civil unions will simply be a tool to re-define marriage.

Data is irrefutable: children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and a dad. We must think of our keiki, and not indulge in selfish catering to the desires of a small sector of adults by rewriting our most basic marriage laws.

Please do the right thing and oppose this with your voice and your vote. Mahalo for your consideration of your constituencies.

Mahalo,

Roland Maurer

Testifier: Kyla Ozoa
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, and Vice-Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations:

My name is Kyla Ozoa and I am a Catholic Filipino-Chinese girl born and raised here in Hawaii, particularly in Kalihi. I am also currently an undergraduate student and the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I would like to thank Chair Karamatsu and Vice Chair Ito for the opportunity to testify and for hearing this bill. I am testifying in strong support of house bill 444 HD1.

As a female part of the LGBTI community and someone that knows others a part of this community, the passing of this bill would play an important role to my life and to those I care about. My family has also been extremely supportive of me and has made it clear to me that they love me no matter my sexual preference. I feel that this bill is a step towards equality and happiness, which is what our country prides itself in being about, along with our state.

For me this is personal because I feel I should be able to be with whom I want to be with, not because of their gender/sex, but because that is the person I have fallen in love with. This bill will allow me, no matter the gender/sex, to spend my life with exactly who I find myself in love with and find I want to dedicate my life to. I want to be able to visit the one I'm with if ever they're in the hospital, to start a family with the one I choose, and not have to worry about whether or not they are a man or a woman. It hurts me to know that I may not be able to get these privileges, especially as I see my sister is gaining all the rights and "equal" opportunities with her soon to be husband.

Another reason is because I do have other family members and friends that are a part of this community. It hurts me to hear them talk about not being able to legally be with the one they love, or not being able to start a family, just because of the current inequality going on. As any other loving person, I want nothing other than to see those I care about happy and content with their lives. Currently, this is what causes the most concern, especially around this age, because we dream of being able to spend our lives with our "true love". I don't find it fair or right that we reserve this for those only of heterosexual orientation.

I can't help but think that this is like any other oppression that society has put upon other minority groups. For example, the oppression of women, blacks and immigrants, all underwent inequality struggles at different times. Society at that time also found it okay to oppress these people, and I feel like this time is no different the LGBTI community. We are being oppressed because we are seen as different and people fear different. But times are changing and I feel that our country prides itself in moving forward, and that's exactly what I feel the passing of this bill will be. It would be fighting inequality, just like all the other movements. I was taught we are all equal and deserve to

be happy, but with this all going on I can't help but feel that this is only for those of heterosexual orientation. As long as this type of inequality amongst homosexual and heterosexual couples go on, I can't help but think that our society is finding it okay to oppress other people, take away the happiness, and actually dehumanize regular human beings, just because of sexual preference.

I want to be happy; I want to see my friends and family share in that same happiness as everyone else. This bill is one I am fighting for and will always stand in strong support of. To me, this personally determines whether or not I am living in an equal or unequal society. I am hoping that you want to live in as much as an equal society as much as I do, and find it in your heart that this really is a matter of allowing two people that are in love each other, to share the same legal rights as every other heterosexual couple.

Mahalo and God Bless,
Kyla Ozoa

Address:
2003 Eluwene Street
Honolulu, HI 96819

From: Suzanne Maurer [suzanne.maurer@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 8:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: NO to HB 444 HD 1

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members
Suzanne L. Maurer
123 D Maunalua Avenue
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821
808-395-9527

Re: HB-444--PLEASE VOTE NO

Aloha to each of you,

I am writing to urge you to use your vote on HB 444 to vigorously oppose civil unions. The people of Hawaii have spoken clearly about this in 1998, affirming that a clear majority of Hawaii residents believe that marriage should remain between one man and one woman. We do not need this new law to re-open divisive and controversial battle already settled by the people.

You are aware that we already have a reciprocal beneficiary law, passed in 1997. HB 444 is unnecessary to protect rights, and Civil unions will simply be a tool to re-define marriage.

Data is irrefutable: children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and a dad. We must think of our keiki, and not indulge in selfish catering to the desires of a small sector of adults by rewriting our most basic marriage laws.

Please do the right thing and oppose this with your voice and your vote. Mahalo for your consideration of your constituencies.

Aloha ke Akua ia 'okou,

Suzanne Maurer

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 9:08 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: julieohara@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Julie Ohara
Organization: Individual
Address: 91-1051 Makahaiaku Street Kapolei, HI 96707
Phone: 8086746039
E-mail: julieohara@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/20/2009

Comments:

I am against the House Bill 444. I want to have only traditional marriages in Hawaii. It does not just affect those people who want civil unions. It will affect our children - their thinking on same-sex marriage, it will trickle down and affect other laws and people! Please do not pass this bill - I am totally against it. Thank you. - A concerned Hawaii-born citizen.

Janet Takushi
1380 Aupula Place
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

TESTIMONY
STRONG OPPOSITION TO H.B. 444 HD1

RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS
HEARING DATE: TUES, FEB 24, 2009
HEARING TIME: 9:00AM
LOCATION: STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

Honorable State Senate Judiciary Committee:
Senator Taniguchi, Senator Takamine, Senator Bunda, Senator Gabbard,
Senator Nishihara, Senator Slom,

Compelling state interest is the ONLY reason for the issuance of Marriage or Civil Union licenses. The original compelling reason for state monitoring of Marriage was for the purpose of protecting the unborn from the scourge of Sexually Transmitted Diseases. These STDs are a cause of major retardation and disabilities in the young.

At present we have an epidemic of STD's among our teen population. It is for the purpose of curing these diseases before conception that the State MAY have a compelling interest in encouraging marriage and issuing Marriage Licenses. The State Health Department has stopped using this important tool to monitor and stem the tide of STD's. The State has sorely neglected its role in the protection of the society as a whole and individuals in specific. The privacy issue is not valid when society is under so great a threat. We have a compelling interest to certify that people are CURED of STD's before they are given a License from the State to procreate and its privileges .

The present provision for Domestic Partnership provides benefits for a wide variety of relationships. It is not based on a gender or sexual relationship. It is for the purpose of providing all the needed benefits that are equitable between persons of any relationship. If there is some other benefit that Domestic Partnership does not provide it is better to amend the law. This has been done in California.

Civil Unions MUST INCLUDE A HEALTH CLEARANCE if the state is to have a compelling interest in granting these licenses..

At present OTHER STATES ARE SENDING THEIR HIV-AIDS PATIENTS TO HAWAII ,WHERE THEY CAN GET EXTENSIVE BENEFITS AND HELP AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR CITIZENS. If this bill is passed we will not only become a destination for those who would procure a civil union but for those who are dealing with serious health issues. Our State Health Department cannot afford to encourage this influx of people who have not contributed to our state but who are willing to take advantage of our generous State Health Care System.

Please oppose HB 444 HD1 because it is not in the best interest of the State of Hawaii.

Thank you,
Janet Takushi

From: Malia Gibson [maliagibson@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 9:31 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Malia Gibson in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Malia Gibson
PO Box 10874
Honolulu, HI 96816

From: L Horio [sharily@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 8:17 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: NO TO BILL 444

Categories: Green Category

VOTING NO TO BILL 444

From: Kiyo and John [kjmaui@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony

Categories: Green Category

If you have any decency, you will pass the Civil Unions bill.
John and Kiyo Miller

From: Sinclair B. Coghill [coghill431@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 8:02 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Oppose HB444, HD1

Categories: Green Category

I oppose HB444, HD1. I am asking legislators not to pass this bill. Majority of Hawaii's citizens voted no for same sex marriage. Keep marriage sacred. God does. Just say NO!

Zelei Abordo
1727 S Beretania St
Honolulu, HI 96826

From: Constantine Nightingdale [cnightingdale@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 6:25 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: WE STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 - CIVIL UNION

Categories: Green Category

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 - CIVIL UNION

ACTS Foundation
Rev. Ralph & Susan McIntosh, President

Hawaii Dream Service Center, Constantine Nightingdale, President

Agape Bible College Hawaii Campus
President: Rev. Dr. Ieti S. Mageo

Beth Israel Ministries
Rabbi Daniel Vargas, President

Christ Centered Consulting
Donna Gamboa, President, & Debra Murray

Christian Voice of Hawaii
Leon Siu, President

Christians in Real Estate
Jerry Young, President

Chuck Colson's Angel Tree
Kelly Joy Akiu, Hawaii Director

Dads Against Drugs (DAD)
William (Will) Malina, President

Fiction Readers
Eric Butler, President & John Dunaway

Fishnet Ministries
Bonnie Holcomb, Chaplain

Gideon's International
Ron Needham, Area Director, Hawaii

Good News Jail & Prison Ministry
Dennis Yokota, Executive Director

Grace 4U Ministries
Nicollette Blout, President

Hawaii Community Land Trust
Carol Steele, Secretary / Treasurer

Hawaii Helps Disabilities
Kimberly Selden, Founder

Hawaii Pacific Christian Community Foundation C. Nightingdale, Chairman

HE Reigns Christian Network
Lee lane, Executive Director

Healing Rooms of Honolulu
John & Linda Keough, Hawaii Directors

Heart Light Ministries
Phyllis Ramia, President

Hollywood Prayer Network
Barbara Hester, Hawaii Director

Ho'olohe Pono
Moani Sitch, Executive Director

International Dance Academy
Colleen Namura, President

Island Christian Guide
Paul & Cheryl Okimoto, Publishers

Island Women Empowered by God
Lynn Reynolds , President

Island Women Restore Lives
Jodi Akau, President

It's All His, It's All God's Ministry
Nathan Paikai, President

A2 Media
Greg Andermann, President

Brother Ben Prison Ministries
Ben Hill, President

C12
Al Moi

Market Place Ministries
GoJes H.S., President

Marriage On The Spot
Kent & Elisabeth Kitagawa, Hawaii Directors

Mercy Ministries International
Pastor Helena Corcoran, President

Nutrition & Education

Dr. Judy Paikai

Operation Christmas Child / Franklin & Billy Graham Ministries Rebecca Woodland, Hawaii
Director

Prison Ministry

Eddie Ochoa, Chaplain

River of Life Mission

Bob Merchant, Executive Director

SADAKA International Dance Company

Deborah Bear Barbour, President

Salem Broad Casting

Dave Serron, Sales Manager

Shelter of Wisdom

Carolina Jesus, President

Sons of Issacar

Pastor Eric Hurd, President

Surfing the Nation

Tom Bauer, President

KWHE TV 14

Tony Boquer, General Manager

Logo's Bookstore of Hawaii

Carl Ashizawa, Manager

The Healing Community

Dr. Wayne Nickens, Dr. John Char, Pastor Eric Hurd, Pastor Rick Irvin & Cheryl Toyofuku,
R.N.

The Open Door Academy

Tom Mcree, President/CEO

Victory Ohana Prison Ministries

Gary Shields, President

Victory Outreach

Tony Velasco, Executive Director Hawaii

Waikiki Beach Outreach

Robert "Bob" Erb, President

Willie L. Burrus

Windward Spouse Abuse Shelter

Avis Jarvis, Executive Director

Youth Vision

Randy & Julie Shiroma, President

From: Terri Yoshinaga [mztee22@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 8:31 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Categories: Green Category

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committees,

The Bible is God's Word, what our forefathers upheld. During the years some people have taken upon themselves to change this rules set in writing by our God the only God. Look at the world today. By going against God's rules and not honoring him is setting everyone up for disaster. I believe that God's Word is the truth and only truth. If more of us upheld and live by honoring God's commandments and rules, we could have a much better world. Each time you change the laws like this you are defying God. Please accept the vote in 1998 opposing same sex parnters. Do not change the name to Civil Union and vote again on the same bill. Don't we have more important issues to work on than one that has been dead and resurrected by man and not God.

Thank you for your time and may God Bless each and everyone of you,
God Bless America! Hawaii too!
Amen

Sincerely,

Terri Yoshinaga
a concered voter.

**Hawaii State Senate
Judiciary Committee**

Testimony in **Strong Support** of HB444

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, members of the Judiciary Committee,

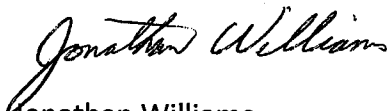
Today, you will and have heard from, many people claiming their religious beliefs somehow entitle them to oppress other Americans. Homosexual acts between consenting adults are legal. Gay men and women are required by our society to pay their taxes and to obey all the laws that all other Americans are to follow.

Why then is there any doubt what the Hawaii State Legislators are supposed to do. To pass the "Civil Unions Bill" will not infringe or negate the rights heterosexuals have to marry. It will allow gay members of our society to live in equality with the life partner of their own choosing.

Personally I am disgusted with those who demand the right to deny others what should be their inherent right, all the while hiding behind the veil of religion.

Please pass HB 444. It's the right thing to do and its about time!!!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Jonathan Williams
2281 Ala Wai
Honolulu, HI 96815

SANDRA G. Y. YOUNG

Attorney at Law
Pearlridge Office Center, Suite 402
98-211 Pali Momi Street
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
Telephone: (808) 487-8464

Fax: 586-6659

February 21, 2009

Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Sen. Dwight Takamine
Sen. Robert Bunda
Sen. Mike Gabbard
Sen. Clarence Nishihara
Sen. Sam Slom

Re: Opposition to HB 444 HD1 Civil Union
Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.

Dear Senators Taniguchi, Takamine, Bunda, Gabbard, Nishihara and Slom:

I am strongly opposed to the proposed Civil Union HB 444 for the following reasons.

As an attorney who believes in democracy and a government for the people and by the people, I was disappointed to see that so many legislators in the House have ignored the will of the people and have passed a discriminatory bill, particularly one that contains many legal defects. Over a decade ago, we, the people of Hawaii, voted by an overwhelming seventy percent against allowing a plurality of the justices on the Hawai'i Supreme Court in *Baehr vs. Lewin* to determine that same-sex marriage would be the law of the land. We trusted you and the democratic process over the Court and voted to give you, the Legislature, the authority to define marriage.

Consistent with the will of the people, you passed legislation that defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman. You also passed legislation to give reciprocal beneficiary rights to unmarried persons.

Unlike the Civil Union bill before this legislature, the Reciprocal Beneficiaries law is non-discriminatory because it gives benefits to unmarried persons, including relatives and same-sex couples. While the benefits under the Reciprocal Beneficiaries bill may be less than those given to married couples, the answer is not to pass a discriminatory bill, like the Civil Union bill, but to enact laws which expand the benefits given to reciprocal beneficiaries. Unlike the Civil Union bill, the Reciprocal Beneficiaries law is morally neutral; it does not judge or favor one type of relationship/behavior over another. Why should the Legislature enact discriminatory and morally controversial laws, like the Civil Union bill, when improving the non-discriminatory, morally neutral Reciprocal Beneficiaries law would achieve the same just outcome for all unmarried couples?

Civil Union Bill
February 21, 2009
Page Two

Once again, we ask that you heed the voice of the people of this state and to vote against same-sex marriage. In my view, because the civil union bill mirrors the marriage laws of this state, a civil union is same-sex marriage -- it simply has a different name.

Credible research confirms that children do best with two opposite-sex parents, and that the absence of a father or a mother can make a lasting difference in a child's development. Children of a same-sex relationship could be permanently deprived of a legal mother or a legal father and an opposite-sex role model.

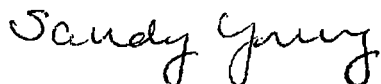
Furthermore, as a family law attorney, I was surprised at the number of legal defects in this poorly drafted bill. Although the House attempted to correct one defect in HB 444 to exclude same-sex couples in a reciprocal beneficiary relationship, it does not exclude couples who are in a domestic partnership from another jurisdiction. There are many other defects and problems in the bill I would like to address if I am given an opportunity to testify.

According to the Department of Health, since 1997, there have been approximately 1,577 reciprocal-beneficiary relationships, or about 131 per year. Is there a pressing need to pass a bill which contains so many defects?

Our state and country are facing an economic crisis of epic proportions. We should focus on solving our pressing economic problems rather than using our limited resources to redefine marriage contrary to the express will of the people.

For the foregoing reasons, I ask that you oppose the Civil Union bill (HB 444). Mahalo nui loa for your attention and for your service to the State of Hawaii.

Very truly yours,



SANDRA YOUNG

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Capitol Auditorium
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions - STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony to this committee. I would like to express my strong support for House Bill 444 HD 1- Civil Unions.

The Constitution of the United States of America state 'all men are created equal' and is the basis of the freedoms of this great country. Yet the rights of homosexuals have yet to rise to the same level. We are denied our basic rights of equality for marriage of same-sex couples and their families. The esteemed members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee has a historic opportunity to correct this grave injustice and will be remembered accordingly for making a brave decision.

The majority of the public supports civil unions as does President Obama. According to the White House Web site, President Obama "supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples." While we prefer equality under the laws governing marriage, the bill before you is progressive in our strides for equality and provides protections for civil unions.

We stress that granting equal rights to same-sex couples in no way will impact the rights of opposite sex couples or religious communities. Religious communities will always be free to define marriage according to their specific traditions. As shown in states where gay marriage and civil unions are legal, there has been no deterioration of the sanctity of marriage and, in fact, studies show greater respect supporting marriage and civil unions has occurred in these states.

Granting same-sex couples equal rights strengthens families. Families with legal protections are less likely to be a burden on society. Children of same sex couples are currently without the same family protections and benefits that are provided to children of opposite sex couples. In the very difficult times our country faces, we need to value all families and all children in all forms as it is the basis of our society and a core principle set forth by the founders of this great nation.

Separate from the basic human rights issue is the economic one. The state of Hawaii is suffering severely from the lack of tourism during this economic downturn. Passage of this law would provide great economic gain for the service providers of marriage/civil union services, such as jewelry, accommodation and hospitality businesses.

We ask that you please correct the historic injustice and bigotry that have kept us from enjoying the same basic rights as opposite sex couples by supporting this bill.

Sincerely,



Douglas Stonecipher, 292 West 92nd Street, 5D New York, New York 10025

Testimony of Andrew J. Gerakas
Senate Judiciary Committee
HB444 H.D.1
Capitol Auditorium
February 24, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee my name is Andrew J. Gerakas. I am a deacon of the Catholic Church but I am here representing the Respect Life Educational Institute (RLEI) a 501 (c) (3) organization as its Secretary Treasurer and its sister RLEI organization, a budding political action committee, as its President.

We request that that this legislation which makes such a radical change in the definition of marriage rights and legal status not be reported out of your committee. This legislation which will have such a profound impact on the social and economic fabric of our community is being rushed through and has not been given adequate study nor have the various segments of our state been given the opportunity to analyze and bring forth their studied views.

The legislature should not use devious means to circumvent the Constitution and the law of the land. One can envision law suits being brought forth challenging this legislation, should it be passed, as it nullifies the Constitution and the law which defines marriage as between a man and a woman in the state of Hawaii.

The argument that if we don't give homosexual couples the same benefits and legal rights as traditionally married couples we are violating their civil rights, are homophobic, prejudiced and without aloha is a specious argument at best. Homosexually inclined persons are creatures of God and are to be loved and respected like any one else. We welcome them in our churches, pray with them and for them. We cannot, however, condone sexual acts between persons of the same sex. One does not have to quote the Bible to realize that such acts are not natural by the very physical make up of man and woman. We certainly cannot condone legalizing such acts as normal and with the same legal status as sexual acts between a married man and a woman.

Our age seems to think it has discovered a new freedom in sexual relations. We can go back to the Golden Age of Greece under Pericles, the Egyptian and Roman civilizations which, at a particular stage, there was a freedom and a novelty to engage in what were abnormal sexual acts. These included not only homosexuality but pedophilia and sexual orgies of various kinds. When these civilizations lacked chastity and idolized sex it became a symptom of their decay. We can look to our Islands for an example. Before Fr. Damien came to Molokai there were sexual orgies and sexual exploitation. Fr. Damien brought order to a chaotic situation. Fr. Damien will be declared a saint in October. He is revered not only by Catholics but by all the people of Hawaii. What would he say about HB444 H.D.1?

Have we thought through the practical consequences of legally establishing another sexual entity

other than male and female? The obvious one is that gay and lesbian sexual unions will be taught in our schools as equal and attract more young people to these life styles. The result being a drop in population. Most countries in Europe already are not able to replace their dying and have to import hordes of Muslims and others. The saving grace for the U.S. has been illegal immigration. What will happen if there is a significant increase in gay and lesbian relationships?

What about less obvious consequences? What, for example, will happen to hospitals and nursing homes where persons are segregated into rooms with those of the same sex? Will we eventually have to separate males, females and civil unions into separate rooms? What about the prison population? Will we have to room gays and lesbians together or with whom will we bunk them? Remember they will be a legal entity and can demand their rights. What about straight males and females? Will they demand to be placed in rooms with people of their own sex? What will be the cost, not to say the confusion, this will cause? What about the many forms people have to fill out which ask a person to indicate one's sex. Will we have to reprint forms to indicate a third legal sexual preference?

Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee HB444 H.D.1 creates divisions and social and economic consequences that have not been adequately considered. This bill should not be reported out of your committee.

Dcn. Andrew J. Gerakas
4524 Waikui Street
Honolulu, HI 96821
Phone: (808) 373-4538

cc. Senator Colleen Hanabusa

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Capitol Auditorium
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions - STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony to this committee. I would like to express my strong support for House Bill 444 HD 1- Civil Unions.

The Constitution of the United States of America state 'all men are created equal' and is the basis of the freedoms of this great country. Yet the rights of homosexuals have yet to rise to the same level. We are denied our basic rights of equality for marriage of same-sex couples and their families. The esteemed members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee has a historic opportunity to correct this grave injustice and will be remembered accordingly for making a brave decision.

The majority of the public supports civil unions as does President Obama. According to the White House Web site, President Obama "supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples." While we prefer equality under the laws governing marriage, the bill before you is progressive in our strides for equality and provides protections for civil unions.

We stress that granting equal rights to same-sex couples in no way will impact the rights of opposite sex couples or religious communities. Religious communities will always be free to define marriage according to their specific traditions. As shown in states where gay marriage and civil unions are legal, there has been no deterioration of the sanctity of marriage and, in fact, studies show greater respect supporting marriage and civil unions has occurred in these states.

Granting same-sex couples equal rights strengthens families. Families with legal protections are less likely to be a burden on society. Children of same sex couples are currently without the same family protections and benefits that are provided to children of opposite sex couples. In the very difficult times our country faces, we need to value all families and all children in all forms as it is the basis of our society and a core principle set forth by the founders of this great nation.

Separate from the basic human rights issue is the economic one. The state of Hawaii is suffering severely from the lack of tourism during this economic downturn. Passage of this law would provide great economic gain for the service providers of marriage/civil union services, such as jewelry, accommodation and hospitality businesses.

We ask that you please correct the historic injustice and bigotry that have kept us from enjoying the same basic rights as opposite sex couples by supporting this bill.

Sincerely,



James M Meyer

551 South Kihei Road, Kihei, HI 96753

FROM: Kealoha Laemoa (~~PHONE NUMBER~~)

TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL
AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE,

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.

WITH ALOHA,

Kealoha Laemoa MOLOKAI Resident

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Capitol Auditorium
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

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Sincerely,



L. Langlois, 551 South Kihai Rd, Kihai, HI, 96753

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Capitol Auditorium
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

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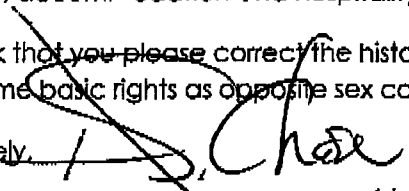
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Sincerely,


H.S. Chase, 551 South Kihiki Rd., Kihiki, HI, 96753

From: Voncile Ching [VChing@libertydialysis.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:21 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Testifier's name (Your name) – Voncile K. I. Ching

- Addressed to the Senate Judiciary Committee – I oppose this bill. I am in support of traditional marriage of a man to a woman. Please DO NOT PASS THIS BILL for the sake of our keiki, and what is written in the Bible. “God created man and woman. A man will marry his wife and leave his mother.”

Thank you for your attention to this most important matter!

- Notate the date and time of the hearing
Thursday, February 5, 2009 @ 2:00 p.m.
- Measure Number: HB 444 HD1
- OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 in the subject line where it will be easily read and noticed.

Voncile K. I. Ching
Special Projects Coordinator
LDH Hawaii
Phone (808) 585-4631
Fax (808) 585-4603

Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

From: Mike Lombardi [mikelahaina@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:19 AM
To: Sen. Roz Baker; Sen. J. Kalani English; Sen. Shan Tsutsui; JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Michael Lombardi
Bill #: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO)
Hearing Date: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Why do I not have a vote and be able to voice my opinion in the bill HD 444 HD1? I strongly oppose this bill to allow Civil Unions in the state of Hawaii. DO NOT pass a law that the public has not been able to vote for or against.

Michael Lombardi

Windows Live™ Hotmail@...more than just e-mail. [See how it works.](#)

From: Monica Adams [adamsm@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:19 PM
To: JGO Testimony; JUDtestimony
Subject: TESTIMONY REGARDING HB444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS strong support

TESTIMONY REGARDING HB444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

To: JGO Chair, Senator Brian Taniguchi
JGO Vice-Chair, Senator Dwight Takamine
Senator Robert Bunda
Senator Mike Gabbard
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara
Senator Sam Slom

From: Misaki Takabayashi, PhD, University Professor, Hilo Hawaii
Monica Adams, Director of Development at a nonprofit healthcare agency, Hilo Hawaii

Re: Testimony in support of passage of HB444 unamended

Honorable Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the JGO Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a testimony **IN STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions. I believe that it is in the best interest of the State of Hawai'i to pass HB 444, which would allow members of the same sex the ability to extend legal rights and benefits to their domestic partners **OUTSIDE** the domain of "marriage".

You are all representatives of the diverse peoples of Hawai'i. The only factors that unify all of us in Hawai'i are that we are different from each other yet we contribute to the well-being of our state and its citizens.

We have been living as legal?reciprocal beneficiaries for the past seven years. Misaki is a university professor who is dedicated to educating the next generation of workforce in Hawai'i. Monica spends every minute of her work days securing grants and running healthcare programs so that the poor and the less privileged folks in East Hawai'i can receive adequate health and life support. We are the pillars that uphold the integrity and well-being of Hawai'i and the people you represent. In fact, we are the people you represent. Yet, we are denied many of the fundamental civil rights that others like you enjoy as a matter of course. Embracing and honoring Hawai'i's diversity by supporting basic civil rights for the very people that you represent is your responsibility as senators.

Mahalo,

Monica Adams (Director of Development)

Misaki Takabayashi, Ph.D. (University Professor)

From: Hakim Nance [hnbonz@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:35 AM
To: jgotestimony@capitolhawaii.gov
Subject: Strong opposition to HB 444

Feb 17, 2009

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Sen Brian Taniguchi, Chair

RE: HB 444

Aloha, my name is Hakim Nance. I am a husband and a father of two. I am an orthopaedic consultant.. I am testifying in opposition to HB 444 for a number of reasons. I would first like to pose a question(of which I have many) to you, the committee. Are we to allow anyone who finds him/herself on the losing side of a vote BY THE PEOPLE, to overturn it simply because they don't like the outcome? I submit to you that the people of Hawaii voted overwhelmingly against same sex marriage in 1998.

This bill is merely a prelude to same sex marriage which is the ultimate goal of its proponents. By bringing this bill to committee, let alone passing it; you in effect are telling me and the other 69-70% who voted against it that our vote (our voice) does not matter. This is subverting the will of the people! This angers me to no end! Too many before me have sacrificed much for my vote to count and I am outraged by this.

A House member stated that the attitudes of the people of Hawaii have changed on this matter. I say to you , the only thing that has changed is that the voices of this bills' proponents have gotten louder. There has been laws passed and bills voted in by the majority that I disagree with, but we can't bring them up every ten years to re-vote. It's called the "will of the people"! Like it or not!

I have heard more than a few equate their struggle for same-sex rights with that of African-Americans during the civil rights movement as well as references to them being sent to the back of the bus. As an African-American I find this EXTREMELY insulting and it could not be further from the truth. I have never seen a gay/lesbian couple attacked by police dogs or fire hoses, nor have I ever seen a sign that states " gay only" restroom or water fountain. These are not civil rights such as voting, riding public transit, etc. that they seek but an acceptance and legitimizing of a different lifestyle.

The difference being a lifestyle choice versus one being chosen by God to be one ethnicity or another which we have no choice in. There are countless stories of former homosexuals returning to heterosexual life and vice versa. I know of more than a few personally and some relatives. My point being, are we going to allow anyone who comes up with an alternative lifestyle, whatever it may be, in the future to have the same benefits as marriage. I say NO! I believe they should have the benefits afforded through the reciprocal benefits passed in 1997 as well as visitations etc.

Those of us who oppose this bill are labeled as "bigots" and "haters", but the vast majority only want to protect traditional marriage. However, I would like to apologize for those who have acted in a hateful manner out of ignorance and fear. That is never acceptable. I would like to stress that this opposition has nothing to do with hate or prejudice, but everything to do with protecting the value and sanctity of traditional

marriage which I and many others enjoy with our spouses from being diminished in any way by anyone who comes along and wants to change the definition of marriage to suit their lifestyle choices.

You all were voted in by the people of Hawaii, which means you are to represent the will of the people and the majority has spoken. With that senators, I urge you to oppose this bill to preserve traditional marriage as we know it, which has been the cornerstone of civilization since the beginning of time.

Respectfully, Hakim Nance

Access your email online and on the go with Windows Live Hotmail. [Sign up today.](#)

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS.

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2009

February 24, 2009

9:00 A.M.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS
TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

My name is Halley Hobson. I am a 15-year-old resident of Ewa Beach, Hawaii. I am not in support of this bill. In passing this bill to allow homosexual marriage, I believe it will actually limit many others in their freedom of speech and faiths.

For many years the community of homosexual activists has claimed that they do not have equal rights in this country because they are not able to marry. I believe that they are wrong and that enacting HB444 bill will actually only be placing a label on such unions that is not in our constitution. This is wrong. Marriage is between only a man and a woman.

If HB444 bill is enacted, traditional and true marriage will be put on the back burner as old and outdated instead of right and pure.

Currently, many homosexual unions already have the benefits of a married couple (man and woman) such as insurance so why do they need the label of marriage?

They want the label of marriage to gain more benefits but most

important to legitimize the idea that homosexuality is normal and an acceptable lifestyle, which it is not.

There are many other disadvantages to HB444 bill as well.

It will make a statement that the voice of Hawaii's people and their beliefs are not important.

This idea of civil union has been voted upon by the people and was put down 11 years ago.

Next it will limit and constrain the freedoms of those who do not agree with homosexual unions. For if these people do something to exercise their freedom of speech it will be called a hate crime and Hawaii will have succeeded in violating The United States' 1st Amendment rights.

Then HB444 will result in educating young ones regarding homosexuality as acceptable and that if you like someone that is the same sex the teacher will encourage you and say that it is okay because the law says so. This will encourage promiscuity and STDs.

But what about the families who do not think this is okay and want to pull their children out of school? The parents who have to keep up with 2 or 3 jobs, who have money problems and are on welfare, really want the best for their children but won't have time to home school them. Must they have to suffer because a loud minority got their way?

HB444 will not strengthen our families but instead confuse and cause chaos in many homes.

I thank the committee for taking the time to consider my testimony on this important issue, and I know that by not passing this bill, the people of Hawaii will benefit.

Respectfully,

Halley Hobson

From: Becky Mitschele [beckysuu@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support HB 444

February 23, 2009

Relating to HB 444 HD 1
Testifying in Support

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations,

My name is Becky Mitschele, and I am in support of HB 444 supporting civil unions. I am submitting my testimony once again to the Senate encouraging you to pass HB 444. Thank you for reading my testimony and for giving consideration to this extremely important bill.

In reviewing the testimony, I couldn't help but notice that majority of the testimony is from religious members or groups. This is especially true of those in opposition to the bill, with many of the testimony quoting a person's interpretation of scripture. Many of those in opposition claim this to be the major reason why the bill should not be passed as it threatens the ideal and institution of marriage. This is simply not right and, to me, has no logical bearing. Having two people join together in a civil union is in no way threatening marriage, the right of men and women to marry, or imposing "beliefs" onto society. *This* bill would allow same sex couples the ability to be legally recognized as a union and be allowed the same legal liberties as those people who are married.

This bill should be passed as it will greatly improve the lives of so many and extend to a group of people a right that been overlooked for too long. A civil union does not equate marriage; all you would have to do is to ask a same sex couple why.

As a heterosexual and a Christian, I support HB 444. I believe that those in opposition based on religious assumptions are fearful. I also believe that fear (and religion) has no place in law making. The legislature is a place to create and change laws that define, up-hold, and protect people's rights. I urge members of the twenty-fifth legislature to pass this bill and grant a civil liberty that defines the rights of same sex couples and extends rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of people who are married to partners in a civil union. Thank you again and aloha!

Becky Mitschele
Huelani Drive
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:18 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: aurasaki@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Alan Urasaki
Organization: Individual
Address: 1526 Kaweloka Street HI
Phone: 808 454-0114
E-mail: aurasaki@hawaiiantel.net
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Please support the passage of of HB444, for all of Hawaii's people. Mahalo.

From: Kelly Sakai [sakai_kelly@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Kelly Sakai in Strong Opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Attachments: stat142.jpg

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. However, marriage is the union of a man and a woman and should be protected and kept that way.

It is not just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote no.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Sakai
Concerned Hawaii Resident
3210 B Lower Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

From: Kelly Sakai [sakai_kelly@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:18 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Bradley Yamada in Strong Opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. However, marriage is the union of a man and a woman and should be protected and kept that way.

It is not just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote no.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Bradley Yamada
Concerned Hawaii Resident
3210 B Lower Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

From: emilycaitlinsmith@googlemail.com on behalf of Emily C. Smith [emilycs@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:29 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 444 HD1

Emily Smith

Graduate Student

UH Manoa, School of Social Work

Testimony for:

Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee

February 24, 2009 9:00 am

HB 444 HD1

I am submitting testimony in support of HB 444 and civil unions in Hawai'i.

Thank you for accepting my testimony on this important issue. I support this issue for very personal reasons. I am preparing for my wedding to my wonderful fiancé. We are getting married in less than four months and are wrapped up in the outpouring of love and support coming from our family and friends as we prepare to wed. While we know that our wedding is just a formality, as we have been committed to each other as partners for a couple years, we love being able to share the beauty of our wedding and are looking forward to all the benefits of marriage.

I am reminded of the fact, however, that my brother is not so lucky. My younger brother came out to my family just over a year ago, while we were on a family trip. My family was 100% supportive of him, but my parents were concerned. They were worried for their son and the tough path he may be forced to follow in the coming years. My brother would make an excellent husband and father. But there are so many barriers in place that may keep him from those joys, those same joys I always took for granted.

Just as love is not a choice, neither is sexuality. As with love, you can either embrace your sexuality, or repress it. My brother, and millions of others in this country, are being discriminated against for embracing who they are. I refuse to accept that.

Every argument against civil unions boils down to a single fact: the mainstream wants the government to limit the rights of the minority. I love my brother very much and want him to have the same rights that I do. I want him to have the hope that he will find the love of his life and build a future with that person, just as I am doing now with my fiancé. Our community should be promoting love, not shunting it aside. The government should have no hand in deciding which adults can fall in love and enjoy the legal rights other have in recognizing that love.

I support civil unions because the morals of some cannot dictate the rights of others.

Thank you.

From: mghsmart [mghsmart@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** Oppose HB444

HB444, HD1: RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS
Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM
Auditorium, State Capitol

I am a private citizen and most strongly OPPOSE HB444. The granting of "civil unions" and making their rights equivalent to marriage is like the government distributing candy to diabetics or giving supersized meals to grossly overweight individuals. Government officials may feel good, the recipient may want it, but it isn't good for them or society.

You probably don't want mention of God; however our founders and more recent leaders did not shy away from God and God's law. Our Constitution recognizes inalienable rights from our Creator and our Pledge of Allegiance acknowledges we are "...one nation under God." Kamehameha III proclaimed Hawaii's first constitution. Its preamble included a bill of rights that began, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men." There is a saying: "Those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it." Homosexuality is not new. It was prevalent in many cultures that were eventually destroyed. Vice laws against sexual practices (homosexuality, prostitution, adultery, etc.) were put in place to protect society. These laws affect heterosexuals as well as homosexuals. Sodom and Gomorrah were societies destroyed by the wrath of God due to sinful behaviors according to the Bible. Researchers report, those ruins are the only place where you can find 96 percent pure monoclinic sulfur in a round ball. Brimstone found in those ruins is NOT from any type of geo-thermal activity. There is no evidence of such in the area, and geo-thermal sulfur nodules are only 40 percent pure sulfur and are of the rhombic type." This finding gives credibility to Biblical teachings.

We should learn from the mistakes of others. The negative impact on Massachusetts is documented at http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html. Once Civil Unions are equated to marriage, other American's Constitutional freedoms, speech and religion have restrictions placed on them. Silencing people who disapprove of unnatural sexual choices appears to be a desired goal and result of these measures. God-fearing people, who out of love for their homosexual brothers and sisters, must be allowed to speak the truth. Parents must be allowed to teach their children that homosexual relationships are sinful. More information about this concern can be viewed in the documentary "Silencing the Christians" at <http://www.silencingchristians.com/> .

It would be unethical for Hawaii legislators to pass HB 444 against the will of the people of Hawaii and give the false impression that homosexual acts are part of a healthy lifestyle. My homosexual cousin died at age 36 of AIDs. A January 14, 2009 Los Angeles Times article reported: "In 2000, public health officials believed that syphilis was close to being eliminated, but a dramatic jump in infections among gay and bisexual men reversed the downward trend. Men who engaged in homosexual sex made up 65% of the 11,466 cases reported in 2007, roughly the same as in 2006." In a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report titled HIV/AIDSs among Men Who Have Sex with Men, revised in June 2007, stated "In the United States, HIV infection and AIDS have had a tremendous effect on men who have sex with men (MSM). MSM accounted for 71% of all HIV infections among male adults and adolescents

in 2005 (based on data from 33 states with long-term, confidential name-based HIV reporting), even though only about 5% to 7% of male adults and adolescents in the United States identify themselves as MSM [1, 2].

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm/resources/factsheets/msm.htm>.

If the purpose of this bill is to allow stable relationships to be legally obligated to look after each other's well-being, as the Committee report states, then that has already been accomplished with Reciprocal Beneficiary which is more inclusive than "civil unions". Nowhere in the report does it cover all the negative repercussions that will result from the institution of civil unions. Although the Chairman lists groups that testified in favor of the Bill and others who oppose the Bill, he fails to mention that 70% of Hawaii's voters voted against marriage and/or marriage rights and privileges being established for any unions except for those between one man and one woman. Most of those 70% think that the issue has been resolved. Many are unaware, are busy with work and family, feel they aren't articulate enough to write or speak in opposition to this Bill or are afraid of being targeted for speaking out against civil unions as were the supporters of Proposition 8 in California. The secret ballot of the people should have more bearing than the number of activist that can gather for a hearing on any particular day.

Marriage is recognized as a protected state because it is a union that naturally produces future citizens. Unions between a man and a woman are the only relationships that society needs to protect and endorse to ensure its future. Homosexual love puts personal desires above what is best for children and society. Studies show children do better in families comprised of a father and a mother. Psychologist Trayce Hansen has written extensively on the negative implications of legislation like HB444. It is documented that most of homosexual relationships don't last long. A study by an AIDS researchers, published in 2003 in the journal AIDS, reported that the average duration of committed relationships among gay steady partners was 1.5 years. Those who testified about their long term relationships are not the norm.

Section - 4b offers a "conscience clause" exemption. It is only a matter of time before there will be a lawsuit to remove this protection.

The fact that such a clause is needed speaks loudly that we know HB444 is inherently wrong. Because of state sanctioned homosexual marriage equivalency, Catholic Charities doesn't provide adoption services in Massachusetts because they don't put children into homosexual environments. Doctors in California are being sued because they won't inseminate homosexual couples. A Catholic hospital in California was sued by a man who wanted surgical mutilation to put female breasts on his body. Even when these suits fail, there is a financial burden. When they succeed, they deny a Constitutional right, freedom of religion.

HB444 is attributed in testimony and by Senate Majority Leader Gary Hooser as a civil rights or equal rights issue but that is a false argument. Everyone can enter into marriage, as long as it is one man and one woman. It is a personal choice to participate or not. The homosexual community understands that a man is different from a woman since they call woman in woman/woman relationships lesbians and men in male/male relationships gays, acknowledging the relationships are not the same. Furthermore, civil unions discriminate against every other loving relationship. Why not grant adulterous relationships equal rights? If this were about equal and civil rights, HB444 Section 3 would not be needed. HB444 is a discriminatory Bill.

Some proponents of HB444 deny homosexuality is a choice. There is no scientific evidence that homosexuals are born to be homosexual. Humans are thinking beings; we do not act on instinct but we often give in to temptations. There are documented environmental influences that impact that decision. Former homosexual activists Michael Glatze, founding editor of Young Gay America magazine and Charlene Cothran, longtime publisher of Venus magazine are outspoken opponents of the homosexual lifestyle. Lisa Miller of Virginia adopted a lesbian

lifestyle when her heterosexual marriage failed. She subsequently entered into a "civil union" and had a child. Lisa now rejects that lifestyle, but her daughter will continue to be exposed to an environment.

Another claim is that civil unions/marriage is about love and that loving people should be allowed the same rights and privileges as marriage. Some might say it is lust, not love that compels a homosexual relationship. Marriage is about commitment and providing the best environment for raising children. Divorce has weakened the family, but that is no reason to weaken it more. It is possible to love many people and not be married to any of them. Some people love their pets. If marriage were just about love there would be no restrictions on number of people in the marriage, relationship between partners, whether they were married to someone else or not, etc. Michael Glatze, the former homosexual activist wrote: "We believe, under the influence of homosexuality, that lust is not just acceptable, but a virtue. But there is no homosexual "desire" that is apart from lust."

Section 4 (b) has some protections for those who morally oppose homosexual unions, however, in their testimony the ACLU proposed modifications to remove protections from those who perform civil solemnization ceremonies. That change would make it legal to discriminate against many religious sects in hiring for State jobs. There are no protections for private citizens speaking out about the immorality of homosexuality.

Proponents in the tourist and wedding industries approve this Bill because homosexual vacationers have significant expendable cash to spend in a state that endorses homosexual relationships. This validates that most homosexuals have plenty of cash and do not need tax savings associated with civil unions/marriage. What it doesn't indicate is whether other families would avoid Hawaii because of what is perceived as an unhealthy vacation environment. The promised riches may never come to fruition. Overhead from managing a new program may actually drain the state budget.

Although not true for all, the norms and values of acceptable homosexual activity are different from those of heterosexuals. It is common knowledge that homosexual men have sex in parks, public restrooms (at places like department stores) and highway rest stops and more than one public official has been caught trying to participate in this activity.

Events such as Folsom Street Fair, Pig Sex Orgies (during the inauguration in Washington DC), Boston's Dyke March and Transgender Parade as well as other Gay "Pride" events include activities that are lewd and pornographic on public streets in full view of the public. These events are disgraceful and should shame all involved.

In testimony in favor of HB444 one woman admits: quote: "...Gay and lesbian people were raised this way too, so most of us, growing up, struggled with feelings that we ourselves were wrong, ridiculous, or disgusting." This woman admits she had to overcome her conscience and only then could accept the alternate lifestyle. She knew her behavior was wrong behavior but did it anyway. Government must not be authorized to deaden consciences by equivocating homosexual and heterosexual relations.

If HB444 or a similar Bill (HB878) passes, the State and the citizens must be prepared for a new onslaught of litigation protecting "feelings" that may be hurt. Freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association, and personnel hiring standards will all be under fire and ripe for lawsuits. Crystal Dixon, an African American, held a high ranking position at the University of Toledo in Ohio. She was told she would be demoted or removed for the offense of submitting a letter to the editor in response to another letter where she stated that being homosexual was different from being an

African American. She wrote the letter in a loving manner, but that didn't matter to activists. If it can happen in Ohio, it can happen in Hawaii.

Michael Glatze, the former homosexual activist quoted earlier:

"Homosexuality, delivered to young minds, is by its very nature pornographic. It destroys impressionable minds and confuses their developing sexuality; I did not realize this, however, until I was 30 years old....It became clear to me, as I really thought about it - and really prayed about it - that homosexuality prevents us from finding our true self within. We cannot see the truth when we're blinded by homosexuality.

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=56487) In another article http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=56481 Michael Glatze states that he now has deep respect for a Christian aunt who disapproved of his lifestyle. She was never judgmental but always firm.

I am asking you to show the same love and concern for our lesbian and gay politicians and constituents as Michael's Christian aunt showed for him. Love the sinner but despise the act.

It is neither courageous nor honorable to vote against the people or God's law even if you have good intentions. Please recognize the value of Reciprocal Beneficiary for the good of all. There are legislators who identify with the homosexual lifestyle, but we trusted them to abide in the state constitution, and not put personal desires ahead of the good of the citizens of Hawaii. Please show us our trust was not misplaced and stop HB444.

Please vote AGAINST HB444 or any similar legislation.

Mary Smart
Mililani, 96789

February 22, 2009

Re: House Bill 444 - Civil Unions

Dear Brian Taniguchi, Clarence Nishihara, Dwight Takamine, Mike Gabbard, Robert Bunda, Sam Slom, and members of the Hawaii State Senate:

I appreciate your taking the time to enable the public to testify before this committee on HB 444 – Civil Unions.

I wish to express my strong support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions because I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I have had two long-term relationships in my time. My first was for 21 years. I lived with a man who was ill much of the time, and there were times I needed to take off work to care for him. Since our relationship was “not recognized,” I lost time from work, missed income, and worried that if he fell into a coma, I would not be able to be by his side should his family take over.

I have been in a relationship with my second partner for seven years now. We have had a Reciprocal Beneficiaries agreement for several years, but I feel that it’s simply not enough. The language in it is too vague, and I feel uncomfortable depending on it. Civil Unions as they exist in Connecticut grant the following rights to same-sex couples:

- Financial and medical decision-making when a spouse is incapacitated
- Retirement benefits
- Consideration of partners as “immediate family” by banks, credit unions, etc.
- Spousal coverage on liability and other types of insurance
- Access to safe-deposit boxes

As noted by the Hawaii Commission on Sexual Orientation and the Law, out of the approximately 300 marriage-based protections identified by the commission, only about 50 have been extended to Reciprocal Beneficiaries. This is clearly unequal treatment under the law.

Public opinion has changed since 1996 when this issue was first brought before the people of Hawaii.

Many people across the United States now support civil unions, as does President Obama. In fact,

President Obama "supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples."

Let’s show the world the unique meaning and sense of *aloha* by extending Civil Unions to same-sex couples!

I ask that you support HB 444.

Many thanks, and Aloha!

Kevin M. Roddy
3032 Alencastre Place
Honolulu, HI 96816
808 735-2372

From: ekomomai@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:23 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444

My name is Mary Bretschneider. I am a 59 yr. old resident of Waipio Gentry. I vote in every election. I am submitting this testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee for its hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 3009, I am adamantly opposed to the bill as currently written. It blurs the line even further between gay relationships and traditional marriage. Traditional marriage needs to be nurtured and supported as the basis of the family in our society. Hawaii voters have already spoken on this issue. I expect our representatives to vote as we have indicated.

Joshua Kay

1201 Wilder Ave., Apt. 2103 · Honolulu, HI 96822-3135
Office (808) 545-5252 · Cell (808) 372-8499
E-mail: joshua@hawaii.rr.com

Strong Support

HB444 HD1

Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

February 24 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Joshua Kay, and I am in strong support of House Bill 444 — Civil Unions.

Due to the unequal treatment of same-sex couples under Hawaii civil law, and because I and many others are denied the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities enjoyed by opposite-sex couples, I am keenly aware of the fact that I'm treated a second-class citizen. This unequal treatment is unfair and unjust. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law.

Additionally, because there are now many religious organizations (including various Christian denominations), that recognize and honor same-sex unions, it's becoming glaringly obvious that restricting these rights, benefits and protections to only opposite-sex couples gives the appearance that the state is officially endorsing the religious beliefs of some, in deference to the religious beliefs of others.

The passage of HB444 into law will go a long way toward addressing this inequality and eliminating the appearance of state-sponsored endorsement of certain religious beliefs to the exclusion of the beliefs of others.

I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Aloha,

Joshua Kay

1201 Wilder Ave., Apt. 2103

Honolulu, HI 96822-3135

From: GNStringer@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:15 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Nelson and Nancy Stringer in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

We write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

We believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, we urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Nelson and Nancy Stringer
81-6248 Piko Rd.
Captain Cook, HI 96704

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: gabriel peckham [biogabe@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:27 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of ___Dr. Gabriel D Peckham_____ in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1

Relating to Civil Unions Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr Gabriel D PEckham
Post Doctorate
University of Hawaii

Al Beeman
908 Kumukoa St.
Hilo, HI 96720

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Subject: Testimony In Favor of HB444– Civil Unions

Date: Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9AM Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takemine and Members of the Committee,

It is always time for equal rights and today it is time to finally give equal rights to gay couples in Hawaii.

As Senator Bunda recently said, "Society is becoming increasingly tolerant. "

Hawaii is not in the mood to tolerate discrimination of any kind.

Neither is its favorite son, President Obama, who supports civil union and who knows something about discrimination.

I urge all Senators present to vote in favor of HB444 HD1.

If HB444 HD1 should become deadlocked in the JGO Committee, I would like to ask that Chairman Taniguchi please allow this measure to be pulled to the Floor of the Senate so that the full voice of the Senate can be heard on the matter of Civil Unions.

Me ka mahalo (Very respectfully submitted),

Al Beeman
Hilo

From: Haviland Wright [haviland.wright@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:28 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Haviland Wright in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Haviland Wright
4610 Kapuna Road
Kilauea, Kaua'i
96754
808-651-5683

From: noela nance [nnoela@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:15 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: FW: Strong Opposition to HB444

From: nnoela@hotmail.com
To: jgotestimony@capitolhawaii.gov
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB444
Date: Mon, 23 Feb 2009 19:03:33 +0000

Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judicial Committee
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

My name is Noela Nance, I am a wife, mother, and a full time home-maker, which is one of the most important jobs in our nation.

Since the beginning of time and civilization a family has consisted of a husband and a wife. With this basic unit, children are born and raised to make a positive contribution to the community. This institution has been the foundation and cornerstone of prosperous societies among all civilizations.

Being both a woman and a minority I understand the meaning of discrimination and equality or the lack thereof. I have family members whom I love who have chosen this lifestyle, and I WILL stand shoulder to shoulder with them in defending their rights to not be discriminated because of their lifestyle choices.

However, I believe HB444 is not about equality, but rather about legitimizing a lifestyle and altering the definition of marriage as we know it. I believe this bill is a Trojan horse and Pandora's box disguised in the name of "equality." If this bill were to pass, where would the definition of marriage line be drawn? Can anyone then get married, i.e. multiple couples? Who decides? Obviously not we the people.

In 1997, the reciprocal benefits bill passed hoping to address these concerns. Now, the same people are stating that this is not enough, the same way advocates in New Jersey are saying civil union is not enough. What is enough for supporters of this bill? Are we on a slippery slope toward polygamy, group marriage, and marriage among perhaps distant relatives? Perhaps the reciprocal benefits bill needs revision.

Senators, I would like to remind you that in 1998, we the people of Hawaii buy a 70% majority, proclaimed our voices to reserve marriage between one man and one woman through our votes.

I beg you, do not nullify our precious voice in the same way the citizens of California are being treated after passing Prop 8. The majority of voters in Hawaii have already decided to make marriage an institution between one man and one woman and we elected you to uphold that decision.

I would like to thank all of you for having a servant's heart to serve the public and I'm trusting you to represent the majority in Hawaii by not passing this bill.

A very wise man and teacher has said "... to whom much is given, much is required." You have not only been placed in your position by the voters of Hawaii, but by a Higher Being.

I believe and hope that you will do what is right and not necessarily what is popular.

In closing please oppose HB444, not as a means of discrimination against others, but rather to protect and preserve the sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman which has been and will always be the foundation of a healthy and productive society.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify before you.

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Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [See how it works.](#)

From: John Whitson [whitjn@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:29 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: stongly oppose HB444

Testimony in OPPOSITION OF HB 444 - Relating to Civil Unions

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

FROM: JOHN WHITSON

HEARING DATE: Tuesday, February 24th, 2009

Hearing Time: 9AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I strongly oppose HB 444 relating to Civil Unions.

This is not a Civil Rights Issue. The rights of same sex couples has already been addressed under the Reciprocal Benefits Law now on the books.

Anything further than that imposes the moral views of a small vocal group on the rest of society.

Please vote no on this measure.

Sincerely,

John Whitson

February 23, 2009

From: Clayton Ing [cing@hdcc.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:41 AM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Sam Slom; JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

Aloha Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am urging you to vote **NO** on the subject bill #HB 444 HD 1. It is merely another attempt to further erode the morality in Hawaii. The decline in morals was also one of the reasons for the demise of the Roman Empire. What will be next, marriage between siblings? Or, marriage between humans and their pets? Are you willing to have our keiki read that Snow White and Cinderella decided to get a divorce in order to marry each other? Or watch on TV the marriage of Bert and Ernie on Sesame Street?

As my memory recalls, this issue was already decided upon in the 1998 election where 69% of the voters decided to ban same sex marriages. This is an obviously overwhelming margin. Since most of you are Democrats, I would like to remind you that the definition of the word Democracy is "government by the people" or "majority rule". If 69% of the vote is not a majority, I would like an explanation on why it is not.

As a reminder, you as Senators, were placed into office to serve people like me and honor our decisions. However, it has been apparent that some of your colleagues have blatantly decided to make decisions on their own even going as far as to put this issue up to vote regardless of the outcome of the Judiciary Committee's decision. They feel they are ABOVE THE LAW and will do anything to satisfy their self interests instead of the people they represent. Those who choose to do so WILL be remembered in the next election and for the remainder of their political career. Therefore, I urge you to make the RIGHT decision and vote **NO**.

Mahalo for your time and attention,
Clayton Ing

From: DAPHNE GRAY [DGRAY5@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:42 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Support of Civil Unions, H.B. 444, HD1

Dear Senators:

My name is Daphne Gray and I write today in strong support of civil unions, H.B. 444, HD1. This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities — giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. Thus, I respectfully request vote yes on HB 444, HD1 and that you urge your colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Daphne Gray
67-5165 Kamamalu Rd
Kamuela, HI 96743

From: Allison Aosved [allisoncara@care2.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:42 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) for 2/24/09 at 9:00am

Allison C. Aosved, PhD
41-521 Inoaole Street
Waimanalo, HI 96795

Attention: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
For Tuesday, February 24, 2009 hearing at 9:00am
Regarding Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1)

23 February 2009

Aloha Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1). Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

It is time that the people of Hawaii recognize that all people in our community deserve to be treated with dignity, respect and equality. Doing what is right is not always easy and that is exactly what I am asking from my elected leaders. I understand that there are many who may oppose this hearing and I am asking you to do what is right - to stand up for all of the people of Hawaii.

Please support Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) . Now is the time.

Sincerely,

Allison C. Aosved, PhD

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From: Lisa Doyle [doylelm@care2.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:33 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: allisoncara@care2.com
Subject: Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) for 2/24/09 at 9:00am

Lisa M. Doyle
41-521 Inoaole Street
Waimanalo, HI 96795

Attention: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
For Tuesday, February 24, 2009 hearing at 9:00am
Regarding Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1)

23 February 2009

Aloha Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1). Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

It is time that the people of Hawaii recognize that all people in our community deserve to be treated with dignity, respect and equality. Doing what is right is not always easy and that is exactly what I am asking from my elected leaders. I understand that there are many who may oppose this hearing and I am asking you to do what is right - to stand up for all of the people of Hawaii.

Please support Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1) . Now is the time.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Doyle

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From: david [davidincj@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:31 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STOP CIVIL UNIONS - HB 444 - PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 AT 9 AM

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for representing the citizens of the state in Hawaii.

I am strongly against civil unions and want to plea to folks to stop bill HB 444.

Almost everyone I know feels the same way I do, I'd say 95% of the people I talk with whenever we get a family gathering or outing, feels the same way.

It is disgusting to see a man holding another mans hand in public as if they are boyfriend and girlfriend. It is very shameful and perverted. Even nature teaches that. So

please do not let this bill pass. Thank you for your time.

Yours Truly,

David Ikehara

From: ben araki [drbaraki@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:30 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Dr. Benson H Araki, Senate Judiciary Committee, testimony against HB444 Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9AM

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am sending this email voicing my rejection of HB444. Those that choose a same-sex relationships have been given their equal rights under the law. What HB444 will recognize goes beyond equal rights and infringes on the rights of those who believe that marriage is sacred and special, and upholds the dignity of the human race. Why do our elected legislators defy the voice of the majority of our people, and jeopardize this union between one man and one woman and initiate a "slipppery slope" that will bring our society from one of dignity and sacredness to that which is demeaning and reprobate?

When history is taught, will we be remembered as were the failed nations and societies of the past? They, too, relinquished high moral principles and succumbed to political correctness, one party rule, government corruption, government control instead of people control, consumerism, etc. If you've read history, they also had to deal with same-sex issues and chose to support and engender it. The final outcome....all of these empires and nations are no longer around. Do you think we are any different? Give it some thought because the lives our our children and children's children are at stake. Or are you just thinking about yourself?

With much respect,
Benson H. Araki, DDS

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From: Kelly Sakai [sakai_kelly@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:24 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Lance Sakai in Strong Opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. However, marriage is the union of a man and a woman and should be protected and kept that way.

It is not just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote no.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Lance Sakai
Concerned Hawaii Resident
3210 B Lower Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

From: fenfang li [fenfangli@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: oppose HB444

NAME: Fenfang Li
ADDRESS: 1334 Kaihee Street, Apt. 202, Honolulu, HI96822
PHONE: (808) 523 9542

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Fenfang Li

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

Thank you,

FROM: Fenfang Li

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Fenfang Li

FROM: Fenfang Li

TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL
AUDITORIUM**

FOR HB 444, HD1

DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE,

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.

WITH ALOHA,

Fenfang

Fenfang Li, Ph.D, M.P.H.
Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Senate Committee on Judiciary Government Operations: Chair Brian Taniguchi and all committee members

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 – 9 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol – State Auditorium

RE: HB 444, HD1 - Civil Unions – STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee,

I am Mike Golojuch and I strongly support HB444, HD1, Civil Unions. As a father of a gay son and a retired Air Force Officer as well as being on the Board of Directors for Parents, Family, Friends, of Lesbians and Gays, it is only right that our gay and lesbians children have the same rights as their heterosexual counterparts.

Passage of the Civil Unions bill will go a long way in supporting our Constitution that states that all are equal. This is social justice at work. This is also the continuation of doing away with secular laws that previously didn't consider people of color as equal to whites; didn't allow women to vote; and didn't allow people of different races to marry.

Although I do not consider this a religious issue, I can say as a Catholic who has been the Chair of Parish Councils, ran religious education programs including the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, and many other activities, the leader of Christians, Jesus Christ, would be the first to open his arms to welcome his gay and lesbians brothers and sisters into full communion of society.

As Sean Penn stated when he accepted his Oscar for his role as Harvey Milk, "We've got to have equal rights for everyone."

It is my birthday and the best present would be the passage of the Civil Unions bill out of this Committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Civil Unions.

Sincerely, Mike Golojuch

From: Josie Barayuga [josie.barayuga@capatriots.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:45 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition To HB 444 HD1

Josephine Barayuga, RN

Bill Number and Title HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

To the Honorable Judiciary Committee, I hope you will stop the bill from passing out of committee. As a professional nurse, I strongly oppose HB 444 two reasons.

I voted in 1998 for the constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. The vote of the people has not changed. The voice of the majority must be heard. The voice of the minority will not promote righteousness in our state. The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness, our state motto.

As part of the health community, people are already being compromised by keeping records of who was involved with the patient and cause of illnesses. There is no DNA of such a union. We need people who represent solid information about themselves and not a counterfeit. If the Legislature is positive that the people of the state of Hawaii support civil unions, please put the matter to vote as a constitutional amendment.

Respectfully,

Josephine Barayuga, RN

From: Kevin Juan [kjuan@hondawindward.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:39 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: FW: Opposition to HB444

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing this e-mail to testify against HB 444 that is up for Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009.

HB444 is not the will of the people. In 1998 the majority of registered voters expressed their opinion on this matter.

Traditional Marriage was overwhelmingly approved. Since then there has been no significant change in the position of the

"PEOPLES OPINION". In fact I have spoken to many who voted for traditional marriage and 99.9% of them **HAVE NOT CHANGED** their

view on this issue. Simply calling this bill "civil unions" is only a ploy to disguise the true wording of this bill. We have not been fooled by the

semantics of this bills writing. Therefore Senators, I urge to you to walk you districts and talk to the people living in your districts. Go to the shopping malls and the parks and playgrounds and simply ask the PEOPLE. They will let you know the answer you need to vote clearly on this issue. Please step back and express the **WILL OF THE PEOPLE** in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin S. Juan
45-229 Pahikaua ST.
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: Robert Nathanson [nathansor001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:46 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Robert Nathanson in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the
Date/Time: Auditorium
Subject Testimony of Robert Nathanson in Strong Support of H.B.
line: 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples. For example, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Nathanson MD

68-615 Farrington Hwy. #19A

Waialua, HI 96791

From: Ku'ulani Miyashiro [km1747@nyu.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 5:25 AM
To: Sen. Clayton Hee
Cc: governor.lingle@hawaii.gov; JGO Testimony; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Testimony supporting HB444; Ku'ulani Miyashiro
Importance: High

Testifier: Ku'ulani Miyashiro
Title: citizen of Hawai'i, graduate student at New York University
Re: HB444 HD1
Hearing: Feb 24, 2009 Tues 9:00am
Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Dear Senator Hee,

I write to you as an advocate, a Native Hawaiian, a graduate student in Education, a daughter and granddaughter, a Christian, a liberal, a resident of Kane'ohe, a concerned individual.

I write you to urge your support of HB444 which extends the right to individuals to express their commitment to each other through civil unions.

Raised in a family of devout Pentacostal Christians, who strongly support traditional marriage, it would seem contadictory for me to stand behind this bill. My inbox has been inundated by some of my family members who have urged me to stand behind them and rally against this bill.

But throughout college, I met wonderful friends from all backgrounds and dispositions, who taught me so much about life and social expectations. It is their faith and their optimism and their ability to stand in the face of adversity that I look to and admire. I've learned over the years that the best way I can show love to my fellow human being - as the Bible asks us to do - is to be an advocate for LGBT rights.

After all, this is about equality and fairness for everyone. If my boyfriend and I can enter a domestic partnership or get married tomorrow, what gives us the right to stand in the way of two men or two women who love each other and want to make it official too? Please don't allow the state to stand in the way.

Please, Senator Hee, support HB444 HD1.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ku'ulani Miyashiro
Master's Candidate
NYU Educational Leadership, Politics and Advocacy
Cell: 808-428-1372
Fax: 718-872-9635

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Carl E. Harris

Re: HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

Date of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24

Time of Hearing: 9 am

Location of Hearing: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Senators,

I am a tax paying, African American resident of 36 plus years in the State of Hawaii; I am writing this letter in opposition to the Civil Unions Bill HB 444 HD1. As a voter and resident of Waipahu I am appealing to your good conscience that you would in accordance to your civic duty vote in opposition of this Civil Unions Bill.

I strongly oppose the passing of this Bill for several reasons:

Firstly, I find it inconceivable that a position is being taken that homosexuals are saying that it is discriminatory to deny them the rights heterosexuals enjoy in marriage. Further to hold the position that they deserve these rights to the point of it being considered a civil right for homosexuals just as equality has been shown to the African American is absolutely absurd.

Secondly, as an African American born male, I had no choice in the matter__ it simply was not up to me nor was it the choice of anyone to select their race at birth. (I believe Senator neither did you have a choice); And yet, **Homosexuals compare themselves to African Americans saying that they are being oppressed and not being treated "equal". We as African Americans are born with our race. It is not something we choose because we had preference. Homosexuals are not born with their sexual identity and there is no scientific evidence that**

proves that they are born that way. Most African Americans don't believe that homosexuals are **born** that way. As a matter of fact:

Recent Polls also show that African Americans oppose Civil Unions and Same-Sex Marriages by 71% to 23%

In addition, Evangelicals also oppose Civil Unions and Same-Sex Marriage.

- Evangelicals remain the most unified, consistent and organized group in the nation against Same-Sex Marriage and Civil Unions
(This is a recorded fact).

Evangelicals know that this bill would undermine the Traditional Family that makes up our society, our communities, not only in Waipahu, but all over the State of Hawaii.

Thirdly, Senator, I too am an evangelical and I truly know what the long term effect of the passing of this Bill could be for our children. I implore you to not allow this Bill to be passed, make your voice heard for the sake of not only my children and grandchildren, but your children and your grand-children, and all of the children and grandchildren of the islands. The purity of Hawaii and its desire to keep herself undefiled from what we have seen in many other states in America is what drew me to become a resident and to raise my children and grand-children in the islands. Help us to preserve that which is the very fabric of our society today: Our traditional families, traditional values, wholesome education for our children. Please, let's fight together to ward off a tremendous divide in the State of Hawaii. Let's not follow a divisive pattern such as we have seen take place when this kind of legislation is passed.

Again I strongly oppose the passing of this Bill and I ask that you respond to the voice of Hawaii that has spoken in 1998, that voice still rings out **NO** to Civil Unions because it will literally destroy the moral fiber in these islands. I believe that you too want the best for Hawaii; and I want to thank you in advance for loving Hawaii, the people of Hawaii enough to answer the call of their cry in voting against the passing of this Civil Unions Bill. In good conscience I just don't think you as a representative of the people of the State of Hawaii you could subject us to the degradations and destructive effects of this Bill, nor could you do such to your own posterity. I will be praying for your strength to stand for what is Godly.

Respectfully Submitted,

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:47 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: gordon_yee@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Gordon Yee
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: gordon_yee@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:
I oppose the bill.

HB 444
Senate Judiciary Committee
February 24, 2009

Dear Senator,

My name is Cathy Thourson. I am a registered nurse. I have no problem working with gay co-workers or caring for gay patients in the same compassionate manner that I care for all my patients. I respect their right to choose a homosexual lifestyle.

I am also a mom. My daughter is 16. She is blessed with a mom and dad who love her and 2 older brothers. Her dad and I have been married for 26 years. Both sets of her grandparents have been married over 50 years on my side and over 60 years on her dad's side. Today she sits in the audience pondering a proposed radical restructuring of the traditional institution of marriage.

It does not seem that long ago that I was 16. In my day, I remember my shock and befuddlement that the word "gay" which I originally understood to mean "happy and cheerful" was changed to mean "homosexual". Interestingly, the original meaning has been abandoned as the latter has taken dominance.

It seems that the whole gay movement has been an evolution of redefining words, social standards, and now the institution of marriage. There is an inherent dishonesty in the reference of the bill to "civil unions" as if traditional marriage is not at stake. I wish to pose a few thoughts and questions in the matter.

Supporters of civil unions site *equality, love, fairness, and civil rights* as reasons why society should sanction their choice of cohabitation and radically revamp thousands of years of marriage tradition to a new definition, their own. Some even go so far as to claim a genetic component as a reason to justify this end. This being said, some questions can be fairly raised.

If "gayness" were found to have a genetic component, it stands to reason that families with one gay member would have a greater likelihood of another. Say a brother with a 'gay gene' fell in love with his brother (also with a gay gene) and they desired to have a civil union (ie. get married), why not? Since we are talking same-sex, no offspring are involved so there is no concern about genetic defects. If they love each other, why would anyone want to deny them the American dream to be happy? The same would go for 2 sisters in a lesbian relationship with each other. Why would any one in the civil union/same sex marriage camp be opposed to such a relationship? After all, two sisters cannot produce offspring with each other; **and if** the determining factors are "equality, love, fairness, and civil rights" **and if** they are 2 consenting adults, **and if** they are not 'hurting anyone', then who can stand as their judge and tell them otherwise or deny them their freedom? If a civil union advocate would stand opposed, would they not then be

justly labeled a *judgmental-incest-phobic-bigot*? (Oh the name-calling can get ugly!) After all, **equality for all** rules out any exceptions. If HB 444 is passed, Pandora's proverbial box is logically propped wide open to **every conceivable** possible union.

As Dr. C. Everette Koop and Francis Schaeffer wrote in the book, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*, "On a humanistic base, people drift along from generation to generation, and the morally unthinkable becomes the thinkable as the years move on."

Some of the "unthinkables" I fear will become the thinkable are as follows:

- Churches to perform same-sex marriages or face litigation
- Christian schools mandated to hire a percentage of gay teachers united in civil unions or face discrimination lawsuits
- Private adoption agencies, regardless of their religious convictions, to place children with gay couples
- Christian churches must hire gay "married" members to their pastoral staff
- All textbooks must be rewritten to redefine marriage
- Marriage retreats must include gay couples
- Church valentine dinners must accommodate gay couples
- Photographers, regardless their convictions, must shoot gay weddings
- Pastors would be prohibited from speaking on scriptures which refer to homosexuality as a sin
- Bibles would be rewritten to eliminate any negative references to homosexual practices
- High school homecoming courts must include lesbian and homosexual couples so as to represent civil unions and not to discriminate one as better
- Sex ed classes in school to provide instruction on lesbian and male to male sex
- School students to have assembly speakers touting the benefits of same sex unions
- Trans-gendered, bisexual, polygamous, incestuous same sex unions granted the same status as same-sex marriage
- The original meaning of traditional marriage obsolete
- 'hate crimes' penalties imposed on persons voicing opposition to same sex practices

These "unthinkables of today" could become the "norms of tomorrow". I hope the senators have the wisdom to forsee what lies down this path of relativism and heed the warnings of Koop and Schaeffer. We must have overriding principles or we will surely "slide into each new thinking without a jolt." I respectfully ask you senators to *preserve traditional marriage and vote NO on HR 444*.

Cathy Thourson
dafisheye@gmail.com

Testimony in support of HB444 on Civil Unions

As a kamaaina, born and raised in Hawaii, I urge you to **support** HB 444 on Civil Unions, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. I am a heterosexual, allowed to marry the man of my choosing and receive the rights that come along with that, yet I am heartbroken that some of my fellow citizens are barred from receiving these same rights under our current law. I believe all citizens of our government should be treated equally and to vote against this bill is to vote against equality, fairness and justice.

Many who speak out against this bill cite their religious beliefs opposing homosexuality. While I respect their right to worship how they choose, I strongly believe in the separation of church and state. We cannot let the religious views of some to dictate the rights of citizens. To do so would go against the U.S. Constitution.

Please support civil unions in Hawaii. I want to live in a world where all citizens are provided with equal rights. Do not let the fear of others who are different bar our state from moving in this important step forward.

Thank you,

Annie Keola Kaukahi Thomas

From: william dettwyler [wdettwyler@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:43 AM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Roz Baker; Sen. J. Kalani English; Sen. Shan Tsutsui; Akaka; Daniel Inouye
Cc: Rep. Angus McKelvey; kumulani@kumulaniChapel.org
Subject: HB 444 HD1

Regarding Bill #HB444 HD1, relating to Civil Unions, we, William & Ann Dettwyler residing in West Maui are **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to this bill. We urge you to **VOTE AGAINST** it because you are going against the will of the people of Maui.

Ann & Bill Dettwyler

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

February 23, 2009

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

My name is **Brent Schlittenhart** and I live in Kaneohe, HI 96744. I am writing you this day to make it known that I firmly **oppose HB-444, Civil Unions**, and ask you to vote **NO** to this Bill.

In 1998 the people of Hawaii voted for Traditional Marriage with a clear resounding 70% majority. HB-444 is a veiled means to impose "same-sex" marriage upon the people of Hawaii, against their stated will by:

the recognition of partners to be equal with traditional "spouses;"

the solemnization being performed by same persons licensed to perform "marriage;"

planned recognition of "same-sex marriages" performed in other states as a "civil union" in Hawaii;

proposed extension of chapter 572, Family Relations (except part I) every reference to:

"marriage" as equal to civil unions and, "husband", "wife", or "spouse" as equal to

partners, every reference to marital status, including...procedures for annulment, divorce,

separation, or dissolution, shall apply equally...to civil unions and to partners in a civil

union.

Civilizations, since the beginning of time, have always recognized marriage between a man and a woman. Individuals who want to practice sexual relationships outside of marriage have the freedom to do so, but governments should never equate these relationships with marriage. Individuals who engage in same sex relationships already have their civil rights protected under the Hawaii Domestic Partnership Law.

Please vote **No** on **HB444**. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Brent Schlittenhart

From: island zena [islandzena@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Julie Smith in Strong Support of H.B.444,HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that *all* couples in committed relationships are afforded equal treatment under the law. Extending equal rights to gay and lesbian couples takes nothing away from heterosexual couples, nor does it threaten the existence of, and way of life enjoyed by, traditional families. It only provides equal legal rights for non-traditional couples/families that are enjoyed by their traditional counterparts.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawai`i law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. For example, current Hawai`i law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Additionally, and significantly, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples and their children.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawai`i are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Smith
2943 Kalakaua Ave., #204
Honolulu HI 96815

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. - -

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From: Lance Manabe [lhmanabe@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:10 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD

Testifier: Lance H. Manabe
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00AM
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Why I am Strongly Opposed to HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions is the ramifications this has on the traditional family and traditional marriage.

--
Lance Manabe
1155 Punua Place
Kailua, Hawaii 96734
Ph. 754-9992

From: Daisy Carbone [alohafromdaisy@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:09 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Addendum RE: HB 444

THIS is an ADDENDUM to my PREVIOUS email. I forgot this information:

Testifier: Daisy Carbone

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am writing to OPPOSE the passing of the HB 444 Civil Unions bill.

I believe in traditional marriage between a man and a woman. I believe that it is IMPOSSIBLE for male/male or female/female unions to create a normal and healthy family relationship for bringing up children.

IF there is a TRUE homosexual union WITHOUT having OUTSIDE help, it is a physical IMPOSSIBILITY to create children. You need an egg and a sperm, not 2 spears or 2 eggs to create a human being. True homosexual unions will DIE OUT. Not only from natural means, but also from probable causes of AIDS and other homosexual related diseases.

Children flourish under BOTH male and female influences. One-sidedness gives no balanced relationships for children.

I strongly OPPOSE HB 444, as well as thousands of other people. Majority should win out over "loud" minority votes.

Thank you for your time,

Daisy Carbone
Mililani

From: Izumi Tazono Kawakami [zoomzoom85@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:02 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: Izumi Kawakami
Bill Number and Title: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24th
Hearing Time: 9:00 am
Hearing Location: Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly oppose HB444 and any and all bills related to Civil Unions and Same-Sex Marriage. I believe that a union between a Male and Female is the only union allowed and BLESSED by God. It clearly states in the Bible in Leviticus that a man should not lay with another man as he would with a woman. It says that the land will be defiled and that God will punish the people because of their acts.

As an expectant Mother, I want my child to be brought up in a healthy environment where marriage is kept sacred and honored between a Male and Female. Our families will be greatly affected if this Civil Unions bill goes through.

Please vote against this bill.

Thank you.

From: Glenn Racoma [raczion@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:33 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Oppose HB444

I am oppose to HB444 because I don't agree with it, yet continue to pray and accept people that are for it.

Thank you,

Pastor Glenn Rac of Hope Chapel 'K', Kalihi

Glenn Racoma
raczion@earthlink.net
EarthLink Revolves Around You.

From: John Whitson [whitjnj@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:59 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fw: stongly oppose HB444

Testimony in OPPOSITION OF HB 444 - Relating to Civil Unions

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

FROM: Jessie Whitson

HEARING DATE: Tuesday, February 24th, 2009

Hearing Time: 9AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I strongly oppose HB 444 relating to Civil Unions.

The rights of same sex couples are already protected under the Reciprocal Benefits Law. Let's not let heated rhetoric by a small vocal group cloud our sound judgment. Please vote no on this measure.

Sincerely,

Jessie Whitson

February 23, 2009

From: Glen Kozuma [gk@nexaircorp.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:55 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

DEAR SENATORS,

Thank you for your willingness to work tirelessly in behalf of the people of Hawaii . We seek your courage and wisdom to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii and our district will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. For the people of Hawaii and our foundation as a State I strongly ask of you to vote **NO** on the Civil Union Bill HB 444. I have a wife and daughter that work and attend an all girls school whom are currently facing difficult situations with Lesbian teacher. Passing this law will bring many repercussions to the state of Hawaii and start the beginning to the end of human race. Please do not let this bill sneak pass without the consent of the entire population of Hawaii. If not no, please have the bill tabled for further examination and editing to clarify and bring true equality to both parties.

With respect father, husband and business owner,

Glen Kozuma

Best Regards,


Sales & Distribution Director
NEXAIR

Nexaircorp.

Office: 55 Merchant St. Suite 2501

Honolulu, HI. 96813

Whse: 334 Kalihi St.

Honolulu, HI. 96819

P. (808) 791-2070 x 219

C. (808) 294-0708

F. (808) 528-4228

gk@nexaircorp.com

From: nunyabus [inunyabus@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION to Civil Unions

Email to: JGOtestimony@Capitol.Hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium
Subject line: Testimony of Elaine Dunbar in Strong **OPPOSITION** of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong **OPPOSITION** of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and benefits afforded to a lawful union of a man and a woman. Further, it provides gay and lesbian couples with equal provisions under the law such as **ADOPTION OF BABIES AND CHILDREN**.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to **BABIES AND CHILDREN THAN TO SATISFY AN UNNECESSARY AND UNUSUAL SELFISH DEMAND** that will do more harm to the majority of the general public, specifically innocent, unknowing children.

H.B. 444, HD1 will further **DENY** protections and rights to **BABIES AND CHILDREN**. This law will permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding.

Also, private employers will be required to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

This bill is a **SUBVERSION** of the Equal Rights Protections. You must **ENSURE THAT BABIES AND CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS PERIOD!** Passing this will **DENY** the protections for babies and children and their equal rights. Would you be comfortable knowing a young boy of someone you knew (or didn't know) was adopted by two male pedophiles????? **BECAUSE YOU VOTED YES?** Possibly for the baby pedophile market that can bring thousands and thousands of dollars for a child. Please be aware of an **Organized League of Pedophiles** that are wealthy and powerful reaching all the way to the top in this government.

Thus, I urge you to vote **NO**.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:06 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: skyewhite@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: I support this for the tourism dollars that is will bring to the state which can be used for education and awareness of HIV in schools and to the general public.docx

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Uneeda S. White
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: skyewhite@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I support this for the tourism dollars that is will bring to the state which can be used for education and awareness of HIV in schools and to the general public. Education is key and if any can of money can come to help cover all the money misused in un needed raises to the board. Let the extra money come in to the state at a time when it is need the most. Money has no gender, but the way the state handles it only points to those that don't know how to proper take charge, but instead abuse the current system. Do the right thing, they hare here. This state is leading in gay and bi's since the 80's. Come out the closet and do what is already out and accept but the majority of the community anyways. There is no one local in this state that doesn't have a gay as a member of their family. Think on that.

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing this e-mail to testify **AGAINST HB 444** that is up for Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009.

HB444 is not the will of the people. In 1998 the majority of registered voters expressed their opinion on this matter.

Traditional Marriage was overwhelmingly approved. Since then there has been no significant change in the position of the

"PEOPLES OPINION". In fact I have spoken to many who voted for traditional marriage and 99.9% of them **HAVE NOT CHANGED** their

view on this issue. Simply calling this bill "civil unions" is only a ploy to disguise the true wording of this bill. We have not been fooled by the

semantics of this bills writing. Therefore Senators, I urge to you to walk you districts and talk to the people living in your districts. Go to the shopping malls

and the parks and playgrounds and simply ask the PEOPLE. They will let you know the answer you need to vote clearly on this issue. Please step back and

express the **WILL OF THE PEOPLE** in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin S. Juan
45-229 Pahikaua ST.
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: Shelly Lasaine [lasaine808@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:58 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: 444

RE: Civil Unions

Why do people fight against Civil Unions? Marriage is protected and so are the rights of gay people. Sounds like a good compromise to me.

Please discourage the spread of discrimination and bigotry.

Support equality and justice.

If we claim to be the "Aloha State" we should start to show aloha to all.

Mahalo

Shelly Lasaine

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From: Mark Stillwell [marklee@fortawesome.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:34 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: support civil unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I admit that the majority of this letter was copied from the ACLU Hawaii website, but I have read it and fully support this position.

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

--
Mark Lee Stillwell
marklee@fortawesome.org

From: Amber Du Bois [amberayako@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:02 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: measure HB 444 HD1

Amber A. Du Bois
HB 444 HD1
Feb. 24 at 9 a.m
Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate,

I write to you today supporting the passage of HB 444 HD1. I believe that as citizens of the United States we are entitled to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness". There should be no distinction made between those that choose to share that happiness with a member of the opposite sex or a partner of their own gender. HB 444 HD1 is an opportunity to take an important step in the movement toward fairness, allowing all couples (including same-sex couples) to enjoy the legal protections and responsibilities of marriage. The bill provides these protections without offending those who express deep concern about changing the institution of marriage to help gay and lesbian couples and their families. Without arguments about the religious tradition of marriage in a church, synagogue or mosque, the issue before the legislature is simply about fairness.

Providing legal protections for same-sex couples recognizes that all persons in long-term, committed relationships face crises as a family – including decisions about emergency health care, the need to make decisions about disposition of a loved one's remains and the desire to share a room in a nursing home or long-term care facility. When married couples face these crises, they confront no questions about the ability to make decisions or care for their partner. When same- sex couples face the same challenges, they are often treated as "strangers" in the eyes of the law.

Recognizing civil unions serves one of the primary functions of government – to ensure equal access to basic rights for all citizens. The leaders of our state must act immediately to ensure that all families in Hawaii have the basic legal protections that allow partners, parents and their children to deal with moments of crisis.

Aloha,

Amber A. Du Bois

February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Jon Scow, Business Owner
Re: HB-444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing Date & Time: Tues, Feb. 24th at 9 am
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium
STRONGLY OPPOSE HB-444 HD1

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jon Scow and I live in Hawaii, unlike many of the supporters of this bill. This bill HB-444, the Civil Unions Bill is very disappointing to me. I don't want this bill because it's wrong.

God meant a man and a woman to be together. When God made man & woman, He made Adam & Eve, not Adam & Steve, which means male & female. Only male & female can reproduce. But man & man and woman & woman cannot reproduce. And the Lord said, "Be fruitful and multiply". God also destroyed Sodom with fire and brimstone for their man on man and woman on woman sexual immorality.

Sincerely,

Jon Scow
95-239 Auhaele Loop
Mililani, HI 96789

From: godlygay@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:09 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: civil unions

February 23, 2009 Testimony
for HB 444, HD 1 RE: Civil Unions, by Timothy D. Earhart- In Support.

Hawaii State Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee Hearing on February 24,
2009, 9:00 AM

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and members of the Senate Judiciary & Government
Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Timothy Earhart
and I support House Bill 444 regarding Civil Unions. I have been employed as a Handi Van
driver (18 years), now under Oahu Transit Services. I support this bill because I believe
that all people should be treated equally under the law, including same-gender couples who
live here. I support HB 444 as it would extend similar rights, benefits, protections and
responsibilities of spouses in marriage to partners in a civil union.

I want to share with you my current experience. Kimo and Paul are your quintessential young
couple. Since there are no children, they have Yuki, a lap dog. Both are employed, Kimo is
serious and organized, and is with a State agency. Paul is outgoing, sensitive and
gregarious, and works with a helping social agency.

When they started their apartment hunting they would decide upon a place, but, mysteriously
it would suddenly be taken or no longer available. Once the landlord realized that they were
a same gender couple, they suspected they were no longer qualified.

I have a room for rent and i am happy that i can accomodate their need for housing. I would
like to see available to them the protection that civil unions would bring. And I think that
they would jump at the chance to enter this with its rights and responsibilities. Thank you,
Timothy Earhart

2041 Puowaina Drive
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
(808) 537-1488

JOE A. TULLY
P.O. Box 4902, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96745

February 23, 2009

**SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING:
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009
(9 AM, CAPITOL AUDITORIUM)**

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI and MEMBERS
SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Aloha.

I submit this testimony on behalf of my family and other parents and grandparents of Hawaii whose deepest concern is the health and well-being of their children and the children of Hawaii.

We are **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to **HB 444 HD1 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444)**.

In advancing HB 444, the Legislature is advancing a bill based on the sexual practices of adults that directly place our children at risk in health and well-being. It will do so every time the children of Hawaii receive instruction about these lifestyles and practices that does not include full and accurate disclosure of the physical, emotional, and psychological risks involved in these practices.

Such negligent and reckless instruction has already been taking place in our schools for over ten years. School administrators, teachers, and health officials have been involved, individually and collectively, in such instruction to our children and in intentionally keeping parents from knowing that instruction regarding such beliefs and practices has been given and is being given to their children and grandchildren.

As a result, most parents do not know that the serious harms or deaths that their children have experienced may well have been caused by their children adopting these sexual practices as a direct result of the instruction which teachers and health officials have advocated, without full disclosure of the serious harm or death that often results from such practices. But Hawaii's parents will not remain ignorant of what is taking place and the risks to their children and grandchildren. They will soon be made aware of these reckless instructional practices and the intentional failure to disclose the fact that such instruction is taking place and the risks involved.

This bill will only increase such instruction and risks to our children and further put the schools, teachers, administrators, health officials, legislators, and State of Hawaii at risk of serious law suits. Such financial exposure is hardly needed at any time. In this time of serious financial

difficulties, actions that place the State at risk of serious and further financial liability would be truly reckless and irresponsible.

It is the responsibility of legislators and government generally to protect the health and welfare of the people, not to place them at risk. Please do not pass this bill or advance any other legislation that involves such risks to our children or state.

If any would suggest such a reckless path, they should be required to conduct a full family impact study and prepare a Family Impact Statement that is at least as serious as the environmental impact statements required in Hawaii. Our environment is indeed a precious asset of our people. I cannot imagine who would suggest that our children and families are not even more precious to us.

Please note that such instruction is also a violation of the fundamental federal and state constitutional rights to freedom of belief and conscience. Such instruction directly contradicts the religious beliefs of a large majority of the families in Hawaii.

When conducted by State officials under color of law, such actions are a violation of federal civil rights law, specifically of 42 USC § 1981 Equal rights under the law, § 1983 Civil action for deprivation of rights, § 1985 Conspiracy to interfere with civil rights, § 1986 Action for neglect to prevent conspiracy, § 1988 Proceedings in vindication of civil rights. Such violations make those responsible *personally liable*.

In addition, under 18 USC § 241 Title 18 of the United States Code, Crimes and Criminal Procedure, where two or more persons conspire to harm any person in his or her U.S. Constitutional rights or privileges (here the freedom of belief), they may be fined and or imprisoned for up to *ten years*. If death results from acts committed in violation of this section, then they can be imprisoned *for any term of years or for life*. They *can even be sentenced to death*.

There are very serious consequences in these harmful actions which are already being taken in our schools and being considered for further institutionalization in HB 444 – serious consequences both for the children and for those imposing such instruction on them.

Please recognize that a Family Impact Statement is the very least of the efforts that should be made before such measures would ever be seriously considered.

Please vote NO on HB 444.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Tully

Anita Dunn
1327 Akamai St.
Kailua, HI 96734
808-261-1072

HB 444 HD1
Monday, February 23, 2009 @ 8:00 a.m.

RE: Oppose HB444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444. I speak in opposition to House Bill HB444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following:

"The most widely accepted study of sexual practices in the United States is the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs) found that 2.8% of the male, and 1.4% of the female, population identify themselves as Homosexual." Why then are we changing our laws based on what the minority wants? Please take into consideration what the majority of the people of Hawaii want. Most people in Hawaii do not want homosexual couples to have the same rights as heterosexual couples.

If homosexual couples get the same rights as heterosexual couples, schools will be mandated to teach that homosexual relationships are normal. Based on the study that only 2.8% of the population considers themselves homosexual, it is NOT the norm. If this bill is passed, churches will have to perform civil unions going against their beliefs that God established the family as a heterosexual couple. This will lead to a break down of traditional family values.

In addition, I am opposed to HB444 because it will take away my rights as a Christian to say that homosexual marriage is wrong based on what my God and my Bible says. God's Word has been what our values and laws are based on in America. Only months after legalizing same-sex "marriage" in Canada, activists there successfully passed C-250, a bill criminalizing public statements against homosexuality, punishable by up to two years in prison. Say that my Bible says homosexuality is wrong and go to jail. This could happen here. This takes away my rights as a Christian. Some studies say that 90% of Americans consider themselves Christians. Why are you taking away the rights and beliefs of 90% of Americans to give rights to 2.8% of the population. This is wrong.

Please, please, vote no on HB444 and keep traditional family values in place.

Sincerely,
Anita Dunn

From: Phillip Scott [thaiea9@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:02 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444

I just read a lot of the testimonies regarding HB444. I read many moving personal stories of how a civil union law would legally, financially and psychologically enhance couple's lives. Many of them heart breaking. None of the testimonies against civil unions gave any examples of how their lives would be better without a civil union law or worse if one were passed. Marriage is "protected" by the constitutional amendment. It's time to protect the rights of those who are not allowed to be married. It's time for the State of Hawaii to stop discriminating against gay people.
It's time for the Aloha State to live up to its name.

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: Daisy Carbone [alohafromdaisy@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:06 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: RE: HB 444 Civil Unions

I am writing to OPPOSE the passing of the HB 444 Civil Unions bill.

I believe in traditional marriage between a man and a woman. I believe that it is IMPOSSIBLE for male/male or female/female unions to create a normal and healthy family relationship for bringing up children.

IF there is a TRUE homosexual union WITHOUT having OUTSIDE help, it is a physical IMPOSSIBILITY to create children. You need an egg and a sperm, not 2 spears or 2 eggs to create a human being. True homosexual unions will DIE OUT. Not only from natural means, but also from probable causes of AIDS and other homosexual related diseases.

Children flourish under BOTH male and female influences. One-sidedness gives no balanced relationships for children.

I strongly OPPOSE HB 444, as well as thousands of other people. Majority should win out over "loud" minority votes.

Thank you for your time,

Daisy Carbone
Mililani

From: Ruby Knopke [rksavdbygrace@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444HD1, relating to civil unions

My name is Ruby Knopke; I speak as a very concerned citizen and as a retired teacher of 37 years against HB 444. From the beginning of my career I noticed that children who lacked having both a father and a mother present in their home had more emotional and psychological issues than their peers. When I became a single parent, I also experienced first-hand the painful results of a household lacking the balance of a male parent and a female parent raising children with the strengths characteristic of each sex. By defining civil unions as stated in HB 444, the concept of family as a man and a woman committed to each other and raising children together is completely altered. Do we want our future generations to have less than the optimum situation in which our children can grow and prosper? Those who prefer same sex marriages have their rights protected under RBAHR572C. Guarding the definition of marriage as between a man and woman will not be harmful to them but conversely, changing the definition of marriage and family will hurt our society. I urge you to protect the state of Hawaii from heading down a perilous road. Thank you.

From: ericpccc@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:56 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony for HB444 Sen. Jud. Com.

From: Pastor Eric Ebisu Pearl City Community Church (United Church of Christ)

To: SENATE JUDICAIY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009
9:00 A.M. - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
MEASURE NUMBER: HB 444, HD1

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD1

MARRIAGE IS THE SACRED BONDING OF ONE MAN WITH ONE WOMAN. WE KNOW FROM PAST VOTING FIGURES THAT THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII HAVE LONG HELD AND CONTINUES TO HOLD FAST TO THIS UNDERSTANDING AND DEFINITION. WE WERE REMINDED THIS PAST SUNDAY THAT THIS CONTINUES TO BE THE OVERWHELMING WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

IF THERE ARE EQUILITY OF RIGHTS ISSUES FOR THE GAY COMMUNITY, PLEASE WORK ON HRS 372C, OUR RECIPROCAL BENEFICIARY ACT, AND AMEND IT OR CHANGE IT. DO NOT USE THE CIVIL UNION BILL, HB 444, FOR THAT PURPOSE. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1.

MAHALO,
ERIC EBISU

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Morgan Evans [mevans@unitehere5.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:57 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Tesimony HB444

Name: Mary Morgan Evans of Kapahulu
Measure Number: HB444 HD1
Date and time of hearing: Feb. 24 at 9am
Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

I strongly support the recognition of civil unions by the State of Hawaii. Discrimination against same sex couples is akin to discrimination against any group and it is time for our law makers to take the responsibility that comes with their positions. This is an issue of economic justice. No government should have the right to deny individuals benefits based on sexual preference. Voting against this measure is equivalent to endorsing discrimination and denying basic rights. Voting for this measure is a step towards true equality and justice. Mahalo.

From: Frances Yoshimitsu [fyoshimitsu@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:53 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 444

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – State Capitol Auditorium

Measure #: HB 444

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and the members of the Judiciary Committee

In 1998, at least 70% of us in Hawaii sent a clear message that we want those seeking marriage in the State of Hawaii to always be between one man and one woman. HB 444 relating to civil unions attempts to thwart the will of the people. This proposal appears to be an attempt to legitimize gay marriages by simply using another title to the Bill. Our representatives already worked on a reasonable compromise and established the Hawaii Reciprocal Beneficiary law. The law provides benefits, without discriminating or favoring any select group of people. This Bill is being rushed through for a final vote. Much thought should go into a Bill that severely affects the citizens of Hawaii, and the impact this will have on us, our children, our grandchildren financially and socially.

As a resident and native of Hawaii, I ask that you please vote No on HB 444

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Frances Yoshimitsu
681 Akoakoa Street
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

From: Ayman El-Swaify [elswa011.parent@punahou.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:52 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Ayman El-Swaify
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

This bill is being proposed despite the prior expressed will of the people of the State of Hawaii to define marriage between one man and one woman and the existence of a 1997 Reciprocity bill, which already provides benefits previously reserved for spouses to those prohibited from marrying.

So, then, why this bill? It is a deliberate step in putting the legal stamp of approval on homosexuality and imposing it with force throughout the various social and political institutions of a society that would never accept it otherwise. It is about mandating each person's acceptance of homosexuality as a normal lifestyle.

As the example of Massachusetts illustrates, this is not "a benign Eccentricity that won't affect the average person". It will have negative impacts on adoption, individual religious rights, religious organizations, parental rights, health care providers, families and children, schools; virtually all societal institutions.

Homosexuality is not an innate part of human beings as are age, race and gender. It is a lifestyle choice. The human rights of someone choosing to live a homosexual lifestyle are already protected by current law. Marriage is a sacred act between opposite genders and thus simply should not be extended to same-gender couples.

February 22, 2009

Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol Building
415 S. Beretania
Honolulu, HI 96813

Testimony on HB444

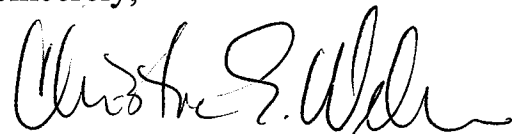
Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Committee Members,

Please accept this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB444**.

The time has come for equality in our great country. I do not ask for special treatment, I only ask for equal treatment, equal rights and responsibilities.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine E. Welch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Christine E. Welch
825 Papalalo Place
Honolulu, HI 96825

February 22, 2009

Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol Building
415 S. Beretania
Honolulu, HI 96813

Testimony on HB444

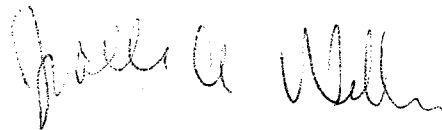
Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Committee Members,

Please accept this testimony **in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444.**

The time has come for equality in our great country. I do not ask for special treatment, I only ask for equal treatment, equal rights and responsibilities.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jonelle A. Welch".

Jonelle A. Welch
825 Papalalo Place
Honolulu, HI 96825

ROBERT K. MATSUMOTO
Attorney at Law
345 Queen St., Suite 701
Honolulu, HI 96813
Telephone: (808) 585-7244
Facsimile: (808) 585-7284
Email: rkmbengoshi@hawaii.rr.com

No. of pages including this page: 4

DATE: February 23, 2009

TO: Senator Brian Taniguchi
Chair, Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

FACSIMILE NO. 586-6461

RE: Testimony on HB 444, Relating to Civil Union
Date & Time of Hearing: 2/24/09 @ 9:00 a.m.
Senate Auditorium

Dear Senator Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

I urge you to vote NO on HB 444 and NOT to pass the said Bill out of this Committee.

No matter how the relationship is couched in HB 444, THE SAID BILL IS SIMPLY A "MARRIAGE" between to 2 same sex persons no less. The effect of HB 444 is to destroy the nuclear traditional family with the consequent destruction of society itself. This is so because marriage between a man and a woman, with its attendant benefits and obligations will be rendered meaningless, and HB 444 will encourage other relationships to the detriment of traditional marriage, i.e. between a man and a woman.

The passage of HB 444 flies in the face of the voters of Hawaii who just recently voted 70 to 30 to preserve marriage between a man and a woman. The changing of the wording of marriage to "civil unions" insults the will of the people of Hawaii.

The prescient words of Judge Walter Heen (dissenting judge in the landmark case of Baehr v. Lewin (later Miike), should serve as an admonition to this committee when it considers HB 444,

"This court should not manufacture a civil right which is unsupported by any precedent, and whose legal incidents – the entitlement of statutory benefits (conferred upon unmarried persons through a certification system) will reach beyond the right to enter into a legal marriage and overturn long standing public policy encompassing other areas of public concern. This decision will have far-reaching and grave repercussions on the finances and policies of the governments and industry of this state and all the other states in the country."

The passage of HB 444 will have the following consequences, among other consequences, (this list is not exhaustive of a myriad of religious, moral, societal and economic considerations):

1. It will destroy the importance of marriage between a man and a woman as a social institution, thereby destroying the very fabric of society and civilization.
2. It will discriminate against and violate the religious beliefs and freedom of conscience of many Christians, Jews, and Muslims, and others who believe marriage to be the union of opposite sex couples, and no other relationship should supplant or supplement that ideology.
3. It will leave children vulnerable to the whims of adults who cannot provide, generally speaking, a stable environment which a traditional married couple can.

4. It will encourage persons to push for other relationships, such as polygamous marriages, because the very definition of "marriage" takes on a different meaning.

There have been numerous studies conducted to determine the effects on married couples, children and society at large where the institution of marriage has been weakened such as "no fault" divorce. The devastating impact on children has been noted especially. A strong correlation has been found between the family breakup and child homelessness, drug abuse among the young, the physical abuse and neglect of babies and children, high rates of teenage pregnancy and a continuing cycle of broken relationships. Clearly, once traditional marriage becomes marginalized or rendered irrelevant with the passage of HB 444, the seeds of destruction of society will have been sown.

A recent U.S. District Court ruling (February 23, 2007) in Lexington, Massachusetts, if left standing, will have profound effect elsewhere where civil unions or same sex marriage are recognized. *David Parker, et. al., Plaintiffs v. William Hurley, et. al. Defendants*, C.A. No. 06-10751-MLW. In that decision, the District Court judge dismissed the lawsuit of concerned parents of public school children, who have been forced to learn that "normalizing homosexuality to young children is 'reasonably related to the goals of preparing students to become engaged and productive citizens in our democracy.'" "It is reasonable for public educators to teach elementary school students about individuals with different sexual orientations and about various forms of families, including those with same-sex parents, in an effort to eradicate the effects of past discrimination, to reduce the risk of future discrimination and, in the process, to reaffirm

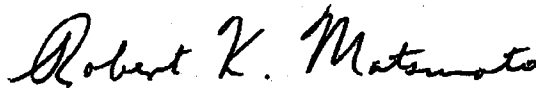
our nation's constitutional commitment to promoting mutual respect among members of our diverse society."

The District Judge further held that the parents of the school children cannot have their children opt out of the curriculum teaching the "normalization of homosexuality." Instead, he gave a "TAKE OR LEAVE IT" stance. He said if the parents don't like it, they can send their children to private schools that do not teach the normalization of homosexuality or to teach their children at home.

If your committee passes HB 444 out of committee, and if HB 444 is passed as law, it will be only a few years when what happened in Lexington, Massachusetts may become a reality in Hawaii, i.e. parents of public school children will not be able to "opt" their children out of classes teaching the so called normalization of homosexuality even though such teaching contravenes the religious beliefs of the parents and their school children. Moreover, the "forced" teaching of the normalization of homosexuality may cause teachers to file lawsuits against the State DOE because their religious beliefs too will be infringed.

Once again, I urge you to vote NO on HB 444, and not pass the said Bill out of committee.

Very truly yours,



Robert K. Matsumoto

This communication contains confidential and privileged information. It is exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you receive it in error, please notify the sender immediately by telephone or fax and return the original by mail.

February 23, 2009

Candace N. Yee
94-219 Kuhana Place
Honolulu, Hawaii, 96797

**To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Brian Taniguchi**

Subject: HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions

**Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM
-AUDITORIUM**

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444.

Please oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times.

The people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences, but we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world.

I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

Respectfully yours,

Candace N. Yee

February 23, 2009

Tammy Murakami
PO Box 1475
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

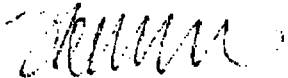
Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

RE: STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I am sending this fax to express my opposition to **Civil Union Bill # 444**. Just a reminder that the people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same sex marriage therefore, I would like to encourage you to protect traditional marriage and say "NO" to civil unions.

Mahalo,



DEAR SENATOR BRIAN TANIGUCHI,

I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO CHANGE YOUR POSITION IN SUPPORT OF HB 444.

THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII AND YOUR DISTRICT HAVE ALREADY VOTED 10 YEARS AGO IN FAVOR OF THE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE OF ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN.

HAWAII ALREADY HAS A RECIPROCAL BENEFICIARY LAW RBA HRS 572C.

PLEASE DO NOT DESTROY HAWAII AND OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS!!

OPEN YOUR HEART AND EARS AND LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII.

PLEASE VOTE AGAINST THIS BILL!!

MAHALO,
SHAREEN SATO

**To: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations**

Fr: Rev. Bruce Iverson

Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 am, Capitol Auditorium

Re: Testimony against HB 444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **against** this bill.

1. The vast majority of people in Hawaii, have already voted once to affirm traditional marriage, and are concerned that the legislature has forgotten. This bill about "civil unions" is the same as the same sex marriage law with a different title. Hawaii voted and made clear that we do not want same sex marriage, listen to our voice.
2. Hawaii already confirms many benefits through the Reciprocal Beneficiary Law. This law does not expand the rights of many; it instead creates a special protected class that get more right than others. This bill does nothing to further this law.
3. This bill does nothing to strengthen the traditional family, which is under attack. Studies continue to show that children do best in a traditional family with a father and mother. This bill would rewrite the basic marriage laws for the benefit of a few adults in opposition to the best interest of children.

This is a bad bill, which is unnecessary, poorly written, and against the wishes of Hawaii's people.

Please vote NO to HB 444 HD1.

Cary W. Lyman
94-1130 Manino Place
Waipahu, HI 96797

02/23/2009

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444

I strongly oppose HB 444, this is just another way around the same sex marriage issue. This measure was already defeated by the people of Hawaii a couple of years ago.

God ordained marriage to be between one man and one woman as stated in the Bible!

Please vote no on HB 444!

MARK DAVID PETTINATO

Attorney at Law
Pearlridge Office Center, Suite 402
98-211 Pali Momi Street
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
Telephone (808) 487-8402

February 19, 2009

Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight T. Takamine, Vice Chair
Sen. Robert Bunda
Sen. Mike Gabbard
Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara
Sen. Sam Slom

Re: HB 444

Dear Senators:

I am writing in opposition to HB 444 (“Civil Union”), which I understand the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee may be hearing in the near future.

In 1998 the voters of this state approved a constitutional amendment which delegated the task of defining marriage to the legislature. The amendment was the product of compromise between those who favored and those who opposed the Supreme Court’s *Baehr* decision, which had held that same-sex partners were entitled to the same rights to marry as opposite-sex couples. When the voters went to the polls and overwhelmingly approved the amendment, the vast majority of them did so believing they were affirming, probably forever, the normal definition of marriage, i.e. a union between one man and one woman, which is what the legislature codified shortly after the people voted on the proposed amendment.

The legislature now wants to create a halfway-house between “traditional marriage” and “same-sex marriage”—something called a civil union, which is limited (unlike the reciprocal beneficiaries law) to homosexuals. The compromise will be inherently unstable, because homosexuals still want full marriage rights, as was made clear during the House Judiciary Committee’s hearing on the bill. Many of those who testified in favor of HB 444 were up front in saying that civil unions were only “stage one” on their agenda, their final goal (so they claimed) being marriage.

Now if civil unions—or even the reciprocal-beneficiary provisions we presently have—give homosexual couples all—or, in the case of the present law, nearly all—the benefits of marriage, why is there still a clamoring after marriage? And is the acquisition of marriage rights really the final stage, as those who want this bill claim?

Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight T. Takamine, Vice Chair
Sens. Robert Bunda, Mike Gabbard, Clarence K. Nishihara, and Sam Slom
February 19, 2009
Page Two

A classic study by McWhirter and Mattison (both gay men), *The Male Couple* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), tracked 156 male couples over a five-year period and found that not one of those couples remained “monogamous” over that time. The authors concluded that there was something inherent in homosexual relationships which militated against monogamy (which is, of course, the very essence of marriage in western society). European experience bears this out: in those countries that have legalized same-sex marriages, the average life of such marriages is a scant year and a half.

Many advocates of same-sex marriage tell us a very different story from the one that the legislature heard as to why they want to have civil unions (or, further down the line, marriage rights). Their goal is, quite frankly, to destroy altogether the institution of marriage, which they view as “oppressive” and “out of date,” to use two of the more restrained terms in their literature. One famous gay activist tells gays to secure rights to marry, “not as a way of adhering to society’s moral codes but rather to debunk a myth and radically alter an archaic institution” (Michelangelo Signorile, “Bridal Wave,” *OUT* magazine, December/January 1994, p. 161). Richard Goldstein writes in “The Radical Case for Gay Marriage” (*Village Voice*, September 3-9, 2003, p. 34): “Generations of radicals have imagined a world in which the norm-making rules of matrimony are suspended.” And as the experience in Scandinavia has shown, marriage—even heterosexual marriage—becomes a dying institution wherever gay marriage is written into law. More and more children are born out of wedlock, people cohabit rather than marrying, birth rates dwindle to the point where countries are not reproducing themselves, and family instability is the norm rather than the exception. It is the children, of course, who suffer the most: denied rearing in a family in which both a father and a mother are present, they suffer all the social pathologies that study after study has caused us to expect: poor academic performance, high rates of drug use and crime, poor financial outcomes later in life.

And there are other predictable victims. Those who disagree, on religious or moral grounds, with the whole concept of gay marriage are mercilessly persecuted: they lose their jobs or their contracts; in Canada and in Europe they are fined or (in the case of one Swedish pastor) imprisoned; young children are forced to view the most lurid pro-homosexual pornographic agitprop, some of it authored by government departments, as part of the state’s mission to “normalize” the sexual preferences and practices of a small minority and to marginalize anyone who dissents. A foretaste of that sort of thing is what happened recently to people who voted in favor of Proposition 8 in California. People were assaulted; churches and homes were vandalized; people had their jobs and contracts cancelled. Closer to home, some fifteen years or so ago a member of your own committee lost his restaurant business because homosexual activists were bent on silencing him and picketed it to death. This whole issue, which the legislature has wisely avoided for over ten years, has the potential to divide the population of this state into (1) a supercilious minority who will tyrannize and victimize (2) the majority who have already indicated they do not want this legislation.

Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight T. Takamine, Vice Chair
Sens. Robert Bunda, Mike Gabbard, Clarence K. Nishihara, and Sam Slom
February 19, 2009
Page Three

We already have in place a nondiscriminatory “marriage-benefits regime” in the form of our reciprocal beneficiaries legislation. It is designed to be used by any couple who cannot marry. It does not discriminate by requiring that the people who register under it be homosexual. And it provides all the benefits that many of the people who testified in the House—whether through ignorance or dishonesty—claimed they do not have (hospital visitation of one’s partner is the one that is always brought up). If there are other “marital” benefits that should be included in the reciprocal beneficiary legislation these can always be added after study by the legislature. There is therefore no true need for civil-union legislation if the goal is “equality” of benefits under the law. But if the goal is simply to benefit a clamant minority which will not be satisfied until it has irrevocably altered the institution of marriage, then civil unions should be seen for what they are: a mere stalking horse for gay marriage.

I thank you for your service to this state and for the foregoing reasons urge you to vote against HB 444.

Sincerely,



MARK D. PETTINATO

February 17, 2009

Mr. & Mrs. Harry Tanoue
1070 Ala Napunani Street, #106 Honolulu HI 96818

To: Senate Judiciary Committee:
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair
Senator Robert Bunda
Senator Clarence Nishihara

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444**

Dear Senator,

In 1998, majority of the people of Hawaii used their privilege to vote in support for "Marriage between A Man and A Woman".

Based on this strong support for Traditional Marriage, Bill 444, Civil Unions, should never have been considered. However, having passed the House, it is an insult to the supporters of Traditional Marriage.

We already have a civil union, which is between a man and a woman. According to the Bible, marriage is the sacred union between men and women; not unnatural acts between two men or two women - this is called sin. Actually, the only civil union is between a man and a woman.

In respect for our ancestors, and for the future of our families, children and grandchildren, we pray you will make the right decision by honoring God and the Will of the People of Hawaii, by **Opposing HB 444**.

Respectfully,

Harry E. Tanoue

Amy E. Tanoue

Mr. & Mrs. Harry Tanoue

February 23, 2009

Dear Senator Taniguchi:

Our family is strongly opposed to House Bill 444. Please represent our views and not paid homosexual lobbyist.

Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Please vote against HB 444, or better yet, do not even give it a hearing.

Kind regards,



Frank & Susan Harwell
2333 Kapiolani Blvd #1112
Honolulu, HI 96826

February 23, 2009

Fax: 586-6460


State of Hawaii
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Senator Brian Taniguchi,

I seek your wisdom and courage to not disrespect the Hawaii people's mandate in 1998 that defines marriage as "*should be between only a man and a woman*". HB 444 through legislators is a reintroduction of a bill that will legalize "*same-sex marriage*" under a more euphemistic yet deceptive coined "*civil unions*".

Please listen to the heart of your people. HB 444 is divisive and opens the controversial battles that have already been settled by the people of Hawaii in 1998. Please vote against HB 444; do not even give it a hearing.

Respectfully,


Carolina Gunn

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church
Ewa Beach, HI

From: Irene M. Lewellen
85 965 Mill St. #306
Waianae, HI 96792

RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444

DEAR SENATOR,

I Humbly ask that you would please VOTE NO on the civil union bill HB 444 we have alot of beautiful Keiki's in the state of Hawaii, and its really sad & heartbreaking to know that our kids in Hawaii go through drug abuse domestic abuse crime & violence with some members of their family, but with all of this going on in our Island, we still need to teach and show our Keiki's Good morals & Family values and continue our good positive family traditions. Lets not put our Keiki's of Hawaii through another future of negativity of allowing & excepting same sex marriages. Its wrong and its not normal. I know some other states have same sex marriages, but we the people of Hawaii is different, we got alot of Love & Aloha's. we dont need civil union bill HB 444 to ruin our Island, it would be a huge mistake to pass it in our Islands. I have alot of Love & Respect for Gay People, but I am totally against same sex marriages to unite as 1, especially in the state of Hawaii. God created a man and a woman to unite as ONE in marriage to have You and Me. So please lets Honor God and keep our tradition marriage to only be between a man and a woman in our beautiful state of Hawaii. Once again I humbly ask that you please VOTE NO to the civil union bill HB 444 for the people and the Keiki's in the state of Hawaii! ☺

MAHALO & GOD BLESS!!!
Irene M. Lewellen
IRENE M. LEWELLEN
Feb. 23, 2009 7:45 a.m.

From: Barbara Grace Ripple [bripple@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:24 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Yes for Civil Unions HB444 HD1

Yes to Civil Unions in Hawaii--HB 444 HD1
No to discrimination against same-sex couples

February 23, 2009

(unable to attend Tuesday's hearing due to my husband's scheduled surgery)

From:
The Rev. Barbara Grace Ripple
United Methodist Church
(Supt. of UM churches in Guam, Saipan and the State of Hawaii 1998-2004)
99-094 Kaamilo Street
Aiea, HI 96701-3055
808/220-3130
email: bripple@hawaii.rr.com

I have resided in Hawai'i since 1998, am a United Methodist minister and a member of The Interfaith Alliance Hawai'i (formerly the Hawai'i Council of Churches). I believe firmly and passionately that we must not discriminate against persons because of ethnicity, religion, race, age, gender, or gender identity. This is the law of our land, This is also a matter of conscience. Two persons of the same gender who choose to live together in a committed relationship are entitled to the same legal rights and privileges under the law as two persons of differing gender.

After nine years as an educator and twenty-eight years as clergy with four years of post graduate work in seminary, I am convinced that all discrimination is wrong, and that the exclusion of some persons because they seem to challenge our concept of what is 'normal' is against the teachings of most religions including the Christian faith. When I hear the Bible used to justify discrimination against this group of persons who were created in God's image, I am reminded that at one time the Bible was used to justify the enslavement of persons brought from Africa to the United States to serve our needs for cheap labor, and who were for too long a time denied their equal rights under the law.

Homosexuality is not a choice; it is the genetic make-up of about one-tenth of our population. For too long, persons who were born homosexual have faced ridicule, taunting, beatings and even terrible death because of others' misplaced fears, anger and ignorance. They have been forced to hide or to pretend they are something other than the beautiful persons God created them to be. For too many, this has led to leading a double existence, or even to the terrible tragedy of taking their own lives.

Among my cherished friends are two women who have lived together in a loving, committed relationship for many years and are raising a daughter who radiates the love she has received in this home. Also among my cherished friends are two men who are raising a son and a daughter, adopted from birth. The children had serious health problems because of their birth mother's addictions, but now are happy, healthy children because of the love and nurture they have received in their family. These families are not 'non-traditional,' but rather are like any other families I know. The persons I know in same-gender relationships are just like persons in any other relationships. They love, they argue, they pay taxes and bills, they contribute to society. These are all God's beloved children. Who are we to discriminate and say they are not entitled to dignity and to the rights and responsibilities that we give to couples where there is one man and one woman? What right do we have to deny them the same as what we have?

Those who say that allowing civil unions will destroy 'traditional marriage,' or that marriage must be between 'one man and one woman' need to remember the time when marriage was illegal if it was between one white person and one black person. We look back and say 'that was ridiculous!' One day, when our homosexual sisters and brothers are allowed to live as freely and with as much dignity as their heterosexual sisters and brothers, we will look back at today's discrimination and think, 'How ridiculous!'

Last night at the Academy Awards, Dustin Lance Black, receiving the award for his original screenplay, "Milk," recalled being raised in a Mormon home and hearing Milk's story around the time his family moved to California. "It gave me the hope one day I could live my life openly as who I am and then maybe even I could even fall in love and one day get married...I want to thank my mom, who has always loved me for who I am...But most of all, if Harvey had not been taken from us 30 years ago, I think he'd want me to say to all the gay and lesbian kids out there tonight who have been told that they are less than by their churches, by the government or by their families, that you are beautiful, wonderful creatures who have value. And that no matter what anyone tells you, God does love you."

YES, for HB 444 HD1-CIVIL UNIONS. It is the least we can do to show our Aloha!

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Four weeks ago, my [non legally recognized] friend, was rushed by ambulance to emergency. After 33 years of love and care and sharing a life together, she waits inside alone, while I am told to wait in the waiting room. After a frantic few minutes waiting, I approached a different clerk and lied, said I was her sister.

So thank you for considering a bill that will end the lies. Thank you for recognizing the immense pain caused by denying us our rights. Thank you for ending the lies about us. Thank you for decency and caring. Thank you

Eileen Diana Burg
Kaneohe, HI

From: Kauka, Baxter D Civ USAF PACAF CEOF/CEOF [Baxter.Kauka@hickam.af.mil]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:27 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444, HD1

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Baxter D. Kauka

From: CBMAGNUS@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:53 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I'm In Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium

Subject line: Testimony of Charles Magnus in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles B. Magnus

2215 Aloha Drive #5K

Honolulu, HI 96815

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Lynn Nakamoto [KBCSecretary@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:13 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha,

My name is Lynn Nakamoto; I am a wife and mother of three children and live in Kahului Maui. I oppose HB 444 HD 1 relating to Civil Unions. I believe that everyone should have rights; I have gay cousins and friends whom I love dearly. This message does not come out of hatred, but rather from love. I love God so much and this great County was founded on the values and principals we find in the Bible. God does not approve of Civil Unions (gay marriages) and entitling these unions to the same benefits as normal marriage is like saying that gay marriage is okay. It seems like the further we get away from God's law, the more trouble our nations gets in to. We need to follow the simple instructions God lovingly gives to us. In the Bible, God promises that if we turn from the wrong things we do and follow Him and His commandments that He will restore and heal our land. I ask that you help the citizens of Hawaii follow and obey God's law to ensure a prosperous future for Hawaii and our nation.

Thank You,
Lynn Nakamoto

From: Siobhán Ní Dhonacha [nidhonacha@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:53 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: H.B. 444 HD1 Civil Unions - Vote Yes to really usher in a new and overdue era of equality and justice for all! Ua mau ke ea o ka 'aina i ka pono. The life of the land is preserved in righteousness.

To Whom It May Concern (which I believe is everyone, actually!)

Thank you for reading on!

I am writing to fully support and endorse H.B. 444 HD1 Civil Unions. In 1998 a groundswell of religious activity, some apparently from out of the State, ensured that marriage between people in the State of Hawai'i would remain between a man and a woman. Hawai'i remained behind the curve when it could have been a leader, as it is with mixed race marriages and inter-cultural issues in some other important ways.

Now there is chance to rectify this sad event.

As a woman who has been in a committed partnership with another woman for almost 14 years, I know first hand what legal, familial and social discrimination is, and what not having equal rights does to the sense of trust and safety in this world, country and state. The fact is that every day people assume I am straight, and when some find out I am not, they have fired me, evicted me, ostracized me, disowned me in my biological family and been hostile in many other ways. My partnership has so much external pressure from family who have rejected it, from the lack of ability to go anywhere safely as a couple who can even hold hands in public - even just once, without the fear of being beaten up, or stared at belligerently.

If I "choose" this biological imprint of sexuality, why would I? I would have to be crazy given the hostility that the general straight world has for gay people. Who in their right mind would willingly and because they felt like being "that way" sign up for such an experience of daily hatred? No, I am who I am, and most of the time, I feel pride in myself. But that pride is not because the straight world helped me with that.

Social behaviors like racism and homophobia may be dressed up in pretty "Save the family" or "Save marriage" or "Save the children" clothing, which was the case when President Barack Obama's parents could not marry in 16 states due to legalized racial bigotry when he was born here in Hawai'i in the sixties . But the virulent hatred seething underneath shines though and it is never pretty.

I was born and raised in Ireland, a country dominated by religion, and believe that people of faith must be free to practice their faith in private, but not to ever use that as a political platform or in politics. Separation of church and state is so that all people can have religious freedom, because when one religion dominates in a civil society, everyone suffers.

At the legislature yesterday (02.22.09), pastors of various Christian denominations worked on whipping their followers into a fervor about - other people having rights? Love thy neighbor as thyself, anyone?

Were there not some needy homeless people to feed or some park to clean up or some children to take out for day or some Habitat for Humanity house to build? But no, better spend money to print T-Shirts, signs, stickers and to protest against other people who actually want to be together and stay together.

As long as there is divorce and as long as any straight person has ever been divorced or allowed divorce or any church allows divorced members, it is a complete hypocrisy to oppose and disallow anyone who would like to have legal rights as partners. Fix divorce, why don't these homophobic people? If straight marriage is in such trouble, why not focus on fixing that then? Why tell other people what they are not entitled to ?

The signs at the "rally" yesterday read "Don't mess with marriage". These people seem to have come directly from church, judging by one member who saying they were bused in. Wow! That is a lot of money and time to protest something that doesn't affect anyone else negatively and will only affect society positively and is a long overdue change. Marriage is not being "messed with" - does this bill says stop straight people marrying? Does it say "do away with heterosexuality"? No, it doesn't!

Countries with civil unions or gay marriage do not have a decrease in straight marriage or something bizarre like that because gay people can marry or have civil unions. Life has gone on and in a much better way.

One woman at the "rally" was thrilled that so many people believe that marriage is between a man and woman. There is great arrogance in saying this, and tremendous social danger in believing that one segment of society is better than another. Remember the egregious plantation "lifestyle" - anyone? Remember the loss of Hawaiian lands, culture and freedom - anyone?

Without equal rights for all terrible things can happen. As Pastor Martin Niemoller wrote:

"In Germany, they came first for the Communists, And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist;
And then they came for the trade unionists, And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist;
And then they came for the Jews, And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew;
And then . . . they came for me . . . And by that time there was no one left to speak up."

The great land of Hawai'i has an unique opportunity to not only be the birth place of the first African-American and the 44th President but the birthplace of true equality for everyone in the land. Please do not let Hawaii lose the chance to shine brightly for the rest of the nation. And to shine brightly for me and thousands like me. I am personally counting on you.

Ua mau ke ea o ka ` aina i ka pono.

The life of the land is preserved in righteousness.

Sincerely,
Siobhán Ní Dhonacha

From: Harry Victorino [sgthv@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:59 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION to SB444

TO : Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
FROM : Harry Victorino
DATE/TIME : February 24, 2009 / 9:00 am., Tuesday
PLACE : State Capital Auditorium
REGARDING : STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1
(Relating to Civil Unions)

In 1998 the people made their voices heard and I am writing to ask that as our elected officials, you honor the will of the people by strongly **opposing** this bill. The people of Hawaii are a very tolerant people and have spoken through **their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiary Law..**

In these tough economic times, the legislature should be working to bring its people together rather than causing division through re-hashing of controversial battles which have already been resolved. Civil Unions are just another name for Same Sex Unions/Marriage- please don't water down and devalue the foundation of our community.

I believe that Marriage/Union is only intended to be between a man and woman, and for the sake of our society, nation, state, community, and mainly our children, we need to ensure that this is never devalued.

Again please honor the will of the people and **oppose this bill.**

From: Danny Aiu [danvsaiu@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:57 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444, Senate Judiciary Committee, Tuesday Feb 24, 2009 at 0900

Good morning,

My name is Nora Aiu. I oppose HB444. I would just like to take the time to ask you to hear the voice of the majority in their opposition to HB 444 and bring forth our voice when you place your vote. I believe that those who are elected to represent the people's voice should also vote the voice of the people and not their own personal agenda/opinions, or the voice of the selective minority and place it as if it were a vote representative of the majority of the people. We all have our own opinion of things, and that does not make it right or wrong. But when the very job we hold is the collective representation of the people's opinion then that is what one MUST and SHOULD do.

I stand forth along with the many others who oppose this bill. I believe in God, and it says, "if you love me, keep my word". I believe that this bill is same sex marriage dressed up and made politically correct under the title of civil union. The Bible clearly speaks of marriage as the union of man and women, and clearly tells us that homosexuality is not of God's will, it is a sin. It says this in not just one verse, but many through out the Bible. I in no way condemn those who chose this lifestyle, everyone has the freedom to do as they want as individuals, but I do not want it to be become acceptable and the norm in the eyes of my children/future generations, in our state, nor our country.

I need to make a stand for God's word for God, myself, and for my children/future generations. I believe if we let this bill pass, then it tells others that "We the people of Hawaii" believe in this and invite others to follow suit, and invite people to come here and partake in its benefits, and make this lifestyle a common and acceptable behavior. It is not acceptable in the eyes of God, thus not acceptable to me and the majority of the people in Hawaii. I love God and do my best to follow his word, and if I don't make a stand against this, then I'm saying it's ok and will continue to watch the moral and ethics of this country (which had deep roots based upon their belief in God) continue to erode. How can God continue to bless America when we continue to move further and further away from him by removing all that He represents in our country.

The people in Hawaii are making their voice heard, but are the votes that the Representative and Senators make as individuals truly representative of the collective voice of Hawaii? 10 years ago the people spoke out against this, and once again are speaking out and what becomes Hawaii law should reflect the majority and not the minority, nor a personal opinion.

Please represent the voice of the majority.

God Bless and have a wonderful day.

Respectfully,
Nora Aiu

From: April Hynd [ahynd@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:06 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of David Olsen in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
David Olsen, RN
4604 Aukai Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96816
(808)732-3420

From: scott s. [75270.3703@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444 HD1 Hearing 2/24/2009 9:00 A.M.

I OPPOSE HB444 HD1 and ask that it not be passed out of committee nor removed for consideration on the floor.

The Citizens of the State of Hawaii, by Amendment to our Constitution, have declared their decision that marriage is to be between a man and a woman. This bill attempts to circumvent the will of the people, by creating a state-sponsored relationship having all the qualities of marriage, but simply substituting the term "civil Union". If we are to have constitutional government in Hawaii, we must resist this sort of cynical process which attempts to substitute the political opinion of an elected legislature for the voice of the sovereign citizens.

Various arguments have been made that attitudes have changed, certain individuals would prefer to have "civil unions", etc. If all this is true, then put it to the test of the people as a new Constitutional Amendment and submit it to the people for approval.

There seems to be a desire to rush this bill into law. Apparently the proponents are afraid of having a full and open debate. into the matter; preferring to create the impression of the "done deal". I have yet to see, for example, any discussion of what "civil union" will provide that isn't provided by "reciprocal beneficiary" and why "reciprocal beneficiary" is not adequate or the best solution to specific concerns.

Please avoid this attempt to finesse the marriage issue by creating a new marriage called "civil union" and abide by the people's confirmed opinion that marriage is between one man and one woman only.

Scott W. Smart
Mililani, HI

From: Jan Yoshimoto [janyoshimoto@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:59 AM
To: JGO Testimony



Senate Judiciary Committee
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m.
Measure Number: HB 444

As a voting resident my entire life in Hawaii, I am compelled to speak out against attempts to sneak HB 444 through and let my voice be known in support of traditional marriage.

Having been married for almost 30 years, raised 3 children now 29, 24 and 21 and also having 2 grandchildren (ages 8 and 5) I believe that marriage between a man and a woman is the foundation of a healthy family. I believe healthy families provide strength and stability to their community. As I watch my son and his wife raise their children, I see that it is through the family that values, traditions, and legacy is passed to the next generation and the generations to come.

Hawaii's people spoke their wishes ten years ago when they voted down same sex marriage. We should again ask the people of Hawaii what they believe and not have the legislature over-ride their wishes. Hawaii's people have already voted NO..

I urge you to serve the people of Hawaii and vote NO on HB 444.

Jan Yoshimoto

From: Danielle Beattie [dbeattie@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:07 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STOP HB 444

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Re: Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 am
Measure number: HB 444

Dear Senators:

We request that you STOP HB 444. We oppose the State of Hawaii extending the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. From the beginning of time marriage has always been committed for 1 man and 1 woman. If it were not so, GOD our Creator would have created 2 men or 2 women on earth first to start multiplying the earth. But through that union, there would be no procreation. Marriage is for 1 man and 1 woman to take part in the sanctity of this holy and honorable union. Through a married couples love and commitment, procreation can occur and the extension of the generations to come.

We say, "Listen to the voices of the people!" And we the people of the State of Hawaii have made our stance that Marriage is made for 1 man and 1 woman. You have been elected by the citizens of Hawaii to listen to their voices and vote majority rules. So do your duty to the citizens of Hawaii...STOP HB 444.

Thank you and may GOD help us.

Sincerely,
Danielle Beattie

From: Nancy Stockert [stocnanc@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government
Operations
Hearing Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the
Date/Time: Auditorium
Subject line: Testimony of Nancy Stockert in Strong Support of
H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Stockert, Ph.D.

1929 Kakela Drive

Honolulu, HI 96822

From: Lawrence Basich [larry2paul2002@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

My name is Lawrence Basich of 2345 Ala Wai Blvd, Hon, HI 96815. I live in Waikiki and have been a volunteer at the Zoo and for homeless ministries in Waikiki.

I have seen the injustice given to homeless and others who are not in the mainstream. I belong to the only church in Hawaii that is open to the LGBT community. I have seen discrimination at all levels against all of my charges and friends.

Please begin the process of unity and pass this bill.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence Basich
Waikiki citizen
2345 Ala Wai Blvd, apt 1405
Hon., Hi 96815

February 23, 2009

Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT OF HB444 HD1**

Dear Chair Karamatsu, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Brandee Aukai and I am a graduate student at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am testifying in support of HB444.

I am a wife and mother to two young children. My husband and I are people who have chosen to live a life together and raise a family. We are raising our children to become honest and decent people. What we cannot understand is how someone could want to take something away from another, just because they are different from themselves. By denying the rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities to partners in civil unions, we are denying people the right to their own happiness. I am in a "traditional" marriage, and do not feel threatened if civil union partners are to receive the same benefits as my husband and I. If two people are in a committed relationship, pay their taxes, raise children, share the same responsibilities as a married couple, then they should be allowed the same benefits as a married couple.

What message are we sending to our children if we are denying others the right to happiness? I do not want my children being brought up in a society where people would not have the basic human rights that are owed to them. I humbly ask for your support on HB444 for the equality of all people.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,
Brandee Aukai
(808) 620-9857

From: Wendell Lum [wendellkaneohe@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: BELIEVE IN GOD WAYS NOT MAN WAYS!

DEAR SENATE JUDICIARY LEGISLATOR:

GOD DOES NOT DO THINGS THE WAY MAN ON EARTH DOES. HE DOES NOT CHANGE HIS WAYS LIKE YOU AND ME. HE IS THE CREATOR OF MAN AND THEN WOMAN. HE DID NOT CREATE MAN FOR MAN OR WOMAN FOR WOMAN. THE WOMAN'S ROLE TOWARD AND FOR MAN IS DEFINED IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

WE SHOULD NOT SUPPORT: SECTION 3. EXCEPT FOR PART I OF CHAPTER 572, EVERY REFERENCE IN THE HAWAII REVISED STATUTES TO "MARRIAGE," OR ANY ASPECT THEREOF, SHALL APPLY EQUALLY TO "CIVIL UNIONS," INCLUDING:

(1) EVERY REFERENCE IN THE HAWAII REVISED STATUTES TO "MARRIED" SHALL APPLY EQUALLY TO THE STATUS OF PARTNERS IN A CIVIL UNION;

(2) EVERY REFERENCE TO "HUSBAND," "WIFE," OR "SPOUSE" SHALL APPLY EQUALLY TO A PARTNER IN A CIVIL UNION; AND

(3) EVERY REFERENCE TO A MARITAL STATUS, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO PARTIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ANNULMENT, DIVORCE, SEPARATION, OR DISSOLUTION, SHALL APPLY EQUALLY AND AS NECESSARY TO CIVIL UNIONS AND TO PARTNERS IN A CIVIL UNION.

FROM THE BIBLE (1 CORINTHIANS 6: 9,10): *DO NOT BE MISLED. NEITHER FORNICATORS, NOR IDOLATORS, NOR ADULTERERS, NOR MEN KEPT FOR UNNATURAL PURPOSES, NOR MEN WHO LIE WITH MEN.....WILL INHERIT GOD'S KINGOM.*

Jesus declares that the days just before the Rapture will be like the days of Noah and Lot. However, notice that although those were times of gross immorality, He doesn't even mention that fact. Here are His words: And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the day of the the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all.

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son on man is revealed therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Blessing to you,

Wendell

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: Kristin Bacon [baconk001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: H.B. 444 HD1 Civil Unions - Vote Yes to really usher in a new and overdue era of equality and justice for all! Ua mau ke ea o ka `aina i ka pono. The life of the land is preserved in righteousness.

To Whom It May Concern,

I whole-heartedly support H.B. 444 HD1 Civil Unions. I am a lesbian in a committed partnership with another woman for almost 14 years.

Having been raised here in Hawai'i in a family that has loved living here since the 1930s, I have a deep love for this State. This is the land of Aloha.

It is only fitting that our State follow other states and countries all over the world and uphold Equal Rights.

I believe in separation of church and state. Government should make sure one religion, in this case the Christian right, is not given the power to enforce their beliefs on everyone else.

Thank you for reading this and making sure H.B. 444 HD1 Civil Unions is passed - it would mean the world of difference to me and many others and is really a simple, loving thing to do.

Aloha,
Kristin Bacon
baconk001@hawaii.rr.com

February 22, 2009

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 415
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Strongly Oppose HB444 – Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations,

First, thank you for this opportunity to strongly **OPPOSE** HB444.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government, and to protect its free expression should be our first object."

The will of the people is the concept of "consent of the governed." A government cannot govern if the populace chooses not follow. Jefferson's quotation doesn't say the will of the people is right or wrong - he says it's the foundation for a legitimate government. To ensure that a government is legitimate, the political process has to be open and the vote honest.

There appears to be a belief that Hawaii supports the concept of civil unions. In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that they define marriage between one man and one woman. By changing the term, same sex marriage, to civil union, leaves an impression of dishonesty, trickery, and deception among our elected representatives.

I urge you to support the will of the people. If you are uncertain then take the time to find out what your constituents believe in before supporting a bill like HB444. It is too important to the future of Hawaii to guess or worse, take matters in your own hands and ignore the will of the people.

I value my family and cherish my children. We try to teach them our core values and beliefs. These teachings extend with the belief that our government is of the **people, by the people, for the people....**

I ask that you be responsive to the wishes of the people of Hawaii or at the very least, table this matter and seek the wishes of the people in your communities.

Sincerely,

Glen Hayashida

Glen Hayashida

From: Randall Min [minohana94@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony

To the senators,

My name is Jedidiah Min, and I ask of you to not pass the said House Bill 444. As others have said before, 70% has voted against gay marriages in Hawaii. It is not the will of the majority to pass this bill. What profit will there be to pass this bill? The Bible says that marriage must be between one man and one woman, not of the same gender. If you pass this bill there will be no definition, according to you that man is man and woman is woman. I believe, and I speak for others as well that we have boundaries to keep us, and others safe, and for us to enjoy. If therefore, you pass this bill, you also break the boundaries that has been set for us. The people have spoken, we want traditional marriage.

Sincerely,

Jedidiah Min

From: Curtis McCosco [curtis@cosmc.tv]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:27 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Curtis McCosco in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Curtis McCosco
Wailua, Kauai

From: Gary Rohanna [gkrinca@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:07 AM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Dwight Takamine
Subject: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions. I believe that this bill will promote equal rights to Hawaii's residents and request that it be voted into law.

Sincerely,
G Rohanna

From: DOMINIQUE MEYER [dominiquemeyer@usa.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:00 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Dominique Meyer Gere in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways.

To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Dominique Meyer Gere
4111 Pakolu Place
Honolulu, HI 96816

From: Beth McDermott [bmcd50@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions

**Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Auditorium
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9 a.m.**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in **strong support** H.B 444 HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions. There is no reason gay and lesbian couples should not be afforded equal treatment under the law. A majority in in our state and across the country now believe this. **In fact people around the country and the world are increasingly looking at our state as a leader in championing civil rights and diversity, particularly now with President Obama in office.**

What kind of message will we send if Hawaii now steps backward in fear?

I am a heterosexual female and have no problem with affording loving gay and lesbian couples in our community the rights and protections I enjoy. I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth McDermott
2739 Terrace Drive
Honolulu HI 96822
Tel (808) 988-6004
Cell (808) 782-7502

From: email [email@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:02 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I oppose SB 444- NO on SB 444

Testifier: Bryson V.

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Senators,

I oppose this bill. Please vote against HB444. I am unable to be there in person to testify, as I live on a neighbor island, but please hear me out.

I remember this being on the ballot before, and I supported traditional marriage. I urge you to not pass this bill.

I would like to clarify one thing: I do not hate those who are called homosexual, because I know God loves them. However, His Word says that men and women were not created to be homosexual and it is sin. God hates sin, because He knows it will destroy us. That is why I ask you to not pass this bill.

There are many reasons why the bill should not be passed, but they all stem from the fact that homosexuality is wrong. I hope you will make the right decision on this matter.

Thank you, and God bless.

Bryson

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 444, HOUSE DRAFT 1
A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

Frederick W. Rohlffing III, Esq.
Former Member, State of Hawaii Commission on Sexual Orientation and the Law

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 23, 2009
9:00 p.m., Capitol Auditorium

Good morning, Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I strongly oppose the passage of H.B. 444, H.D. 1.

I am an attorney in private practice. I was a member of the Commission on Sexual Orientation created by Act 217 of the 1994 Hawaii Session Laws, which has been superseded by the present Commission created by Act 5 of the 1995 Hawaii Session Laws.

I. Background

A. Baehr v. Lewin overview

In Baehr v. Lewin, 74 Hawaii 530, 852 P.2d 44 (1993), the Hawaii Supreme Court vacated a Circuit Court judgment dismissing homosexual marriage claims, and ruled that Hawaii's marriage law allowing only heterosexual couples but not homosexual couples to obtain a marriage license constitutes sex discrimination under the State Constitution's equal protection and equal rights provisions.

Because the Baehr case marks the beginning of the campaign to legalize same-sex marriage in Hawaii and incorporates many of the arguments being used today to support the passage of the civil unions bill now before this Honorable Committee, I believe it worthwhile to spend some time analyzing the logical errors of Justice Levinson's opinion, which was joined in by Chief Justice Moon.

In the first part of Justice Levinson's opinion, he analyzed the argument of the homosexual couples that the limitation of marriage to heterosexual couples violated the constitutional right of privacy. Justice Levinson noted: "In this connection, the United States Supreme Court has declared that 'the right to marry is part of the fundamental 'right of privacy' implicit in the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause.'" 74 Hawaii at 552, 852 P.2d at 55, quoting Zablocki v. Redhail, 434 U.S. 374, 384 (1978).

Justice Levinson's correct resolution of this issue is often overlooked. He rightly held that there was no "fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage" because such a relationship is not "rooted in the traditions and collective conscience of our people that failure to recognize it would violate the fundamental principles of liberty and justice that lie at the base of all our civil and political institutions." 74 Hawaii at 557, 852 P.2d at 57. It is ironic that while Justice Levinson relies almost wholly on the holding of the United State Supreme Court in Loving v. Virginia, 388 U.S. 1 (1967) to support his equal protection analysis, he nevertheless found no fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage, where the Court in Loving by contrast held that the prohibition on interracial marriage deprived an interracial couple "of liberty without due process of law in violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment." Id. at 12.

It is only after concluding that there is no fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage that Justice Levinson gets off the track. Having determined that there was no fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage, he then proceeded to examine whether homosexual couples seeking marriage licenses were denied the equal protection and equal rights guarantees of the Hawaii Constitution. Woodenly analogizing from the equal protection inquiry of Loving v. Virginia, Levinson declared that Hawaii's marriage license law facially "discriminates based on sex against the applicant couples," thereby presenting an apparent violation of the state constitution provisions protecting equality. 74 Hawaii at 557-583, 852 P.2d at 57-62. After suggesting that none of the prior cases rejecting homosexual marriage claims had directly addressed equal protection claims, Judge Levinson held that sex is a "suspect category," and that laws discriminating on the basis of sex must be subject to "strict scrutiny." 74 Hawaii at 580, 852 P.2d at 67.

B. Critique

1. Justice Levinson failed to understand the historical basis for the Loving v. Virginia equal protection analysis.

What is striking about Justice Levinson's decision is his failure to perceive the crucial distinctions between the Virginia's anti-miscegenation law and Hawaii's heterosexuality requirement in its marriage law. This is all the more surprising in view of Justice Levinson's prior holding that Hawaii's marriage law did not violate the right of privacy because there was no "fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage." Since there is no fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage, the role of gender in Hawaii's marriage law required more respectful treatment than being summarily thrown upon Justice Levinson's Procrustean bed of equal protection analysis.

Justice Levinson's sex-discrimination analogy to the racial discrimination found in Loving overlooks the unique type of discrimination that was the specific, emphatic crux of the Loving decision: White-Supremacy racism. The U.S. Supreme Court specifically described in Loving the White-Supremacist policy that historically and explicitly undergirded the Virginia laws. See 388 U.S. at 6, 7. The Court emphasized: "The fact that Virginia prohibits only interracial marriages involving white persons

demonstrates that the racial classifications must stand on their own justification, as measures designed to maintain White Supremacy.” 388 U.S. at 11.

As stated by Cass Sunstein, one of my law professors at the University of Chicago:

The key sentence in Loving says that “the racial classifications [at issue] must stand on their own justification, as measures designed to maintain White Supremacy.” This striking reference to White Supremacy--by a unanimous court, capitalizing both words and speaking in these terms for the only time in the nation’s history--was designed to get at the core of Virginia’s argument that discrimination on the basis of participation in mixed marriages was not discrimination on the basis of race. . . . Viewed in context--in light of its actual motivations and its actual effects--the ban was thus part of a system of racial caste.

Cass R. Sunstein, Homosexuality and the Constitution, 70 Ind. L.J. 1, 17-18 (1994).

Justice Levinson should have recognized, as Judge Walter Heen in his dissent did, that the identical treatment of both men and women under the Hawaii marriage law makes it consistent with the equal protection provisions of Hawaii’s Constitution. See 74 Hawaii at 590-93, 852 P.2d at 71-72. The heterosexual marriage requirement does not discriminate on the basis of sex because it does not “draw a line” between what men and women are permitted to do, or the governmental benefits they may obtain. Men and women are treated exactly the same by the heterosexual marriage requirement. Both genders are equally required to marry only persons of the other gender. It does not give any advantage to one gender over the other.

Justice Levinson’s response to Judge Heen’s insight is to impatiently refer, without any analysis, to Loving’s rejection of the equal application argument in the context of Virginia’s anti-miscegenation statute. Justice Levinson brushes Judge Heen’s objection aside without noting that the Supreme Court in Loving did not declare that equal application to both classes was an irrelevant consideration or an unacceptable answer to a charge of violation of equal protection generally. The Supreme Court only rejected the specific equivalence argument in the context of racial discrimination in a scheme designed to enforce White Supremacy.

2. Justice Levinson failed to analyze the marriage institution in relation to equal rights for women

In order to overcome the facial neutrality of Hawaii's heterosexuality requirement, there would need to be convincing evidence that the marriage law's intent or effect was to unfairly favor one sex over another. No such analysis was even attempted by Justice Levinson. There is certainly no evidence in the record of this Commission supporting such a thesis.

3. H.B. 444, H.D. 1 fails to sustain the sex-integrative role of marriage

Refusal to legalize same-sex marriage or civil unions does not convey any sexist message about the inferiority or superiority of one gender in relation to the other. Indeed, by requiring one person of each sex, such laws convey an unmistakable message about the indispensable equality, equal worth, and equal contribution of both sexes.

For Justice Levinson in Baehr, and supporters of the civil unions bill today, to analogize Hawaii's heterosexual marriage law requirement to Virginia's White Supremacist anti-miscegenation law is ironic. I believe that that what can be termed the sexual apartheid implicit in homosexual marriage is the more valid analogy to the anti-miscegenation statutes of the South.

II. H.B. 444, H.D. 1 should not be approved by this Committee.

There are three legal responses to actions of individuals. The category concerning least favored conduct can be called "prohibited conduct." This includes activities and associations that the law proscribes, outlaws, bans and forbids--usually by means of criminal prohibition. The second category can be called "permitted relationships and behavior." This includes connections and actions that are tolerated, condoned, and allowed. The third category can be called "preferred relationships and conduct." It includes those relations and activities that are singled out for special approval, encouragement, and preference, including those officially endorsed as fundamental to our society, culture, and democratic way of life.

Historically, homosexual relations have been consistently placed in the prohibited category. However, since the passage of the model penal code in the 1970s, Hawaii has not punished private homosexual relations between consenting adults. Nor does it punish adultery or fornication. Many other states also now take this approach. But only a small minority of states have moved to reclassify the status of homosexual relations from "prohibited" to generally "preferred" behavior. That is precisely what the proposal to legalize homosexual marriage or marriage-like civil unions would do. Marriage is one of the oldest and most widely-respected types of preferred, specially protected relations. The gay/lesbian demand that homosexual couples be allowed to marry is a demand for special preferred status for homosexual relations. The demand for same-sex marriage is not merely a demand for "tolerance" of homosexual relations. Rather, it is a claim for the highest type of specially preferred, exceptionally secured status that the law confers.

H.B. 444, H.D. 1 lacks a persuasive rationale other than as a response to a mistaken view of marriage. Why are civil unions to be limited to just two individuals? Business partnerships usually include more than two persons. Why is an individual limited to just one civil union? Business partners, unless they agree otherwise, can also belong to other partnerships. And why do we want to encourage the formation of these civil unions anyway? Why should people who are single and choose to live alone be required to pay taxes that are not only used to favor married couples through the provision of government economic benefits, but favor pairings of homosexual couples?

Civil unions are the means of conferring preferred status upon homosexual couples, but without calling it marriage. It will thereby dilute the significance of marriage, and encourage the sexual apartheid I have described above. I therefore ask this Committee to refuse to recommend passage of H.B. 444, H.D. 1.

Thank you for your support,
ACLU of Hawaii

SAMPLE TESTIMONY

Send before noon today.

Instructions:

Copy sample language below, click on the email address, paste testimony, add your name to the subject line, and send.

Email to:

JG0testimony@Capitol.Hawaii.gov

Committee:

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing Date/Time:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium Subject line:

Testimony of _____ in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner.

Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Jepson

1111 Kooahoo Place

Kailua, HI 96734

Dear Senators:

My name is Andrea Jepson and I write today in strong support of civil unions, H.B. 444, HD1. It was not too long ago that inter racial couples were not allowed to marry. Lots of individuals and religious groups supported that position at that time. It made no sense. It was punitive and narrow minded. Those laws were finally changed. Marriage was finally defined as a human right of all people. Except for some reason that basic human right to be together in a civil union acknowledging love between two people, was not extended to gays and lesbians. We need to treat all people equally in Hawaii.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities < giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. Thus, I respectfully request vote yes on HB 444, HD1 and that you urge your colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

Sincerely,

From: bevmau@hopechapelkapolei.org
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB444 HD1

Testimony from: Beverly Mau
Subject: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Gov't Operations
Hearing Date: Feb. 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I would like to express my strong opposition to allowing HB 444 to pass here. First and foremost, 11 years ago, the people of Hawaii have already sent the message that marriage should remain between one man and one woman, a traditional marriage. Although this time it would not be called "marriage", it is the same thing to those that are for this bill. It is the same thing with a different name.

Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law which gives same-sex couples many benefits that probably a heterosexual single doesn't have.

I also feel that down the road, this will negatively affect the children of Hawaii and generations to come if we start to redefine marriage and the family as we know it now.

Thank you for hearing me.

From: j benito [jbenito_07@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:32 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

From: Jessica Benito

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9 a.m.

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members,

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 and ask that the Senate Judiciary Committee vote NO to HB 444 HD1.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held tradition of marriage being between one man and one woman.

This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people of Hawaii already put this immoral issue behind them and voiced that this is not what we want in our state. The establishment of Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law *already* provides them benefits. The passing of the civil union can result in gay couples asking schools for equality in any teaching material related to their alternate lifestyle. I do not want our future generations having to learn about gay marriages and lifestyles. A marriage is between one man and one woman.

I am a resident of Hawaii, who is currently attending college in Arizona, and I ask that you please represent me and vote NO on HB 444 HD1.

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Bryan Kawika Oran in Strong Support of H.B.
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

First I would like to state that as a Service Member in the military, all comments and views stated in this testimony are of my own. I am not a representative nor does my views reflect those of the US Military or the commanders appointed over me.

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

As a 19 year old service member who grew up in a catholic military conservative family, I have been able to travel across the world and see many different countries and societies. There is no place like Hawaii... Hawaii one of a kind! For one of the most diverse areas in the world, why do we still suffer from bigotry and discrimination?

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couples in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

My generation is already inheriting a crippled economy, social security that will be non-existent, non-affordable healthcare, two wars, and a dying planet. Let us at take from your generation a sense of openness, diversity and equality. I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Kawika Oran
2389 Komo Mai Drive
Pearl City HI 96782

From: Marc Rich [dunnrich@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:56 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: H.B. 441

JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Marc Rich in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Marc Rich
P.O. Box 1043
Roslyn, WA 98941

Marc Rich
Owner - Orientationstravel.com
Broker Associate - Windermere Cle Elum
Realtor - Hawaii By The Sea
509-304-9597

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:54 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: djwchang@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: David Chang
Organization: Individual
Address: 99-576 Hoio Street Aiea, HI
Phone: 781 6375
E-mail: djwchang@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I oppose HB 444.

I requesting that the measured be tabled to allow issues that voiced in the opposition to same-sex marriage be addressed in this measure.

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 444 HD1 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

My name is Cissy Boyer and I am a homeschool mother, realtor and wife who lives in Makakilo. I respectfully ask this committee to oppose HB444 HD1, a bill that extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

This is a very emotional and contentious issue, rooted in philosophical differences in beliefs and morals. It is claimed that same-sex couples merely wish for equal benefits and protections under the law, however, experience in places where same-sex marriage is already legal prove that this is not the case. The homosexual community is determined to impose their lifestyle on the rest of the population that do not share the same values or embrace their way of life. They no longer simply want acceptance which they long ago gained, they now want to indoctrinate and force others, especially young people, to join or support them in their activities. I am certain you have read the ramifications of legalizing same-sex marriage in other places: public schools teaching the “normality” of homosexuality as early as kindergarten and not allowing parents to opt-out their children from such “education” (this is one reason my husband and I have chosen to homeschool our children and not subject them to this propaganda); businesses and individuals sued because they did not want to participate in events such as homosexual weddings; pastors put on trial and jailed for preaching that homosexuality is a sin.

Supporters of this bill have consistently asked “Who will be hurt by civil unions? Why should the general public be so concerned with how the homosexual community lives?” In addition to the examples above, another reason is the impact on children. The adverse effects on a child not raised in a home with a mom and a dad have been well-documented. Why should the sexual desires of same-sex couples be more important than the well-being of children, who usually have no say in what kind of household they will be brought up in?

Where is all of this leading? Fast forward down the road: we will see polygamous and incestuous marriages, transgender pairings, maybe even people married to animals – a total and unhealthy disintegration of the family. Think about how confused our society, especially our children, will become. There are great consequences to allowing same-sex marriage to be legalized. Will we allow a small but vocal minority to dictate our way of life and our beliefs? Decide to protect marriage – under any name – and agree to define it as a union between one man and one woman.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and I ask the members of this committee to do your job by representing an overwhelming majority of your constituents by opposing HB444 HD1.

To: The Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Lisa Poulos

Re: Public Hearing, Tuesday February 24, 2009
HB 444

Dear Senators;

I am honored that I have the privilege to voice my opinion on HB 444, but I am also very saddened that I must come before our legislature again over the issue of same sex marriage.

10 years ago, we, the people of Hawai'i, made it very clear that we opposed same sex marriage. We were so definite that over 70% of the state's citizens voted for a constitutional amendment banning same sex marriage. In fact, I believe those opposed was much greater than 70% but because the amendment was worded in such a confusing manner (a "yes" vote meant you opposed same sex marriage, a "no" vote meant you were in favor of it, and a blank vote was counted as a "no" vote) that many of those "no" votes were actually voters not in favor of same sex marriage but were merely confused by the wording. We were very clear on this issue. Why is the legislature not listening to its citizens?

I have read HB 444, and although it uses the words "civil unions" it is nothing more than a bill trying to extend marriage to same sex couples. In fact the description of the bill states: "Extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union." Altering the word "marriage" to "civil unions" does not change the fact that marriage is trying to be extended to same sex couples. We are not deceived.

10 years ago, the legislature provided for the needs of same sex couples through reciprocal beneficiaries. If that is not enough, why does HB 444 state that a party to a reciprocal beneficiary is ineligible for a civil union? In Hawaii, same sex couples needs are already provided for. HB 444 is not about needs, but about same sex couples demanding the public to approve and accept their life style choices.

HB 444 states: "Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any person authorized to perform solemnizations of marriages or civil unions to perform a solemnization of civil union and no such authorized person who fails or refuses for any reason to join persons in a civil union shall be subject to any fine or other penalty for such failure or refusal." How can we believe this? The legislature is not following a constitutional amendment made by over 70% of Hawaii's voters. How can we believe that if HB 444 is passed those opposed to same sex

marriage or unions won't be forced to perform them. The legislature's behavior makes all laws suspect.

HB 444 will force the citizens of Hawai'i to recognize and validate civil unions and marriages from other states. We have already made it clear that we oppose same sex marriage in Hawaii. Why are you forcing us to recognize same sex marriages and civil unions performed in other states?

When HB 444 passed out of the House, some said that those opposed to the bill were "silent". We have never been silent. In fact we spoke loud and clear when we passed the constitutional amendment against same sex marriage. Hawaii's voters' stance on this issue is very clear. Our mistake is that we assumed our representatives would represent us!

The citizens in the state of Hawaii have spoken. Over 70% of the voters say that marriage is defined as one man and one woman. You can not arbitrarily change the will of the people under the guise of "civil unions". Do not try and sneak same sex marriage in the back door by calling it "civil unions". Be trustworthy representatives of the people of Hawai'i. Listen to the citizens, we have already spoken. Listen to us. No same sex marriage, no civil unions. Oppose HB 444.

Respectfully,

Lisa Poulos

From: Lauren Stovall [kamaleialoha@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:11 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Lauren Stovall in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Stovall
PO Box 1079
Kapa'au, HI 96755

Access your email online and on the go with Windows Live Hotmail. [Sign up today.](#)

From: Thomas Dolan [dolant001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:25 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Thomas J. Dolan in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Senators:

My name is Thomas J. Dolan, and I write today in strong support of civil unions, H.B. 444, HD1. This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities — giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. Thus, I respectfully request vote yes on HB 444, HD1 and that you urge your colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Dolan

Retired Teacher and Editor

860 Halekauwila St., # 2802

Honolulu, HI 96813

(808) 591-1585

From: Matthew Tuthill [mtuthill@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:43 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: written testimony

VIA EMAIL: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of **Matthew Tuthill** in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

I believe that it is patently unfair that certain members of our community are denied the rights of others merely based on who they chose to love. Thus, it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Tuthill
3633 Maunalei Avenue
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Matthew C. Tuthill, Ph.D.
University of Hawaii
Kapiolani Community College
Math and Sciences Department
4303 Diamond Head Road, Iliahi 222
Honolulu, HI 96816
Phone: (808) 734-9329
mtuthill@hawaii.edu

A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. -- Margaret Mead

We must take sides, neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. -- Elie Wiesel

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change. -- Charles Darwin

From: Sheila_Saiki/KAPAAH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:23 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: Sheila Saiki
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24th
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Please oppose HB 444 HD1 so that the sanctity of traditional marriage, wholesome families, and the raising of healthy children in our islands will be protected. Thank you for your consideration.

From: nwnaka@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:43 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong opposition to HB 444 HD1

Bill Number and title: HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions

Testifier: Norman Nakanishi

Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Hearing date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing time: 9 am

Hearing location: Auditorium

Testimony:

As a former school teacher, coach, private school overseer, and now as pastor of a local church I, my staff, and a good number of our lay volunteer leaders have worked with people involved in the gay lifestyle. We have sought to love them unconditionally and embrace them with the deepest sincerity. Often, they have been sexually molested or abused by a trusted friend or family member of the same sex, and consequently, they wish to be free of those desires. By God's grace, we have been fairly successful in bringing that about.

Over the years, we have had considerable experience with young people - several hundred attend our services and small group programs each week and hundreds more have grown up in our congregation - and one thing is clear: they deeply desire a home setting where there is the loving presence of both a mother and a father. Nearly one half of these have come from broken homes, and unique issues accompany this group of young people. Similarly, as gay couples move towards adopting children, those children will not have the needed and desired benefit of being raised by parents of both male and female genders, further escalating an already prevailing problem.

My intent here is not to impose a religious, faith-based reason, of which you have received many, but one borne out of years in shaping the lives of young people, up close and hearing them pour their hearts out. I respectfully appeal to you: please do NOT pass HB 444 HD 1

With respect and sincerest gratitude,

Norman Nakanishi

From: Steve Carll [stevecar@lava.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:26 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Stephen Carll in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Carll
computer support technician
1673 Paula Dr.
Honolulu 96816

From: Tomoko Iwai [tomoko@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:28 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1 Testimony

Dear Senate Judiciary and Government Operations:

My name is Tomoko Iwai and I am writing to urge you for support House Bill 444.

My partner and I are going to celebrate our 30th anniversary this coming July. We adopted two boys at birth, one in 2002 and another in 2003 and are running a bustling household with two active boys. They call me "Mama" and my partner "Mommy" and proudly announce to their friends that they have two moms, to which most of their friends react with curiosity and/or envy. We are a happy family and have a very strong bond as a cohesive family.

Though our friends and family are all supportive and treat us as a family, we have been discriminated against, especially in the area of family law, and had to make special arrangements such as expensive living trust in order to make sure that we have the same rights that married couples are granted without such arrangements. We are grateful that the state of Hawaii has taken steps in the past to protect us with reciprocal beneficiary and domestic partnership which gave us some benefits. Hawaii's hospitals have been good to us as well treating my partner as my family when I went through surgery and procedures. This was very important to me as I have no other family in Hawaii. I hope that with this bill, we will be treated equally in all areas of law, and will not have to depend on people's good will or special arrangements that cost us otherwise unnecessary fees to be treated equally, and that we will not have to go out of our way to convince people that we are a family that deserves the same protection and respect as our heterosexual counterparts.

Granting equal rights to same-sex couples like us in no way impacts the rights of others. We are law-abiding citizens that go about our lives everyday just the same as everyone else, and when we are granted equal rights, we will keep doing the same things we are doing now, only with an ease of mind that we are protected and confidence in our government that strives to live up to the ideal that all people are equal. This is not about religious beliefs, but about civil rights. I do not seek religious ceremony or acceptance by religious communities that do not accept my existence. I only ask that we are treated equally under the law. Granting us the rights that we deserve will only make our society stronger.

Mahalo,

Tomoko Iwai
Instructor, University of Hawaii at Manoa

46-081 Konohiki St. Apt. 3563
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: Grace Caligtan [graceintelligence@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:29 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM, Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

We are writing to you today in strong support of HB 44 and urge you to support the Civil Unions bill. As couple who has been raised in the Catholic faith and have been together for last 12 years, we have never had any institution keep us from our right to marrying. Nor have we had to convince fellow citizens that our desire to honor our love and uphold our commitment to each other was legal and just.

Yet, committed gay and lesbian couples in our state, continue to seek the security, legal protections and family benefits that we as opposite sex partners have had the privilege and right to take for granted everyday. **However, by passing HB 44 you help over turn this injustice.**

Independently-minded Catholics and many people of diverse faiths and spiritual traditions, believe in fairness. They know it is wrong to deny gay couples the security and legal protections they need in order to be able to care for each other in sickness and health, and even in death. They know by granting same-sex couples equal rights, it strengthens the bonds of care and commitment in all families and children.

Today, we stand and testify with our gay and lesbian family members and friends who have yet to be legally and fully recognized in a civil union by the state of Hawai'i. These are everyday people we call tutu, popo, lola, auntie, uncle, sister, brother. And we simply embrace them as our ohana.

As you know, it was once illegal in many states for people of different ethnicities to inter-marry. Only eight states and the District of Columbia never enacted anti-miscegenation laws. The lack of anti-miscegenation laws allowed diverse ethnic communities in Hawai'i to inter-marry without the threat of legal repercussions. In contrast, most states forbidding marriage between whites and people of color carried severe punishments. All bans on interracial marriage were lifted only after an interracial couple, Richard and Mildred Loving, began a legal battle in 1963. The Lovings were supported by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the Japanese American Citizens League and a coalition of Catholic bishops.

Just as a diverse coalition came together then to end legal discrimination based on race, we ask you to join this generation's effort to ensure equal treatment for same-sex couples. Equality is a simple concept, yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. We ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful and heartfelt consideration.

Respectfully,

Grace Alvaro Caligtan and Paul Tuan Tran
Private Citizens
1967 Naio Street, Honolulu, HI

From: gary [garyinwaikiki@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:27 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Gary Miller in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Miller
Honolulu, Hi 96815

From: makosmoon@gmail.com on behalf of Edward M. Johns [ejohns@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:29 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Re: TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

To: JGO Chair, Senator Brian Taniguchi

JGO Vice-Chair, Senator Dwight Takamine

Senator Robert Bunda

Senator Mike Gabbard

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara

Senator Sam Slom

Judiciary and Government Operations Committee Clerk

From: Edward M. Johns, President of Pride Hilo,

Registered Independent Organization for the University of Hawaii at Hilo

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF PASSAGE OF HB 444

Honorable Honorable Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the JGO Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions. I believe that it is the best interest of the State of Hawai'i to pass HB 444, which would allow members of the same sex the ability to extend legal rights and benefits to their domestic partners outside of the domain of "marriage." Please support this bill, as it is a matter of championing civil rights.

Mahalo,

Edward M. Johns
President, Pride Hilo
Registered Independent Student Organization of the University of Hawaii at Hilo

From: Marian A. Jewell [mjewell@financeinsurance.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:30 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444

Good Morning,

My name is Marian Jewell and I live at 1200 Queen Emma St.; #703 - in Honolulu. Please let Senator Nishihara know that I oppose HB 444 HD 1. I would encourage the Senator to protect traditional marriage and say "no" to civil unions. As a reminder, the people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage. Thank you very much.

From: Caroline Miura [therev@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:29 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Senate bill for civil unions

Aloha ke Akua,

To all you public servants who are charged with acting in the best & highest good for all the people you represent: I hope & pray you all chose to vote in favor of civil unions, to afford all people more just & equitable rights. You shall all be in my thoughts & prayers as you decide the fate of our gay & lesbian brothers & sisters to have more access to the civil rights they deserve.

Blessings & Aloha,
Rev. Caroline C Miura
Spiritual Care & Bereavement Coordinator for Kauai Hospice

From: Debra_Watanabe/PCHIGH/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:30 AM
To: JGO Testimony

QUESTION: WHY I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO HB 444 HD1 CIVIL UNIONS.

ANSWER: A SIMPLE BUT STRAIGHT FORWARD ANSWER- NO WERE IN THE BIBLE STATES A MAN & A MAN OR A WOMEN & A WOMEN. ITS STATES A MAN & A WOMEN.

THANK YOU!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:32 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: inquire@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Laurie Victorino
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: inquire@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I feel very strongly about this. I believe you should listen to reason and NOT pass this bill.

To allow Civil Unions in Hawaii would bring Hawaii a slew of problems. We are already economically hard pressed.

The homosexual agenda seems to be an "us or them", retaliatory one, as several websites and blogs online reflect this, and are urging all people who consider themselves "gay and lesbian" to move to Hawaii to "fight the churches" and "make Hawaii a gay paradise". For me, it's not at all about exclusion or hate. But it seems that some supporters of this bill have turned it into a vindictive thing.

It boils down to this: we don't need more violence in Hawaii- our jails are so overcrowded, we are farming them out to the mainland. Our police and law enforcement are so overworked, the State and counties are paying out millions in overtime wages. Besides, isn't this great state a place that we call home and paradise, which is for ALL people? I resent the fact that people are wanting to turn it into something that it isn't- it's not an exclusive "gay paradise", it's a paradise for us all.

We must think about the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, and other agencies that the state funds. Passing this law would tax our system. Do we have the infrastructure to handle the thousands of extra people who propose to move here, and who will inevitably need healthcare? No, not all gay men have AIDS, but many do.

Simply moving to a state to take advantage of the law does not make for "good business" in terms of the overall picture and health of a state. From a standpoint at the top, you must consider all the other little details- this thing has far-reaching ramifications. We do not have things in place to handle the myriad of new concerns and problems that a change like this would entail. Our current system would fail and collapse if this bill is passed.

There are other testimonies, so I will not go on. Let me be blunt: it is a bad idea to pass this bill. Vote against HB 444.

From: Alex Woodbury [alex@woodburyhawaii.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:23 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Alex Woodbury in Strong Support of H.B.

VIA EMAIL: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Alex Woodbury in Strong Support of H.B.
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Woodbury

Support H.B. 444, HD 1

65-1170 Spencer Rd.
Kamuela Hawaii 96743

From: Anuhea Reimann-Giegerl [franzanuhea@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:06 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1, Hearing on Feb. 24 at 9 a.m., Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

Good morning,

My name is Anuhea Reimann-Giegerl and I submit this testimony urging legislators to SUPPORT HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions.

In my 60 years on this planet, I have NEVER felt or believed that individuals of gay and lesbian persuasion are less important or less worthy than I of every divine gift offered to every living entity in this universe. Considering all the lessons I have learned about human nature in six decades, I am even more convinced now that gays and lesbians do not, have not, and will not threaten any of the values held precious by most families, including marriage. Above all, gays and lesbians are human beings ... dealing with the same challenges and celebrations in life as I do in their quest for peace, love and joy. Aren't we all striving for peace, love and joy in this lifetime? I am.

There is not an ounce of fear in my body and soul about same-gender couples having the same rights to pursue peace, love and joy as I do in all my relationships. I believe there is an abundance of peace, love and joy in this universe for everyone without depriving anyone. I know now that if my family, my friends, my neighbors, my workmates, the stranger playing her/his 'ukulele next to me is happy, fulfilled and content no matter their gender, ethnicity, education, religion, social position, etc., etc., etc. their joy will touch me in joyous ways and I will share that joy with another who will share it with another. The ripple of that joy will move into infinity. Why would I want to hinder that process? So it is with same-gender couples having the same opportunities to pursue peace, love and joy in their relationships. Their love and joy will have a ripple effect into infinity for all of us. Why would we want to hinder that opportunity for all of us?

I support HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions, and I urge all legislators to vote in support of this bill.

Mahalo a nui loa,
Anuhea

From: Tom Burnett [tcburnett@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:33 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB 444, HD1

Dear Chairman Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

a hui hou

Tom Burnett
Educator
PO Box 2051,
Pahoa, HI 96778

--

It's time to jump the fence and go feral.

From: Maui Peace Action [mauipeaceaction@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:27 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Mele Stokesberry, Pres., Maui Peace Action, in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date and Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Mele Stokesberry
President, Maui Peace Action
P. O. Box 880231
Pukalani, HI 96788

From: Michael Lafreniere [tehotu@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:35 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Michael Lafreniere in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Lafreniere
2499 Kapiolani Blvd. Apt 1400
Honolulu HI 96826

From: Scott Craig [Kahu@kumulanichapel.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:26 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Scott W. Craig

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO)

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

The homosexual movement is asking for society's stamp of approval by way of civil unions and marriage.

But how did a group that was outside the boundaries of morality just thirty years ago suddenly become mainstream? How is it that anyone who dares to speak in opposition is looked upon as prejudiced, hateful, and intolerant? Here is a quote from an earlier homosexual publication regarding the strategy that best implements their agenda.

- I. To desensitize the public is to help it view homosexuality with indifference instead of with keen emotion.
- II. In any campaign to win over the public, gays must be cast as victims in need of protection so the straits will be inclined by reflex to assume the role of protector.
- III. Our campaign should not demand direct support for homosexual practices, but instead make anti-discrimination as its theme.
- IV. To be blunt, they must be vilified... The public should be shown images of ranting homophobes whose secondary traits disgust Middle America. These images might include the K.K.K. demanding that gays be burned alive or castrated.
- V. And in the early days of the campaign, the public should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behavior itself. Instead, the imagery of sex per se should be down-played, and the issue of gay rights reduced as far as possible, to an abstract social question.

Part of the problem with this whole issue is that very few people understand the activities of homosexuals. If they did they would get physically ill. Consider this actual event: In a public school in San Francisco, eleven year old girls, nauseated by a classroom presentation of homosexual sex by activists, were not allowed to leave the room. Many of the girls have reported reoccurring nightmares. The city of San Francisco gives homosexual activists a couple hundred thousand dollars each year to go into the schools to educate the children. Whoever heard of education that makes little girls vomit? You'll find it alive and well in a city that has caved into the homosexual agenda.

Homosexuals seek to pass laws that actually create special privileges for homosexual behavior. Gay rights will be ushered into Hawaii with the passing of civil unions, but Gay rights actually take away the rights of heterosexuals. The Gay agenda is coming after our right to free speech, to religious freedom, and most importantly, after our public school children through homosexual recruitment programs disguised as "safe sex" and/or aids education classes, alternative lifestyle classes, or through counseling services for teens run exclusively by gays and lesbians. They have to recruit because they cannot reproduce. There will be no exceptions allowed in their bid for political role over community after community. Heterosexuals will lose their right to protect their children from exposure to homosexuality.

In 1973 the American Psychological Association caved into pressure by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to declare that homosexuality was normal and they removed homosexuality as a disorder mentioned in their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Psychology has become some kind of holy writ to the general public. So, when homosexuality was dropped from the DSM, the agenda became, "Homosexuality is normal." If you said anything to the contrary, that meant you were hateful and bigoted. Deviance became redefined as diversity, and tolerance became defined as acceptance, then celebration. Now, when a man cuts off his genital organ and takes pills to grow breasts, I am to say nothing because the government declares that there is nothing wrong with that person psychologically but there's something wrong with me psychologically if I find something wrong with it.

Knowing that homosexuality is wrong, it is not a phobia, it is not an opinion, it is a fact. It is caused by sexual and/or physical abuse in childhood. Abuse can flip anyone's sexual orientation. During an interview with Barbara Walters, Ellen DeGeneres mentioned that she was molested by a step father, case in point. In my work, I have counseled numerous homosexuals, all of whom told a tragic story of childhood abuse. I saw a homosexual man be taken in by an elderly couple who "re-parented" the man and the man is now married to a woman and they have children. Homosexuals need healing and not the legal power to reorder society.

Scott W. Craig
Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii
808-385-6905

From: Mike_Landes@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Landes
Lahaina, HI

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:37 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: victorinos@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Roseline Victorino
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: victorinos@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

This a travesty of the system here in Hawaii. The nation is looking at us and is laughing. How foolish we are- how could we allow this to get this far? This very agenda was actually already put up for a vote, and the people voiced their opinion- NO!

So, why are we even at this point? The majority has voted against this. As I recall, it was close to 70%. If you vote for this bill, you will not only have to live with yourself and the fact that you did not represent the people (whom you are supposed to represent) but also with the missed opportunity to do more for Hawaii because you will have effectively reduced your supporters.

You know full well that people speak out with their votes. Well, we have spoken against this.

Think about this: what if some of your opponents decided they didn't want you to be in the seat you are in (the seat that the people put you in with their votes). So they come up with a way to circumvent the system and somehow oust you. Not fair, right? Not the way that things are supposed to be, right? You won that seat fair and square and it would be going against the people's wishes to place someone else there.

Yet that is the very thing that is being attempted here. It's wrong, and you still have a chance to preserve the integrity of the system in Hawaii- just say no!

I urge you to vote against this bill, as it is the only right choice. Deep down, you know this. It doesn't matter if you previously supported this, and you would be doing opposite of what you thought you would be doing. You just suddenly realized that you needed to reflect the will of the people, and wanted to do what's right. You will be rewarded in the end if you do what is right.

Vote "no" on bill SB444. It's the right thing to do.

From: Britt Bailey [ebb@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444- SUPPORT

To Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations:

I'd like to ask you for your support of HB 444, for Civil Unions. When my partner and I considered moving to Hawaii from Northern California last spring, we were elated at the opportunities available to us. I was accepted and have begun attending UH Law. My partner, a physician, was hired at Hawaii Permanente Medical Group. Additionally, our daughter was accepted and is attending the Montessori Community School. All three of these opportunities were unavailable in the small town we left.

However, our elation was tempered by the knowledge that in moving to Hawaii we would effectively lose all of our rights we held as a couple in California. In CA we had been registered as Domestic Partners for 8 years, and legally married for all of 2 months until our plane touched down in Honolulu, and we were suddenly un-married again. And so, once again, lawyers had to be consulted, papers drawn up, money exchanged, all to insure that our family would continue to have the legal protections which our straight friends enjoy the moment their marriage licenses are signed, in any state in the nation.

A vote for HB 444 would allow us to live a more open, protected, and included life in the ohana that makes up this beautiful state. I hope you will consider casting your vote in favor of HB 444.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth B. Bailey
2035 Iholena St
Honolulu Hawaii

FROM: Sophia Amasol

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL
AUDITORIUM**

FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS. IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO! Sophia Amasol

From: Vicki Vierra [vickiv@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:31 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Vicki Vierra in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

Please pass this much needed legislation, which will accord same sex couples rights and responsibilities their heterosexual counterparts now enjoy. Hawaii must stand as a beacon to the nation and the world in this matter.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Vierra
HC 1 Box 5077
Keaau, HI 96749

From: Sheila O'Keefe [shesokinhi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Please pass HB444

Aloha,

Thank you for hearing this important bill. I support HB 444 and the Civil Unions it creates.

I urge you as members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee to pass this bill and courageously stand up for equality in Hawaii. All people are equal under the law and should therefore enjoy the same rights and protections provided by our constitution, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Counter to our state's constitution, committed same sex couples and their families are denied the basic rights and protections afforded married couples, including health care rights, property and housing rights, taxation and other benefits. Civil Unions promote stable, healthy, and loving relationships. Civil Unions will help to protect all of our families and help all people living in families to be covered by family laws.

Discrimination has no place in our state. We are fortunate to live where many different peoples and cultures. We not only coexist. We must and can work together to make Hawaii a unique and wonderful home.

I ask you to pass HB 444 creating Civil Unions and to promote the equality of all Hawaii's citizens.

Thank you,

Sheila O'Keefe

From: jbkampfer@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:30 AM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom
Subject: Opposed to HB 441 HD 1

Dear Senators of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Please support the will of the people of Hawaii expressed in 1998 when they voted to preserve marriage as between a man and a woman.

Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law gives the same rights to same sex couples as married couples.

HB 444 circumvents the will of the people by stating that civil unions will only apply to persons who are of the same sex as their proposed partner. Every reference to "marriage" in Hawaii law will apply equally to "civil unions." In essence, this puts the legal stamp of approval on homosexuality and imposes it with force of law throughout the social and political institutions of our state.

Despite how it is being portrayed, civil union is neither an equality issue, nor a civil rights issue. Civil unions, if passed, would give a special privilege to a special interest group, overlooking the rights of the people of Hawaii who already voted for traditional marriage. While the basic human rights of homosexuals need to be protected, they should not be given special privileges because of their sexual proclivities, any more than we have made legal the sexual orientation of polygamists or pedophiles.

John B. Kampfer

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From: Michael E. Winter [mikewinter@pacificspectral.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:21 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Michael E. Winter in Strong Support of H.B.444, Civil Unions

Dear Hawaii State Senators,

I would like to register my strong support for the civil union bill. I have many friends who are gay and lesbian and it pains me to see them discriminated against. The civil unions bill simply removes entrenched government bigotry for honest tax-paying citizens.

It is time to recognize everyone as simple human beings sharing the same god given rights.

I urge you to support this bill.

With all respect,

Michael E. Winter, Ph.D.
3602 Woodlawn Drive, (Manoa)
Honolulu, HI,
96822

TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
COMMITTEE

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009

9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

Aloha, my name is Denise McDonald and as a mother I stand in strong
Please do not move forward with promoting same-sex civil unions. This is not a
Civil Rights Issue. Just because someone wants to do something doesn't mean
they should nor does it make it right. There are reasons for God's laws and we
receive his blessings when we remain faithful to those laws. Please stand firm
in keeping man's laws and God's laws in line.

Marriage is an institution beyond Hawaii, beyond even the United States.
It is a Biblical institution between one man and one woman. Same sex civil
unions is only another name for same sex marriage and the opposition has even
stated that their next step is the term marriage. Knowing this please do not
override the people that have already spoken by their previous vote on this
issue. "The people", the same people you represent. If you do not believe the
majority still feel this way, then send it back to "the people" for a vote. Do not
assume because of how loud the minority is that they have grown into a
majority. Take note of the thousands at the rally on Sunday who oppose this
bill. They are also your constituents and represent the majority of Hawaii. The
people, your people.

I thank the committee for taking time to read my testimony on HB 444,
and would humbly ask you to vote in opposition. Thank you.

From: Veronica [vronica@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:32 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support for HB 444 HD1, for Feb.24 at 9:00 AM

Aloha,

Thank you for hearing this important bill. I support HB 444 and the Civil Unions it creates. I urge you as members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee to pass this bill and courageously stand up for equality in Hawaii. All people are equal under the law and should therefore enjoy the same rights and protections provided by our constitution, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Counter to our state's constitution, committed same sex couples and their families are denied the basic rights and protections afforded married couples, including health care rights, property and housing rights, taxation and other benefits. Civil Unions promote stable, healthy, and loving relationships and gives Hawaii the opportunity to protect all of our families.

Discrimination does not have a place in our state. We are fortunate to live in a state where many different peoples and cultures can not just coexist, but can work together to make Hawaii a unique and wonderful home. Therefore, I ask you to pass HB 444 creating Civil Unions and to promote the equality of all Hawaii's citizens.

Thank you,

Veronica L. Ryan

--

"When they tell you to grow up, they mean stop growing." Tom Robbins

February 22, 2009

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 415
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Strong opposition to HB444

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations,

I strongly oppose HB 444 and strongly urge you to consider the will of the people who have already voted in favor of traditional marriage to define marriage between one man and one woman.

Civil union is an attempt to legalize gay marriage by using another title. There is no clear difference. Hawaii already has the reciprocal beneficiary law which provides benefits to same sex partners.

It should be your duty as a public servant to respond to the will of the people. That is what makes this nation great. The people have already sent a clear message and voted against goes against the principles this country was founded on.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Carol Hayashida

Carol Hayashida

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair Committee on Judiciary and Govt Operations

RE: Support for HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions

Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m., in Capitol Auditorium

From: Cynthia K.L. Rezendes
Wai`anae Resident

Dear Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Govt. Operations

My name is Cynthia K.L. Rezendes and I offer testimony in support of HB444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions.

Having known dedicated same sex couples for many years, I believe that they should be extended the same rights of contract as married couples enjoy today.

While I believe marriage is a religious concept, rite and function, the government extends to people committed via this institutional rite, benefits beyond the churches' purview. I believe these same benefits should be extended to anyone who is committed to an exclusive relationship without the tedium of special contracts, powers of attorney, special medical dictates, etc.

Some say that this is sanctioning an 'un-natural' relationship. How can anyone who has witnessed a parent try to beat from a child their 'un-natural' behavior only to fail still call this an 'un-natural' act of choice? How can anyone deny the recent revelations in nature that have uncovered these 'un-natural' acts in the wild?

Some say that marriage is sacred and should not be tampered with. No one is debating that. The debate is whether or not we treat people humanely and with dignity no matter who or what they are. There are those who say that same sex relationships are going to be whimsical and they don't last. I have seen some that last for more than 20 years. Some even going on 35-40 years. How "whimsical" is that? Certainly there are some relationships that will dissolve BUT show me any society where heterosexual marriages also don't have some that fail.

This is a matter of fairness, just like the United States has allowed non-landowners, Blacks and women to vote.

We need to do the right thing for our society. And, the right thing is to allow for the government to recognize the rights of people to engage in civil unions just like it is the right of people to marry. It is also only fair to allow those who engage in civil unions to benefit from those certain privileges that the government has chosen to allow married couples to enjoy.

Please support HB444 HD1: Relating to Civil Unions.

From: Heather Enslow [enslow7@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:20 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Heather Enslow
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM
Hearing Location: Capitol Auditorium

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I am submitting my testimony as a voice of an educator and parent in the State of Hawaii who is opposed to the passing of House Bill 444. We have a responsibility to preserve traditional marriage.

Hawaii has established laws to protect the rights of same-sex partners and the Hawaii State Constitution (Article 1, sec. 23) gives the definition of marriage that was voted on and passed by the people of Hawaii in 1998. My voice echoes that vote.

Heather Enslow

From: Scott Crawford [scott@aloha.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:48 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

Re: Testimony of in Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

We are writing to express our strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

We are happily married couple, but like many families in Hawaii we have a member of our extended family who is lesbian, and we have seen the struggles she has had to go through dealing with medical issues with her partner where they are not able to enjoy the same basic rights to take care of each other as we are.

Fear, ignorance and prejudice are the only reasons to oppose this bill.

Let us act according to our better angels and provide equal rights for all loving couples in Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott & Kekula Crawford
PO Box 645
Hana, HI 96713
808-248-8808

My Name is Jaime Clare McGuire; I am a resident of Ewa Beach, HI. I strongly urge you to vote NO on HB444.

My husband and I are currently in the process of adopting a high risk teenager in the Hawaii Foster Care System. This 16 year old girl's desperate desire is to find a real forever family before it's too late and she turns 18 never having known the true unconditional love of a father and mother. A fantastic Christian based non-profit organization name Hope INC has changed our mind about only adopting a baby or very young child. After hearing that young girl's written statement, my husband and I broke into tears that a child has gone 16 years hungering for a mother and father and never finding one. Hope INC opened our eyes to the needs of Hawaii's teens and are equipping us to handle the difficult issues that come with an emotionally scarred child. We are now willing and confident we can make a difference in this teenager's life, thanks to the hard work of Hope INC.

State sanctioned civil unions will have devastating implications on the continued missions of faith based organizations regarding the successful placement of adoptable children. In this realm, successful adoptions are ones where children are placed in loving homes and guaranteed that they have both a mother and a father. Faith-based organizations are critically important in the adoption arena for high-risk teens and older children as they have the highest success rate.

If Hawaii changes their stance on marriage between one man and one woman, and I believe that Civil-Unions are just same-sex marriage by another name, organizations like Hope INC will be forced to cease its adoption mission, unless it is willing to adopt out children to same-sex couples. These children would intentionally be denied either a mother or a father. The implementation of same-sex "marriage" or unions will cripple faith-based missions to both the community and its most vulnerable citizens—abandoned children.

A yes decision will also further scar children in the foster care system. No longer will they be placed with a stable family that includes a mother and father, but maybe they will go to a home with two mommies or two daddies, sentencing the child to a situation riddled with confusion and tension. A foster child needs safety, security and the familiarity of tradition to stabilize their healing and recovery. Approving this bill will rob them of that.

Finally, I believe that we must vote NO on HB 444 for the safety and security of Hawaii and our nation. A society that normalizes same-sex relationships sends the message that natural reproduction is not a priority. The only way for any society to flourish is through the reproduction of it's people and culture. Endorsing and normalizing same-sex relationships means that more people will chose a life-style that completely stops natural proliferation and maims cultural stability by weakening traditional family, the key to the strong development of children.

Please represent me and other concerned citizens of Hawaii and vote NO on HB444. Protect our kiekeie, protect our families, and protect our state.

From: Cedric Mengelil [ceddawg77@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:23 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Senate President Hanabusa, Senators:
Chair Taniguchi/Vice-Chair Takamine/Bunda/Gabbard/Nishihara/Slom,

We seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions

are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive

debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as

a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. To the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee, please vote against HB 444 on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00am in the Auditorium.

With grace, honor and respect,

Cedric Mengelil
ceddawg77@yahoo.com

From: Heatherbell Fong [4hb61@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:42 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: measure HB 444 HD1

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Re: Measure number HB 444 HD1 (hearing on 24 Feb 2009 at 9 AM)

Dear Committee,

I strongly support the rights of gay and lesbian people to be protected by a legal civil union of the type proposed in this measure.

Thank you,

Heatherbell Fong
Kalaheo, HI
4hb61@earthlink.net

Metaphor of the month: And that's what a human is: a gathering around a complexity. --Leonard Cohen

From: Narnia [Narnia@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:50 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: No to SB444

Testifier: MV
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Hi,

This is so twisted. Marriage is between one man and one woman, PERIOD.

I disagree completely with Bill SB444. Please vote against it.

It's not wrong just because it's immoral, but it goes against God's law. Do you want God to be against you or with you?

**Thank you,
MV**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:50 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: s_kahawaii@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Sandy A Sproat Kahawaii
Organization: Individual
Address: 64-646 Puu Pohu Place Kamuela, Hi
Phone: 808-885-3664
E-mail: s_kahawaii@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I oppose this bill and encourage all legislators to vote "No".

From: rxnmra@aim.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:45 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Roxanne Mora
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9AM
Hearing Location: STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

I strongly oppose this bill because its just wrong. Marriage was created between a man and woman we have no right to change this because we feel like it or it seems politically correct. I feel very strongly that we as a State need to protect our families from inviting something like this here. I am in no way putting down people of the gay lifestyle. We are all people that have the same needs but same sex marriage/civil unions are wrong. We do not want that here, please hear us!

Thank you for you time!

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. [See yours in just 2 easy steps!](#)

From: Mara J [mjpikey@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:55 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444HD1

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate,

I write to you today supporting the passage of HB 444 HD1. I believe that as citizens of the United States we are entitled to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness". There should be no distinction made between those that choose to share that happiness with a member of the opposite sex or a partner of their own gender. HB 444 HD1 is an opportunity to take an important step in the movement toward fairness, allowing all couples (including same-sex couples) to enjoy the legal protections and responsibilities of marriage. The bill provides these protections without offending those who express deep concern about changing the institution of marriage to help gay and lesbian couples and their families. Without arguments about the religious tradition of marriage in a church, synagogue or mosque, the issue before the legislature is simply about fairness.

Providing legal protections for same-sex couples recognizes that all persons in long-term, committed relationships face crises as a family – including decisions about emergency health care, the need to make decisions about disposition of a loved one's remains and the desire to share a room in a nursing home or long-term care facility. When married couples face these crises, they confront no questions about the ability to make decisions or care for their partner. When same-sex couples face the same challenges, they are often treated as "strangers" in the eyes of the law.

Recognizing civil unions serves one of the primary functions of government – to ensure equal access to basic rights for all citizens. The leaders of our state must act immediately to ensure that all families in Hawaii have the basic legal protections that allow partners, parents and their children to deal with moments of crisis.

ALOHA,

Mara J Pike

From: Kiyomi Moriguchi [kiyomigirl@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:15 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Dawne M
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24th
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

To whom it may concern,

I am strongly opposing this bill for many reasons both religious and non-religious.

I don't even know why we are voting on this issue again! We already voted against it. It makes me wonder if our vote really counts, or if people don't like it, are we going to keep voting until it wins.

The only thing that I see different about this bill, is that it is worded differently. The way I see it, is that we won this battle against " Same sex marriage in Hawaii" If we are going to continue to fight on this same issue, then why did we vote in the first place! It just seems that this bill hides what we are really voting for, it makes it sound like it's something good, but really it's the same thing we voted for a few years ago, when this was a big issue. This really is a constant battle!

I myself have a lot of gay friends, but I still don't approve for them to get married. Also I believe that if this bill does pass, that our islands will become over populated! This issue has been a spiritual battle for years, please continue to say NO to same sex marriage.

Thank you for your time! Have a great day and God bless you all!

From: Alison_Simmerman/HONOKAHI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:14 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Alison Simmerman in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha,

I am writing in support of a bill for civil union. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all. Monogamous relationships reduce the spread of STDs. As an educator, I teach tolerance and acceptance. Our government should do the same.

Mahalo,
Alison Simmerman
45-527 Pakalana St.
Honokaa, Hi. 96727

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

We are Colleen Murphy and Monica Grant, Kaneohe residents and homeowners and a same-sex couple, together since 2000. I am a Realtor with RE/MAX Honolulu, and Monica is Vice President of Resource Development with the YMCA of Honolulu. **We stand in strong support of HB 444.** We are honored and moved to be a part of this important discussion, and sincerely thank you for hearing these testimonies today.

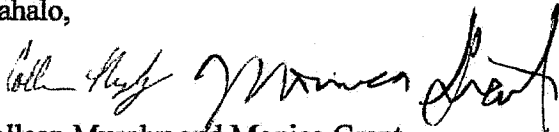
Like so many others that have moved to Hawaii, we came here because of the promise – both declared and unspoken – that this is a place that truly opens its arms to all people with a spirit of Aloha. However, although we have been humbled by the friendship we have been offered in our six years here, we have been deeply saddened by some of the realities of living in Hawaii as a same-sex couple.

The many same-sex couples we know personally here in Hawaii all struggle with this paradox; and yet, like ourselves, all they wish to do is thrive here and give this community all they have to offer in return. We - all of us - give of our time, our money, and our voices. We are business executives, Realtors, nonprofit managers, doctors, nurses, teachers and students. We are also donors, board members, community volunteers, and activists for social change for the good of all people. And we take our responsibilities seriously – we pay our taxes, and we show up at the polls and speak with our votes.

Please know that a “yes” vote on this legislation will not only prove another landmark in civil rights and equality (for which you should be truly proud), it will also send a strong message that Hawaii embraces and welcomes all people, including its gay and lesbian brothers and sisters. A “no” vote will conversely send a message that same-sex couples are not safe here, that those considering relocation or even visits to Hawaii should give pause, and that those of us who are here are not truly welcome.

We ask for your support on HB 444; it is the right and just thing to do. Thank you for considering legislation that will have a positive impact on the lives of so many Hawaii citizens for generations to come.

Mahalo,



Colleen Murphy and Monica Grant
44-160 Kou Pl. #7
Kaneohe, HI 96744
(808) 218-0408
(808) 554-4122
cmurphyrealtor@yahoo.com
grantmonica@yahoo.com

From: microhi@yahoo.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 9:55 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 testimony

Dear Senators,

Thank you for all the work you have done to benefit our State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding HB444.

Our state and country are facing an economic crisis of epic proportions. We should focus on solving our pressing economic problems rather than using our limited resources to redefine marriage contrary to the express will of the people. Before I give my reasons for requesting that you vote "no" on HB 444, let me say that I believe in equality for people. I am not anti-gay, as the church I attend welcomes homosexuals to be part of our family and I am close friends with 2 homosexuals. They are my brothers. However, I think that you should revisit the Reciprocal Benefits Act and ammend it where appropriate. My reasons are below.

As a registered voter I would like to say that, "We, the People have already voted." As elected members of the state of Hawaii legislature, it should be your duty to uphold past electorate decisions. I am in favor of what the majority of the population has said with their vote. It's not about equal rights, as reciprocal benefits have already been passed. Perhaps the Reciprocal Benefits Act should be revisited and amended to facilitate equality. *Let the VOICE of WE the PEOPLE be heard. We stand against this bill, HB444.*

I have read testimonies of several attorneys who believe in democracy and a government for the people and by the people. I am disappointed to see that so many legislators in the House have ignored the will of the people and have co-sponsored a discriminatory bill, particularly one that contains many legal defects. Over a decade ago, the people of Hawaii voted by an overwhelming 70% against allowing a plurality of the justices on the Hawaii Supreme Court in *Baehr vs. Lewin* to determine that same-sex marriage would be the law of the land. We trusted you and the democratic process over the Court and voted to give you, the Legislature, the authority to define marriage.

HB 444 possesses great potential to bring chaos to our State. Because "civil union" basically means the same thing as "same sex marriage" this issue will be just as highly divisive and volatile as it was in the 1990s. If the Senate were to pass the bill the Senate will be reigniting the community in such a way that will paralyze the legislative body, disabling you from attending to the extremely urgent matters that need to be dealt with this year, such as the economy, homelessness, drugs, etc.

The state's crises in tourism, job losses, foreclosures, falling revenues, homelessness, energy instability, high taxes, educational challenges, health care challenges, "ceded lands" issues, etc., are much more critical to your constituents than your getting needlessly distracted in a battle over an issue that the people of Hawaii decisively addressed over ten years ago.

In addition, wherever they are enacted, "civil unions" and "domestic partnerships" have been nothing other than an alternative way of enacting "marriage" for same-sex couples. If the Hawaii Legislature chooses "civil unions," it needs to understand the danger hidden inside of it: same-sex "marriage."

Please don't let history repeat itself. Let's look at the history of other states that have passed similar laws:

Final Report of the New Jersey Civil Union Review Commission December 10, 2008 found that: " the separate categorization established by the Civil Union Act invites and encourages unequal treatment of same-sex couples and their children." And that "The Commission concludes that a marriage law would provide that remedy, despite the existence of a federal prohibition on the recognition of same-sex relationships. The civil unions bill states, "Partners to a civil union...shall have all of the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law...as are granted to spouses in a marriage...." It also states, "A civil union, domestic partnership, or marriage of two persons of the same sex...shall be recognized as a civil union in this State...."

Now consider the state of California, where the legislature enacted "domestic partnerships" that provided same-sex couples the full rights and benefits of marriage. **Was that good enough? No.** How about **New Jersey and Vermont**, which both did the same thing as California? Nope, **not good enough for same-sex advocates** there, who now demand legislatively imposed same-sex "marriage."

The same demands are being made in **Maine, Washington, and New Hampshire**, states which also provided legislatively enacted domestic partnership and civil unions. Most importantly, in both **California and Connecticut**, the existence of full domestic partnership and civil unions provided a platform for those states' supreme courts to judicially impose same-sex "marriage."

Thus, history shows us two important things: (1) that civil unions are wholly unacceptable to those who demand them; and (2) that the existence of civil unions has twice led to the imposition of same-sex "marriage" via judicial fiat. The Hawaii Supreme Court in 1993 first assisted in the imposition of same-sex "marriage" in just this way. The fallout from what the court did would have quickly brought about same-sex "marriage" had the people of Hawaii not adopted a constitutional amendment that gave power to the legislature "to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples." Then Hawaii enacted the **Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law**, which opens up benefits to all who do not qualify for marriage. That was a fair and balanced response. But while the current Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law is open to all who are not permitted to marry, the proposed civil unions law has the definition that **excludes** a man taking care of his sick grandmother, or a woman taking care of her adult brother with Down Syndrome. **Why** are they less deserving of benefits than unmarried persons in civil unions? The activists clamor for "family diversity," but apparently only in the way they wish. Through the passage of a "civil unions" bill, the Hawaii Legislature is setting the stage for the extension of "marriage" to same-sex couples. **The history of this process in other states should not be ignored**, unless the people of Hawaii want to be caught off guard. No one should allow themselves to be fooled and let history repeat itself...again.

Please consider the impact this bill would have on the schools and the parents of school children. For example, on March 25, 2000 the **Massachusetts Department of Education** sponsored a workshop for high school students. A description of it can be found at <http://www.massnews.com/maygsa.htm> . Please be advised that the contents are extremely graphic.

The changing of the wording of marriage to "civil unions" insults the will of the voting people of Hawaii. As a tax payer and registered voter, I ask you, please do not waste taxpayer's time and resources by starting another "same-sex marriage" war.

Let us learn from history. Please vote NO on HB 444.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adrienne Sentell

Senatorial District #11

Testimony by Megan Shea, MSW and Patrick Shea, Esq.
For HB 444
Hearing Date Feb. 24, 9AM
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate
Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Aloha and thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Megan Shea and my husband Patrick Shea and I live in Kailua with our young son. As a family, we strongly urge you to vote yes on House Bill 444, the Civil unions bill. This is a bill about equal rights for ALL human beings. This is the civil rights issue of our time. There was a time and a place where, as a mixed race couple, my husband and I would not have been allowed to marry. In the 19th century interracial marriage was illegal in nearly all states. Looking back today at how far we've come, it is hard to imagine and understand that kind of prejudice. I am certain that one day soon we will look back on this time with similar disbelief. This is your chance to be at the front of an historic movement that recognizes the rights and dignity of every human being. Please help me create a Hawaii where my son can grow up in a community that supports love, family and equality for everyone. Thank you for your hard work and for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Thank you,

Megan and Patrick Shea
1093 Loho Street
Kailua, HI 96734

From: patricia blair [cris6369@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:10 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of _Patricia Blair_____ in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

H.B.444 HD1 is about equal rights. It is your duty to see that all citizens have equal rights as indicated by the Constitution. Passing this Legislature will not harm traditional marriages. Only the participants themselves in what is called a traditional marriage can harm the marriage by not upholding the vows to each other.. Please ignore the biggots and pass this bill now. Thank you very much. Patricia Blair,, Kailua. 888-6393

From: hilotc@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:21 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Tom Carson in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Carson
157 Kualua Place
Hilo, Hawaii 96720
333-1537
hilotc@gmail.com

_____ Information from ESET NOD32 Antivirus, version of virus signature database 3881 (20090223)

The message was checked by ESET NOD32 Antivirus.

<http://www.eset.com>

From: Heidi [heidib@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:19 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Civil unions

Dear Elected Hawaii Officials,

We support Civil unions

We support ALOHA and tolerance not hate. Let's celebrate our diversity. It's good for us and our ECONOMY.

We'd rather see gay marriage and honeymoons in Hawaii than gambling and lotteries. Its way more positive and Hawaiian

Sincerely,

Heidi Bornhorst and OHANA

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:00 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: skgomez@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: Testimony.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Nani
Organization: Individual
Address: Kupuohi Waipahu, HI
Phone: 808-206-1388
E-mail: skgomez@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I am not sure how this is done, but I do know that I am in full support of House Bill 444. (Civil Unions) I am a 33 year old single mother of two boys. I am a full time student at UH Manoa as well as a full time accountant/operations manager. For the past twelve years I have been in a same sex relationship and I couldn't ask for more. She is my best friend, my soul mate and my life partner. She has a daughter who is 17 years old.

I will touch on the subject of same-sex couple raising children. My boys are now 16 and 13 years old. Both speak fluent Hawaiian language, attend Kamehameha Schools, both maintain a GPA of at least 3.0. My two boys are active in sports; wrestling, football, baseball. My eldest son looks forward to a future with a PhD from UH Hilo majoring in Hawaiian Language and Indigenous Cultures. My youngest son looks toward deep space or deep sea as his future. My hanai daughter looks toward International Business as her vehicle to a bright future. The point here is that same-sex couples can raise well educated, well-rounded, and very bright children. My children are not gay nor or they embarrassed of having two moms. In fact, some of their friends wish their mom was a lesbian.

My children have learned to embrace diversity and learn to accept people for who they are. The have seen first hand that people of all walks of life are entitled to love and life without prejudice. I have taken my children around many different types of people from the gay community and my kids enjoy time and receive so much support from the gay lifestyle.

I understand that there are some that view homosexuality as beyond bad and disgraceful. We live in a country where we are free to speak, free to love, and free to live. We have the right to choose our own religion. But should we not be free from religion as well. Why should I be held accountable to the Christian moral of man and woman? There are two things that I do not touch when I teach my children. I do not tell them who to love nor do I tell them what religions are correct. I do tell them that when it is your time, choose from your heart.

I do not have much, no money, no possession. I live month to month and sometimes week to week. But I ask that I am not judged by my wealth or my bank account. Judge me by the success of my children. When they succeed, I am rich. Thank you for listening to my story, it may not be much but it's my life and I wouldn't change it for the world. Same sex couples can raise children; can be productive members of society. We do have a heart and a soul. We should be allowed to join together as a happily married couple and live our lives they way we deem fit.

HOWARD BENNETT & MENG YEO

P.O. Box 302, Laupahoehoe, HI 96764
howarddavidbennett@yahoo.com
808-987-0215

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Subject: Testimony In Favor of HB444- Civil Unions
Date: Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9AM Capitol Auditorium

Aloha, Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to urge you to support Civil Unions in Hawaii – the spirit of Aloha demands nothing less!

As a committed gay partnership, we have enjoyed a monogamous, loving relationship for over 26 years. Since we moved to Waipunalei eight years ago, we have found that our relationship is respected and honored by our friends and neighbors, and that we have been accepted into this community with Aloha and honest good feelings. We think that this feeling of Aloha reflects the true feelings of most of Hawaii.

Please do not allow the rigid beliefs of a minority to become Hawaii's motivator in how it treats its people. We respect their belief that they are somehow "defending" traditional marriage, but would counter with our experience of straight, married couples who have told us that our love for each other and willingness to work things out in order to preserve our relationship has been an inspiration to them as they try to live up to the commitments they made to each other.

Our society has come a long way in rooting-out the discrimination that for so many years dulled it and held all of us back – just take a look at our latest Presidential Election! But it does seem that one of the last holdout areas is homophobia. Hawaii has always led the way in rolling back the poisonous tide of racism, and has been a true inspiration to the rest of the U.S. It is time for Hawaii to again become a national leader against bigotry by passing comprehensive Civil Unions legislation.

We urge all Senators present to vote in favor of HB444 HD1.

If HB444 HD1 should become deadlocked in the JGO Committee, we would respectfully ask that Chairman Taniguchi please allow this measure to be pulled to the Floor of the Senate so that the full voice of the Senate can be heard on the matter of Civil Unions.

Mahalo,

Howard Bennett and Meng Yeo, Waipunalei, Laupahoehoe, Hawaii

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: keakealani_mariko@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: House Bill 444 - testimony.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: RACHEL
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: keakealani_mariko@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

House Bill 444 is a heroic effort on the part of the State of Hawai'i to end a present-day form of prejudice that segregates its people. All it asks is that homosexual couples be given the same civil rights as that of married heterosexual couples -- it doesn't ask individuals to celebrate homosexuality and it doesn't ask the church to perform marriage ceremonies. To deny homosexual couples the rights of married heterosexual couples is to publicly classify them as sub-human and send the message that heterosexuality is supreme. Is this the message we really want to send to our children and grandchildren? Do you really want to perpetuate and promote this kind of slanderous behavior towards other people, just because you may not quite understand and/or identify with their life choices?

I find some of the anti-homosexual displays that have come out of the woodwork recently to be absolutely repulsive. Pastor Wayne Cordeiro, of New Hope Christian Fellowship, paints a portrait of homosexual individuals in one of his recent sermons that directly compares them to sex offenders, suggesting that we require them to register in order to "protect our children". His point of view is, tragically, not unique. How can we stand by and allow this kind of hatred and discrimination to continue? It was not so many years ago that interracial couples were the ones being discriminated against... If we had allowed *that* to continue, how many of us would today be ostracized

or actually punished for whom we had chosen to love? How many of us would not even be alive?

Hawai'i is the melting pot of the Pacific. Denying a group of people the right to have a few extra rights and tax breaks just because we don't understand their love and commitment is ultimately wrong and stands against everything we strive for as people from such a mixed-plate culture. I have been raised to embrace and celebrate diversity, and I am proud to be the product of such a rich cultural environment. In such volatile socio-economic and cultural times, we cannot afford to draw lines in the sand. I stand in strong support of House Bill 444, and I hope that we can all put aside our differences and misgivings, and demonstrate for the rest of the world the tolerance and acceptance that exemplifies the true spirit of aloha.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:10 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: jeffmorelock@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jeffrey Morelock
Organization: Individual
Address: 44-145 Naupaka St Laie, HI
Phone: 808-293-1829
E-mail: jeffmorelock@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Please vote "no" on this issue(HR444) and protect the already fragile family. Family and Marriage of a man and woman are the backbone- cornerstone of our society . Gay unions will further cloud things, confusing our children...thank you, Jeff Morlock

From: g.greenly@att.net
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions !!!

FROM: Gary A. Greenly
4302 Halupa St.
Honolulu, HI 96818

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL
AUDITORIUM**

FOR HB 444, HD1

IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

**ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
MEMBERS:**

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sex-partner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

Thank you,

Gary A. Greenly

From: Jon Carroll [legalcarroll@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:52 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: H.B. 444

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium

Subject line: Testimony of Jonathan R. Carroll, Esq. in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan R. Carroll

Attorney-at-Law

11-3059 Plumeria Rd.

Mt. View, HI 96771

From: Sara Banks [sarabanks@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I strongly support HB444 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee...

As a former Hawaii Civil Rights Commissioner and an Educator in Hawaii, I have spent my adult life fighting for the rights for all people. I have fought for self determination for Native Hawaiians, I have fought for Women's rights, I have fought for Disability rights and yes for gays & lesbians to be considered worthy of all the rights and protections granted to US citizens.

For the sake of our Country, let's get on with securing rights for all people so we can be one collective force to battle our serious issues of the global economy, global peace, global warming, and locally homelessness, sustaining our natural resources, and self determination for all of Hawaii's residents.

Mahalo,

Sara Banks
former Hawaii Civil Rights Commissioner
& current Educator

46-270 Kamehameha Hwy
Kane'ohe, HI 96744
cell 479-1431

From: Rena Mae Nalani Reid [renar@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:10 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: committee on judiciary and government operation 2/24/09,9am, HB444 HD 1

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I strongly support HB 444, HD1 relating to Civil Unions

This bill would extend and allow gay and lesbian couples the same equal rights as heterosexual couples. I believe that the same provisions that our government gives to heterosexual couples should be given to gay and lesbian couples. These couples contribute significantly to our society. They pay taxes, and raise children. Yet, there are no social or economic benefits that are afforded to them due to their sexual orientation.

I strongly feel that it is our duty and the duty of our policy makers to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated fair and equally under law. This bill, HB 444, HD1 will help to do that. Thus, I urge you to vote in support of this bill, with a "yes."

Respectfully submitted,
Rena Mae Takushi
802 Luehu Place
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
781-7984

From: Michele Harman [michele.harman@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:13 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Support of Civil Unions, H.B. 444, HD1

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I wish to express my strong support of the Civil Union Bill, H.B. 444, HD1.

I have known gay and lesbian couples to experience great difficulties due to our current law. I passionately believe that is just and appropriate to ensure them equal rights, and H.B. 444 is certainly a step forward. This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities to couples — giving them greater ability to care for their families. Thus, I respectfully request a vote of "yes" on H.B. 444, HD1 and also, that you urge your colleagues to do the same.

H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawai'i law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawai'i are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Please, vote "yes."

Mahalo nui for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Harman
1825 Anapunti St. #202
Honolulu, HI, 96822

From: Michael Ohara [mikekenohara@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:18 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Michael K. Ohara

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha!

I am writing to let it be known that I am strongly opposed to HB 444 HD 1. I believe that the will of the people regarding civil unions/same-sex marriage was overwhelmingly stated in 1998 by 70% voting against same-sex marriage. My appeal is that our public servants in the State of Hawaii will stand with the will of the people. It is especially disheartening that during these dire economic times that time, focus, and energy is being diverted to this issue. Foreclosures, bankruptcy, and unemployment are gripping our nation and state with many, many individuals and families facing an uncertain future. I ask our legislators to please vote no on HB 444 and let's get back to the pressing economic issues at hand.

May I remind our legislators that you hold an office that is one of service to the great people of the State of Hawaii. It is your duty to uphold, guard, and protect the will of the people. It is a dangerous thing when a few try to wield power over the many. I ask you to go back to the basic tenets of your office to serve the public.

Let's lay this divisive issue to rest and let's get back to business of making Hawaii the great state she is. Let the people's voices be heard!

Mahalo,

Michael K. Ohara

From: flaviano laorosa [flav_laorosa@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:52 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

I reside in Hawaii and I request that a NO vote be voiced for HB444 civil union, Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM by our legislators (Senate Judiciary Committee).

thank you for listening to the voice of the people of Hawaii.

Flaviano Laorosa

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: BorneoboyD@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:56 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Daniel Nelson in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Re: Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

As the son of a Lutheran pastor and someone who has believed in God all my life, we cannot allow God to be used as a weapon any more to persecute people. This has gone on too long already. Whatever your own belief in God is, I urge you to treat ALL people with equality under the law. Please change the way Hawaii currently treats some of it's citizens, people who have lived here and paid taxes all their life even though they are discriminated against. It's time to change that.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Nelson, Kauai

Get a jump start on your taxes. [Find a tax professional in your neighborhood today.](#)

From: Randall Mark [randelnalu@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:29 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Remember, Hawaii's State Motto!

"The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness"

VOTE NO!

Just do what is RIGHT!

Mahalo, Elaine Mark

From: Jeff [mauidivemaster@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:53 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Written Testimony in support of HB 444

Captain Jeff R Brown, USAR (Ret)
550 Lipoa Parkway
Kihei, HI 96753

February 20, 2009

Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony on HB 444, Civil Unions your support requested

Aloha Senator's:

I am a long-time resident of Hawaii, and I am writing to express my support for HB 444 granting civil unions to same sex partners in Hawaii.

I know many voters don't believe this bill is necessary as there are no problems with discrimination in Hawaii; that however is not the case. I work for the largest employer in the State of Hawaii (University of Hawaii (UH), Research Corporation of the University Of Hawaii RCUH)) and I can tell you first hand that they say they do not discriminate against gay and lesbian employees in all their advertising materials. However in practice they DO discriminate as evidenced by their lack of same sex partner benefits and unfair compensation practices aimed at supporting heterosexual couples and unfairly disadvantaging same sex couples.

When I accepted my current position I was informed that they would not pay for the relocation of my partner of 20 years as we "are not a married couple". I later learned that they do however pay for the relocation of heterosexual unmarried couples. I also learned that they would not allow my partner of 20 years to have any benefits as we "were not a married heterosexual family". I tried to work inside the system for 3 years to get the policy changed only to be told, we are working on it, it's very difficult, we are not "allowed by state law" and other such delaying and blocking tactics. Finally at the end of year 3 I filled a Hawaii Civil Rights Commission complaint alleging discrimination in compensation by a protected class. I was saddened to learn that this State agency has no interest in protecting gay and lesbian citizens – they went through the motions then denied my claim. The reason given was that UH was not directed "by law" to furnish any benefits to same sex couples. They did not even give any due consideration to the facts of the case concerning unfair compensation and the deliberate disadvantaging of same sex couples working for UH. Only after I informed UH/RCUH that I would file a civil suit against them did they reluctantly allowed same sex employees to obtain medical and dental coverage.

Four years later they still discriminate against same sex couples in all other benefits and compensation practices such as:

- family death leave -if you are married you can take three (3) days paid leave to go to your father-in-law's funeral, if you are gay you have to take vacation to attend your father-laws or even your own spouses funeral. When my father-in-law died they would not allow me to use family death leave.
- Married couples with families receive benefits of \$300-\$400 per month per family for "family medical coverage premium payments". Same sex couples have to pay out of pocket for their partner's coverage.
- Employee retirement benefits are provided to employees and their "married" spouse, but no retirement medical benefits are provided to same sex couple partners – only the employee.
- UH discriminates against same sex couples in providing campus housing for students (there is pending litigation at this time) – not very fair for a University that bills itself as "not discriminatory".

So the bottom line here is if the largest employer in the State of Hawaii who publicly claims they do not discriminate against gays and lesbians in employee and compensation actually does discriminate in practice, how bad is the private employment sector in Hawaii?

No same sex couples I know want to be married in a church; we just want to have the same rights, benefits and compensation as our married co-workers. This is just a basic case of fairness and doing what is right for hardworking voters who happen to be same sex couples.

The passage of this bill will also ensure that Hawaii employers furnish equal benefits for same sex couples which will reduce the pressure on state medical assistance programs where same sex spouses have been forced to go by this discrimination. As you know if medical coverage is not provided by employers it's next to impossible to purchase coverage on your own.

Without the passage of this bill you will continue to see discrimination by mean spirited, religious zealots who are employed in Human Resources position both with state agencies and private industry as I have experienced with UH/RCUH.

As long as these mean spirited persons feel that they can hide anomalously in the dark and continue their hidden religious agendas against gay and lesbians, we will be second class citizens who are not allowed to exercise our rights.

Please give your full support to HR 444 when it comes up for a vote in the Senate next week – Hawaii needs to end all forms of discrimination and eliminate the loop holes that allow persistent discrimination against its gay and lesbian citizens.

I am also available to testify in person at my own expense at any Senate hearings on this topic if you feel it will garner support of HR 444.

Sincerely,

S/S

Jeff R. Brown

From: Kiana Yasuhara [kianayasuhara@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:18 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony In Support of Civil Unions HB 444 HD 1

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Re: Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1)
Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 9 a.m.

Aloha To Whom It May Concern,

As a Hawaiian Christian living in Honolulu, I am appalled at the opinions, words, and actions of the people of our local Christian churches in order to stop the civil union bill HB 444 HD 1. I was raised in the Christian church telling me that homosexuality was wrong. But Christian churches were also behind slavery, segregation, and oppressing women for so long until the government intervened and changed the laws to give civil rights to these minority groups. Granting equal rights to gay and lesbian couples is no different. If the majority of the public opinion were against gays and lesbians, the laws should validate the gay community even more. People can keep oppressing gays and lesbians, but it will not make them disappear.

It is now a matter of WHEN the gay community will have their equal rights, validation, and most importantly, protection from our laws. Much has changed since the people of Hawaii voted against gay marriage ten years ago. None of us imagined having a black president ten years ago. Many in my family protested with First Assembly of God church against gay marriage at the capital ten years ago. Now, all of those family members are in full support of equal marriage rights for gay people. We never thought that would happen! The majority of public opinion has changed and evolved to be smarter and wiser in support gay people.

All Hawaiian families I know, have gay, lesbian, and trans-gender family members. My family supports all of our gay `ohana. How could we not? Please help us by passing HB 444 HD 1 in support of civil unions to protect them.

Aloha Kakou,
Kiana Yasuhara

From: Vincent P Rosa [vrosa@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:21 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony is support of passing HB 444 by Vincent Rosa

Aloha and Good Day senators

My name is Vincent Rosa and I am in full support of house bill 444 relating to civil unions. And Thank you very much committee members to hear my testimony.

Well to be honest, I ask this question: Why should we not pass this bill? Looking at this bill, we can see that this bill will be passing a lot of rights to couples that never had these rights before. Not only will it protect them but their children as well. And why should we not pass this bill? And it is very hard because we are at a conflict of our religion, when we know fully that we should keep our religion out of the House as much as possible. But that is rather difficult since we had a rally this past Sunday. And these are churches that make up 23.9 percent of Hawaii's religion (www.wikipedia.com/Hawaii) are no the majority vote in Hawaii.

But my experience at this rally was very hurtful and shocking. There were not only talking about not passing the Bill, but how we are such evil people for supporting the bill, and that the Devil is working with our senators and that these "homosexuals" are evil and need to be punished. I was very sad to hear that those pastors were not speaking of true love, humility and Aloha. They were devaluing the life of someone who holds a different person in their arms at night. And it was more hurtful to know that children were holding these signs, saying things such as "Turn to Jesus or Burn in Hell" right next to a sign that says "God is Love." And I asked these kids why they hold these signs, and all they are saying is that "Mom said to" and "Dad said to." So a majority of these children don't know what they are doing and the parents are not teaching what really matters which is love and respect. (And people hold signs saying protect our Children) It looks to me that they are trying to hid this from children but no one has really asked children what they think. Maybe because they think children don't know what this is but they will and many of them already know what is going on and they probably would be in support but they are being forced by parents to have the same mentality as their parents. So how is this spreading the Aloha, when a group of people are trying to take away (or not give) rights to another group of people just because the was they love someone is different then what they are used to.

Coming from a family that is from a heavy Latino background, I grew with a strong Catholic background and I am also used to the sight of two men kissing. That means a lot to me. Not in the way that it is unnatural but that it is love and many other things. Devotion, dedication, commitment, responsibility, trust, honesty and respect. That itself makes a great relationship and love. But churches think not of the individual but of the group and therefore are excluding the person. This bill is not about who is right and who is wrong in the eyes of God, it is about those who are being oppressed by the same laws that were laid in the name of God for freedom. Their rights are being excluded, and in not only excluding their rights, but the rights that children would get from this bills passage.

But we who are in support of civil unions have another reason. Because we do not want to introduce same-sex marriage. We can all say that we respect marriage because it is a religious ritual and we do not want to disrupt the church aspect of unions. Therefore passing this bill is not trying to impose something on a religion but rather a legal aspect, rights and benefits to live full lives together. And to be honest, when I asked many people at the rally to ask me why, without using religion as ANY background or source because in a court, religion is not that important in making decisions, a gentleman I asked by the name of P.J. Au, whom I have attended the University of Hawaii at Manoa and when I asked him this question, he could not leave a religious answer out of it, when I asked him to leave religion out of his answer. If that is the only answer people have to say is religious then this can be a problem in our Senate and those who are need to reevaluate their position in this matter on their religious manner.

10 years ago we did vote against same-sex marriage but we did not vote against giving people rights. SO we have the chance to change that now. If I was in a union with my significant other, it would pain me deeply to know that I might not be able to see that person because of my sexual orientation. Why should I not be able to see that person when I love him with all of my heart and I will always love him, but love can't be used in this event because people don't think it is right or good and moral. So letting me lose the one I love with saying goodbye is moral? We really need to question that.

I ask those who read this that if they hear any statistics by the opposing side to note if they leave sources and credit to anyone. I know that numbers can make the difference but only if they are reliable. And I personal have yet to hear any citation of any website, certified personal, legal companies and corporations and organizations. So I advise if told any statistics, please ask for a situation.

To the end of this, I ask again: What reason do we have to oppose this? We are giving rights to people who yet have rights. We are protecting those children under those right. We are protecting those peoples under these rights. They are not forcing anything on any religion or children except equality. I would like nothing more then your support in passing this bill as it will become a source of equality and this will bring peace to people across this state and it will promote equality.

I leave you with this quote but Dustin Lance Black, award winning screenwriter for his production of "Milk"

"We have always been willing to serve our country: in our armed forces, even as we were threatened with courts-martial and dishonor; as teachers, even as we were slandered and libeled; as parents and foster parents struggling to support our children; as doctors and nurses caring for patients in a broken health care system; as artists, writers and musicians; as workers in factories and hotels, on farms and in office buildings; we have always served and loved our country.

We have loved our country even as we have been subjected to discrimination, harassment and violence at the hands of our countrymen. We have loved God, even as we were rejected and abandoned by religious leaders,

our churches, synagogues and mosques. We have loved democracy, even as we witnessed the ballot box used to deny us our rights.

We have always kept faith with the American people, our neighbors, co-workers, friends and families. But today that faith is tested and we find ourselves at a crossroad in history.

Will we move forward together? Will we affirm that the American dream is alive and real? Will we finally guarantee full equality under the law for all Americans? Or will we surrender to the worst, most divisive appeals to bigotry, ignorance and fear?"

Thank you for your time and my name is Vincent Rosa and I live at 98-1426 C Koahehe Street in Pearl City Hawaii 96782. Mahola and please support equality

From: Linda Miyata [lmiyata@iolani.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:25 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444

Dear Senators,

Please do not pass Bill 444. I am a school teacher and I see how our young children are influenced by adults they admire and love. This bill will open doors for our young children to be persuaded into experimenting with homosexuality. This bill may also lead to require school teachers to read books that approve of homosexuality because equal opportunity will be required. God has given us clear instructions in Leviticus 18:22 "Homosexuality is completely forbidden. It is a great sin."

Please hear the cries of the majority of the people in Hawaii. If gay and lesbian couples flood Hawaii to be married and stay here, it could seriously hurt our tourism, our economy, our pure family life style.

Please do the right thing for the good of Hawaii. Protect our innocent children.
Sincerely concerned,
Linda Miyata

From: Joey Dicion [joey.dicion@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:52 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Joey L. Dicion in Strong Opposition of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong opposition of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. However, marriage is the union of a man and a woman and should be protected and kept that way.

It is not just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote no.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

--

Joey L. Dicion
Principal Broker
Mortgage Potential
98-023 Hekaha St Suite 2-F
Aiea, Hi 96701
Ph# 808-484-5913 Fax#1-866-271-7516
Cell# 808-306-0884
www.mortgagepotential.com

From: Rich Chisholm [rgchisholm@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:55 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Richard Chisholm in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

VIA EMAIL: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

Re: Testimony of Richard Chisholm in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard G. Chisholm
General Counsel
Evolution Capital Management
1132 Bishop Street, Suite 1880
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2009

February 24, 2009
9:00 A.M.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

My name is Halley Hobson. I am a 15-year-old resident of Ewa Beach, Hawaii. I am not in support of this bill. In passing this bill to allow homosexual marriage, I believe it will actually limit many others in their freedom of speech and faiths.

For many years the community of homosexual activists has claimed that they do not have equal rights in this country because they are not able to marry. I believe that they are wrong and that enacting HB444 bill will actually only be placing a label on such unions that is not in our constitution. This is wrong. Marriage is between only a man and a woman.

If HB444 bill is enacted, traditional and true marriage will be put on the back burner as old and outdated instead of right and pure.

Currently, many homosexual unions already have the benefits of a married couple (man and woman) such as insurance so why do they need the label of marriage?

They want the label of marriage to gain more benefits but most important to legitimize the idea that homosexuality is normal and an acceptable lifestyle, which it is not.

There are many other disadvantages to HB444 bill as well.

It will make a statement that the voice of Hawaii's people and their beliefs are not important.

This idea of civil union has been voted upon by the people and was put down 11 years ago.

Next it will limit and constrain the freedoms of those who do not agree with homosexual unions. For if these people do something to exercise their freedom of speech it will be called a hate crime and Hawaii will have succeeded in violating The United States' 1st Amendment rights.

Then HB444 will result in educating young ones regarding homosexuality as acceptable and that if you like someone that is the same sex the teacher will encourage you and say that it is okay because the law says so. This will encourage promiscuity and STDs.

But what about the families who do not think this is okay and want to pull their children out of school? The parents who have to keep up with 2 or 3 jobs, who have money problems and are on welfare, really want the best for their children but won't have time to home school them. Must they have to suffer because a loud minority got their way?

HB444 will not strengthen our families but instead confuse and cause chaos in many homes.

I thank the committee for taking the time to consider my testimony on this important issue, and I know that by not passing this bill, the people of Hawaii will benefit.

From: Laurie La Madrid [laurie.lamadrid@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:45 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Laurie La Madrid in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie La Madrid
Citizen
PO Box 893391
Mililani, HI 96789

February 24, 2009

Re: Strong Support, HB444 HD1

Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

My name is Dr. Jon-Paul Bingham, Professor of Biochemistry, at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and I am here to support your decision in making a positive impact on the lives of many committed gay couples in the State of Hawaii. Your support of House Bill 444 HD1, "A Bill for an Act relating to Civil Unions" is a civic duty to help end unequal treatment of loving same-sex households and families in the eyes of our present state laws.

As a husband in a loving same-sex relationship, we've been married for 9.5 wonderful years now in which our love has not wavered. We have faced the same hurdles as any couple; yet it is our vows to each other that keep us strong and in love. Our pursuit of happiness has lead us to enter a Civil Union in Vermont and legally marry in Canada – but on the shores of our home, Hawaii, our family is melted down to a patch-work of a few civic protections.

As we grow older, as we will do together as new homeowners in Kaneohe, we are both worried about how future unequal laws will effect us economically such as accessing retirement and health benefits, as well as the uncounted number of Hawaiian marriage-laws and statutes which provide uncertainty and complexity to our own Canadian marriage status. Unfortunately same-sex couples and families are faced with greater legal uncertainties; we are personally reminded daily of these inequalities.

Earlier this month we attended a wedding for two of our friends, oh what a joyous event – it took me back to when I said, "I do" nearly a decade ago. Our heterosexual friends expressed their love and commitment to each other, in sickness and in health, and witnessed by all who attended. Yet seeing this, both my husband and myself felt a difference, sadness sank in as we realized that what was conveyed in protections, obligations and rights under law by the State of Hawaii, we as a same-sex committed couple have no full equal access to.

Yes we are presently granted a second-class citizenship by the limited 'grey' areas of reciprocal beneficiaries, but this is very far from providing full coverage or equal access to the law. Should we not be afforded, as state taxpayers, equal representation under all state civil marriage laws?

Civil Unions will provide these much needed reassurances that we seek in gaining equal legal protection in Hawaii. As a same-sex committed couple we are prepared to accept the responsibilities as conveyed by Civil Unions, these being equal to those conveyed to heterosexual couples.

It is fair to be treated equally – this is what we seek, that is what we ask of you.

Sincerely,
Jon-Paul Bingham, Ph.D.
46-369 Haiku Road, E-11
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: LiAnn Collazo [col2lia@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:54 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

~Hello,

My name is Liann Collazo, and I strongly APPOSE BILL 444 which will allow same sex marriages to be legalized in my home Hawaii. I was born and raised in Hawaii and have never seen such special treatment given to people of the GAY community like I've seen within the past 2 months. This is an outrage! Man marrying man. woman marrying woman! This is nonsense and the senate as well as representatives of our community must no this too! I was raised by a mother and father! And through my mother and fathers union in marriage, they were fruitful and bore 8 children! Theyv'e all married there opposite sex and have been fruitful in producing babies too. In all my life, there has been nothing that has been said that marrying a man and man or women and women is RIGHT in God's eyes. IT'S NOT! This is the reason why they hide what they do. Why should the GAY community be given special rights to commit wrong acts in public. And it is WRONG! I refuse to have my child attend school and be told by a teacher that being GAY is OK. I refuse to have my grandchild read books that teach children that living a GAY lifestyle is OK. It's NOT OK! Just as the gay community is being heard, we the people of Hawaii also need to be heard. All the Kings and Queens of this island, had strong moral christian values, had they been hear to see what is going on, they would have gathered there people and rallied against this bill also.

I STRONGLY APPOSE "BILL 444" THIS BILL SHOULD NOT PASS!

Thank you
Liann Collazo

To have one set of laws for one group of people and a second set of laws for another group is the epitome of inequality and is fundamentally unconstitutional. Why should certain benefits be granted only to those who fit a particular definition of “marriage” or “civil union?” Why should best friends or non-married family members who live together be denied the same tax benefits which are granted to those who *do* fit the state’s definition of “married?” For that matter, what business is it of the state’s to be inquiring into the nature of any citizen’s personal relationship? It is analogous to asking a couple: “Is your relationship a romantic one? If so, then here are some tax benefits.” It should be the case that either all individuals have an equal opportunity to receive these benefits, or no one does. I conclude that government should not be in the business of marriage at all. Marriage should be completely left to religious institutions and should be separate from state affairs altogether. I realize that this is quite a radical position today but it is the correct one in the long-term.

I support HB444 and applaud its spirit and intent, however by specifying that a civil union may consist of same-sex partners exclusively, this bill denies a traditional man/woman couple the right to enter into a civil union; thereby discriminating against both men and women. Someone might argue that a marriage and a civil union is practically the same thing, so a traditional couple has nothing to complain about. If they are the same thing, then why make the distinction in the first place?

Of course there are also the obvious arguments that denying rights to gays is discrimination and places an imposition on them. It is irrational to deny someone equal rights because of one’s moral, religious, or other emotional convictions. Just because you “feel” strongly about something doesn’t make it right.

So the thrust of my argument again is that law must universally apply to all citizens; we cannot have different sets of laws that apply to different groups of people.

Richard Ching

PAMELA G. LICHTY, MPH
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816
PHONE: 808 735-8001 ~ FAX: 808 735-2971
PAMELALICHTY@GMAIL.COM

COMMITTEESenate JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

FROM: Pamela Lichy, MPH
DATE: February 24, 2009
(9 a.m. Capitol auditorium)
RE: H.B. 444, HD 1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS – **In Strong Support**

As an activist in Hawai'i for the last 20 years, as a spouse who has enjoyed the benefits of marriage for almost 40 years, and as a person who values and appreciates Hawaii's progressive traditions, I strongly support HB 444, HD1.

This bill is carefully crafted to avoid conflict with any current marriage statutes; it does not contravene the constitutional amendment that was passed in 1998; and does not require any religious official to perform the solemnization ceremony.

If logic were applied here, even those who deplore same sex relationships should acknowledge that a committed union of two people is better for our state, our community and our keiki than officially prohibiting committed partners from legally sealing their union.

In large part this is a question of fairness. Although Hawaii does have a reciprocal beneficiary law in place, less than a half dozen rights are afforded to those registered under it. By contrast, this bill would afford same gender couples the same 400 rights afforded to opposite gender couples. We are talking here of inheritance rights, hospital visitation and many others that we married couples take for granted.

I urge this committee to do the right thing, to remember Hawaii's historic traditions of fairness and tolerance and to pass this bill out with a strong recommendation. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Strong Opposition to HB 444, HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions).

Senators,

On behalf of the Hawaii Christian Coalition and our members, we strongly oppose HB444. Since the founding of our great nation, Homosexuality and its lifestyle has been considered immoral and unnatural. We do not understand why some legislators would want to start making this an acceptable behavior in our society today, and greatly alarms our membership. Our members will be contacting all of our friends, neighbors and relatives to inform them of the legislators who support this bill. We urge every legislator to oppose this bill. We cannot confuse our children who are the future leaders of this great nation, that unnatural and immoral behavior is now an acceptable part of society. I don't have to remind you of the vast majority of this State who oppose this lifestyle.

Respectfully,

Garret Hashimoto
State Chairman, Hawaii Christian Coalition
garret@hi-christian.com

From: karli [k_miyata@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:33 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444 HD-1

Dear Honorable Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee;

I, Karli Miyata, a lifetime resident of Oahu, strongly oppose HB444 HD-1.
Thank you for hearing my testimony :)

From: LLOYD KURASHIGE [lkurashige@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:59 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 444

I would like to voice my opposition to HB 444. I believe that the people of Hawaii have already made their beliefs known by passing an amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution back in 1998 giving the legislature the power to define marriage as between one man and one woman.

Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law in place to address the rights of those who choose to be partners and are unable to marry under the laws of the State of Hawaii.

Please make the right decision for the people of Hawaii and put an end to HB 444 and any further attempts to legalize civil-unions which are in effect same-sex marriages.

Thank you.

Lloyd Kurashige
94-314 Kaaei Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96789
(808)625-4885.

From: Delia L'Heureux [delia5883@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:06 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support for HB 444 HD1, for Feb.24 at 9:00 AM

Aloha members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

Thank you for hearing this important bill. I support HB 444 and the Civil Unions it creates. I urge you as members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee to pass this bill and courageously stand up for equality in Hawaii. All people are equal under the law and should therefore enjoy the same rights and protections provided by our constitution, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Counter to our state's constitution, committed same sex couples and their families are denied the basic rights and protections afforded married couples, including health care rights, property and housing rights, taxation and other benefits. Civil Unions promote stable, healthy, and loving relationships and gives Hawaii the opportunity to protect all of our families.

Discrimination does not have a place in our state. We are fortunate to live in a state where many different peoples and cultures can not just coexist, but can work together to make Hawaii a unique and wonderful home. Therefore, I ask you to pass HB 444 creating Civil Unions and to promote the equality of all Hawaii's citizens.

Thank you,
Delia L'Heureux
Kailua, HI

From: Bill Henry [bhenry86@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:09 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Senate Judiciary Committee, Feb. 24, 9 AM, HB 444

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Public hearing scheduled Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM, HB 444

Over 10 years ago I, along with 70% of Hawaii's voters, said NO to re-defining marriage. Marriage is a civil, social, and religious structure for sustaining and growing our families. Marriage provides children with a father and a mother and the recognition and validation that children are raised best in such a family structure.

Please, do not submit to the spurious arguments of paid lobbyists who suggest calling marriage by another name - civil unions - in order to give homosexual partners special rights which are reserved for husbands and wives who raise children.

Vote NO on HB 444 and do NOT let the Senate Judiciary Committee get "run over" by moving this bill to the full Senate for a vote without the Committee's full review, debate, and approval. This issue should have the full attention that it deserves. Certainly it should receive at least as much time and debate as the Super Ferry received - not a "rushed" passage of an ill-conceived bill. You and your fellow elected representatives are in your roles to serve the people of Hawaii and I appreciate your time and experience. But, if the Committee process is "run over" so would the expressed will of the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo and Aloha.

Bill Henry
Hawaii Kai

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:18 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: hsn3@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Heide San Nicolas
Organization: Individual
Address: 45-906 Nani Place Kaneohe, HI
Phone: 808 235 3082
E-mail: hsn3@hawaiiantel.net
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose HB 444 and ask you to OPPOSE it also for the sake of traditional marriage, families and our community as a whole. This is NOT a civil rights issue.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Felipe & Heide San Nicolas

From: Steve Welck [welck@clearwire.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:18 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: No on HB 444

Aloha Senators!

I believe as do others here on West Maui that there is not adequate support for same sex civil unions in the State of Hawaii. I urge you Senators to properly represent Hawaii on this issue on the Senate floor regarding bill 444. The people of Hawaii voted down same sex marriage plain and simple. This is just another version that is being forced upon the people of Hawaii.

I have spoken to many other residences in our community that feel the passage of this bill will be the same as same sex marriage. Please do not crumble under the pressure of a highly organized few. The gay rights agenda finds weakness in government and penetrate this weakness. I know you to be not a weak Senate. So kindly and strongly voice your opposition to this bill.

Please consider that there will no benefit to having same sex couple visiting Hawaii to increase tourism. Many families will not visit because gays are here and they will not want to expose their families to the gay lifestyle.

The moral fabric of America is already weakened in a few States where civil unions are allowed. When we voted against same sex marriage I was proud to be in Hawaii. Please uphold our will.

Best wishes.

Steve Welck & Family
5095 Napilihau St. / #373
Lahaina, HI 96761
808 283 0525

February 23, 2009

Dear Senator

My name is Ramona A. Martinez and I oppose House Bill 444.

Senator, do you know the history of Sodom + Gomorrah? If not, I recommend that you read about it in the Old Testament Genesis Chapter 13+14; then you will be informed about why God destroyed that city - the people of that place were having sexual relations with their own kind. You can also read about God's wrath + judgement of this perversion in The New Testament in Romans Chapter 1 + 2.

After reading the history + reason you will understand why Sodom + Gomorrah were destroyed. Don't you think that this could happen to America too? We are heading in that direction. Of course not every one will be a homosexual but if America agrees with this Bill + make it into law, we will be guilty of the act as well.

Please keep our marriage traditional by opposing House Bill 444, and let our voice be heard. Thank you! God bless you!
God bless Hawaii + God bless America.

Respectfully,

Ramona A. Martinez
1239 So. King St. #602
Honolulu, HI 96814
808/230-5083

Dave Asato
99-649 Hoio St.
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
Ph. 839-5025 ext. 203
Fax 839-5035

facsimile transmittal

To: **SENATOR BRIAN
TANIGUCHI** Fax: 586-6461

From: Dave Asato Date: 2/23/2009

Attn: Pages: 1

RE: HB 444

Urgent For Review Please Comment Please Reply Please Recycle

Dear Senator Taniguchi, my name is Dave Asato and I live at 99-649 Hoio Street in Aiea. I would like to let you know that I strongly APPOSE HB 444. Please help us protect our traditional marriage and say NO to civil unions. The people of Hawaii have spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage. Could you imagine your children, son, daughter, being brought up in a family with two women or two men being husband and wife. I have four children and ten grandchildren. I do not want to even think of a future with the unit of society like that if a compromise is made today. I thank you for your time and being such a diligent public servant. Have a good day.
Sincerely,

Dave Asato

From: hui zhang [huizhang@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:29 PM
To: JGO Testimony

Hui Zhang
1751 D 10th Ave.
Honolulu, HI96816
(808)347-3186

ATTENTION: **Senate Judiciary & Government
Operations Committee**

RE: **HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

Hearing: **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM
-AUDITORIUM**

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Hui Zhang

Susan Miyao

From: Devri Fuchigami [devri@inparadise.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 9:44 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: John and Devri Fuchigami
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

We are completely opposed to the provisions being recommended in HB 444 relating to civil unions. We believe this issue has already been voted on by the people of Hawaii and they have already given their overwhelming position against recommendations similar to the ones in this bill. State Congress is called upon to represent the will of the people, not the will of special interest groups.

The State of Hawaii must NOT cross this line. It is NOT good for all the families in the state of Hawaii. It is an ill-conceived law and would lead to much confusion and financial hardship on the business community and families. Please reject this bill and put your focus on things that would truly benefit all the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

John and Devri Fuchigami

To Whom It May Concern,

I am against Civil Bill HB 444. I am asking for your support in voting against this matter.

Thank You,

LouAnn Kaaloa

From: Dane Anderson [danerr@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 10:31 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Dane Anderson in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am writing in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. The time is ripe for equal treatment of gay and lesbian couples under the law by granting them equal legal status to that of legally married couples.

Opponents argue that civil unions will destroy traditional marriage in this state; however, this statement is inaccurate. Civil unions will simply be another option to obtain legal rights afforded to married couples, and will do nothing to hinder religious marriage practices.

As for civil unions and families, psychological studies show that children of homosexual parents fair just as well, if not better, than children of heterosexual parents with regards to their social and emotional development. After all, there are many types of families that do not consist of two heterosexual parents and those children are still loved and excel in society.

Claiming that civil unions would somehow be the demise of stable families is a misconception that is not supported by any psychological or sociological studies and only serves to undermine the diverse family structures that care for our children today.

Join me in supporting this bill. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Dane Anderson

234 Pauahilani Place, Kailua Hawaii 96734

February 20, 2008

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair
Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: Support of HB 444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing Date: Feb. 24, 9:00 am

Please approve HB 444 HD1 without amendments.

Law, like science, is for the sinners. Let me explore an analogy with the laws of gravity. Most of us (and our automobiles) obey the laws of gravity. Scientists and engineers design bridges and airplanes with that in mind. In religious literature you find references to people who can levitate. My favorite example of this is St. Joseph of Cupertino, a Roman Catholic saint who levitated in public while thinking about the Blessed Sacrament (the Holy Communion). This was witnessed (allegedly) by many people, include foreign ambassadors. Does this human/natural/godly possibility change the way bridges and airplanes are designed? Does the fact that some people at some time can levitate, obviate the need for special ramps to allow handicapped persons to access public buildings? Science and engineering are profoundly worldly, not sacred, and part of the basis of governance.

The American art of government is getting general good from individual variation. America is based on greed, and the harnessing of greed to serve social goods. Every religion in the world condemns greed (some more than others!). Should we outlaw greed, and strive mightily to stamp it out like Chairman Mao tried in China or Lenin in Russia? Mao and Lenin produced greater evils, and even greater suffering by their people, including the outright starvation of millions of persons. So, American society makes its uneasy peace with greed---distasteful, even disgusting, yet tolerated and hopefully managed (some Presidents are better at greed management than other Presidents).

Thank you for your wisdom in applying the "American art of government" to yet another realm of individual variation.

Tom Ramsey
1521 Alexander St Apt 503, Hon. HI 96822

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:55 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: wongd027@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jan Wong
Organization: Individual
Address: 540 Lagoon Drive Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Phone: 808-206-5269
E-mail: wongd027@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

To: The State Judiciary Committee

RE: Measure Number HB 444 HD1

Date and Time of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM

As a resident of the State of Hawaii, I would like to voice my opposition to HB 444 HD1 (Civil Unions). I have been married for 25 years and I regard marriage between a man and woman to be sacred and special, not to be taken lightly. I do not approve of legalizing homogeneous partnerships because I believe doing so would deteriorate our children's welfare, decay our educational system, diminish the sanctity of marriage, adversely impact our local economy, and lead us one step closer to legalizing gay marriages.

Many attempts have been made to legalize homogenous marriages or partnerships. These attempts have widely been defeated or opposed, both locally and in the mainland. In 1998, the overwhelmingly large majority of residents of the State of Hawaii opposed same sex marriages and partnerships. This message should have rang loud and clear.

Civil Unions often have expressed their constitutional right to legalize gay marriages or partnerships. I feel that adoption of their initiative is wrong and not in the best interest of the large majority of the people. The constitution upholds the majority of the people, not the minority.

Thank you for letting me express my view and if you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Jan Wong

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

RE: IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members:

I am a resident of Hawaii and want to voice my strong opposition to HB 444.

In every generation, there are defining moments when particular persons or events have changed the course of history, whether for good or for bad. Defining moments like the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address, the attack on Pearl Harbor and more recently September 11th, are just a few examples where the course of life has been changed forever.

While proponents of HB 444 would like us to believe the passage of this bill would be a "defining moment" of progress for equal rights for same-sex couples, I see it more as a "redefining moment" that once again seeks to infringe upon the sacred boundaries of traditional marriage since the beginning of civilization. It is no secret that if this bill is passed, it will only be a matter of time before they come back and pressure the state to grant them the title of "same-sex marriage" since they would have already been granted all the legal benefits, protection and responsibilities that are reserved for marriage.

This is evident in places like New Jersey, where a similar Civil Union bill was passed several years ago. Now proponents of same-sex unions are pressuring the state to allow same-sex couples to marry rather than just enter into civil unions, as the law currently permits. The article states, "In a report that could lead to New Jersey legalizing gay marriage, the Civil Union Review Commission said same-sex couples cannot achieve equality with heterosexual couples if their legal status is restricted to civil unions. Full marriage is the only way to meet a state constitutional requirement for equality..." [Jon Hurdle, Reuter, 12/10/08]

Those who oppose this bill are not interested in just saving the "name" of marriage; we want to save "marriage" between one man and one woman. To support a bill that legally grants all the

"Same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as marriage" under a different name is not only duplicitous coming from leaders who are held in high esteem, but is tantamount to a slap in the face of the majority of your constituents and voters, who stand for traditional marriage, of whom you also are duty-bound to represent. I don't know how anyone can call proposed HB 444 anything but a "same-sex marriage" bill, when Section 3 states clearly, "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage", or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions" and "every reference to "husband", "wife", or "spouse" shall apply equally to a partner in a civil union..."

While proponents of this bill would like you to believe times have changed, there are some things that remain the same and should never be changed, namely the definition of traditional marriage, which over 70 percent of Hawaii voted overwhelmingly for in 1998. This is just another attempt to subvert the will of the people who made it loud and clear that they wanted marriage to be exclusively between one man and one woman - period!

I would like to appeal to you to not allow the expediency of political correctness to influence you to ill advisedly revise the statutes of marriage that was providentially decreed, not by government, but by God. To support same-sex union not only goes against the laws of God, but also against the laws of nature for pro-creation of the human race.

I do believe we are standing at a defining moment for the future of the family and for our beloved state. I also believe that each of you have been placed in office for such a time as this. Therefore, I urge you to put aside political maneuvering as lawmakers and stand up as history-makers in protecting the sacred union from becoming a civil union, by declaring your strong support for traditional marriage and opposing HB 444.

Thank you,

Pastor Klayton Ko

98-1960 Kaulahao St.
Aiea, HI 96701

From: Lydia [sp2lydia@aloha.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:58 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Equal rights for all

PLease pass this bill (HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions).

What is marriage in the eyes of the government?

When 2 people decide to share all they own why shouldn't they be recognized as partners?

I am a firm believer that marraige is an institution that has no place in government.

Why don't we take that word "Marriage" out of all government forms, and call them civil unions.

Maybe then we can separate Church and state.

Lydia Alvarez

From: mak221@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:54 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony on Civil Unions Bill HB444-HD1

To : Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Subject: Testimony Strongly In Favor of HB444-HD1 Civil Unions

Date: Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9AM Capitol Auditorium

6 Copies

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. Our names are Mark Koppel and Barry Brandes and we are here to express my support for Senate Bill HB444 - HD1 Civil Unions.

We have been together as partners for over 36 years, live on the Big Island and are simply asking for equal rights as a couple with all other Hawaiian citizens. We are proud that our state is considering this legislation at this time. The state has been a beacon of diversity and tolerance and we feel this legislation is part of that.

Immediately after his inauguration, our wonderful Hawaiian born and raised President Obama posted the White House web site, which contained this comment under Civil Rights:

Support Full Civil Unions and Federal Rights for LGBT Couples: President Obama supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples. Obama also believes we need to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and enact legislation that would ensure that the 1,100+ federal legal rights and benefits currently provided on the basis of marital status are extended to same-sex couples in civil unions and other legally-recognized unions. These rights and benefits include the right to assist a loved one in times of emergency, the right to equal health insurance and other employment benefits, and property rights.

Can we really do less in Hawaii?

I urge you to pass this much needed legislation and, in case of a tie vote, see that it is heard by the full Senate.

Mahalo

Mark Koppel
Barry Brandes
Hakalau, Big Island

From: K.C. [kc@formaxgxl.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:05 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: In support of HB444 and my personal testimony

K.C. Loesch
House bill 444
Hearing: 2/24/09 9:00am
Senate Judicial and Government Operations Committee.

Dear Chair Tanaguchi and Vice Chair Cakamine and members of the Judicial and Government Committee.

I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate you recognizing my feelings and opinions.

There are many that have made the comment about a marriage being between a woman and a man. Yet, so many industries and discussions, we talk about a marriage as being a “partnership” where two entities come together and support each other and grow into one. We hear about creating a union between different ethnic groups, ages, social groups, and more. These are legitimate discussions and one that has never had those terms questioned, until it came to human rights of homosexual men and women.

In more recent years, than we would care to admit. There was action proposed that would prevent a black from marrying a white. Even then the bible was brought in as “proof” of that action being wrong. I remember my mother would comment about a robin not mating with a cardinal. So many people are naïve in their idea about the difference between an animal and a human being. Human beings have emotions and emotional needs that are beyond sexual. The need to partner and unit as one. That is what differentiates us from an animal whose soul instinct is to re-create.

As human beings, we are trying to evolve and have the freedom to express love and be comfortable with heart to heart. Growing up, I never saw men hug men, yet now, it is pretty common. And these are straight men, with wives and kids in tow. Many of these guys are younger, older, mixed ages, background, ethnicity and sexual preference. This is proof that human beings are, indeed, evolving into more loving, sharing individuals. Yet we draw a line.

No one is asking to marry a pig or a horse or their poodle. We are asking to be IN UNION with a fellow human being. Gay people are NOT asking that this union be made between more than one other person, unlike some of the Mormons who routinely practice polygamy. According to THEIR bible, one husband with multiple wives is perfectly normal and accepted. The whole purpose of polygamy is to father as many children and grow your ARMY faster. Because, from THEIR religious point of view, they are doing “God’s” work and there are battles everyday to have polygamy allowed. That is totally about re-creating, not about love and devotion to one other human being. Our country has a law that makes it illegal to have more than one wife. The law is being challenged and/or broken everyday by a church that condemns gays stronger than other.

What homosexual men and women are asking for is a simple right. Yes, simple in the fact that we want to be acknowledged as a partnership with all of the benefits that a union like that entails. No different than the marriage of two companies now acting as one getting the benefits as deserved. Or two people of opposite sex having that unity and legal rights that they deserve.

In our laws and human evolution, we have grown and now, the idea of a black and white marrying, having children, etc., is an everyday ACCEPTED occurrence. Can you sit there and honestly state that the action of

this acceptance changed anything for the worse?? How about for the better? Whenever there is love between people it is great. When there is love and union between TWO people it is something to be joyous about. To have that acknowledged by the public and the government helps to solidify and strengthen that union with the support and benefits that are available to two people that legally state that commitment to each other.

Allowing gay men and women to go into union “hurts” no one. Preventing it hurts the world as proof that some people are more “deserving” than others. We live in a country where 40 years ago the idea of a black president was beyond possible, yet we now have a black president. Even the idea of a woman as president was a laughable dream, yet we came very close. What threat is this growth? Why is becoming open minded something to be afraid of. We are not living the life that people did 2000 years ago. We should not be governed by “rules” or a book that was written by a different mentality and belief system.

The people that wrote the bible had no idea where human beings would go. They were stuck in their day and time and wrote about what they understood at that moment. We have progressed as a being far beyond what they could have imagined. We have grown far further than our own great grandparents imagined.

So, with that growth, what is the threat of having two people that love each other and want to commit to each other and share their worlds together? What threat?

That is the question on this floor today. What is the threat? If that can be explained either politically or religiously, I would be interested in hearing but I haven't heard that yet. I believe in a God. But, I don't believe in the Christian bible. Why should my life be dictated by a bible that means nothing to me, and I'm am sure there are thousands upon thousands that feel the same way. So why is the bible even being considered in this case? And what about the division of state and religion? The government forgets that often, yet that is why we're even on this continent.

I urge you to vote with your heart and with the voice of God. For God says to LOVE YOUR FELLOW MAN (and women), and to JUDGE NOT, THEE BE JUDGED. Gay men and women are God loving people too and just want to have the same respect, and rights, as every other human being. Right now, you have the opportunity to play “God.” You have the ability to change our world for the better, or the worse. With a simple wave or your hand and a signature, you control the destiny of an entire population of gay men and women in this state

Consider carefully your actions. Do you want your future generations to be proud and look upon you as loving, open minded, heartfelt, individuals who truly has compassion for a fellow human being. Or??? Do not discriminate against another human being because that want to join in unity and have that unity acknowledged by law. Do not show your children that there is no tolerance for something different than they. Show YOUR strength and your power in making a decision that will truly allow your spirit to feel the love. The love of acceptance, tolerance, and seeing that expression in other people.

Allow the union of two people to be acknowledge by the law. God is ALL LOVING, and wants all people to love each other, so there is no doubt that God accepts us. Question is, do you understand this and accept us too.

Thank you for your time and I trust you will vote with your heart, soul, and intellect, on my behalf and support BH444.

Help change the world!

K.C. Loesch
2121 Ala Wai
Unit 2705

From: L8m2000@aol.com
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 10:11 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To the Senate Judiciary Committee
Chair: Senator Brian Tanaguchi
Co-Chair: Senator Dwight Takamine
Members: Senator Mike Gabbard
 Senator Robert Bunda
 Senator Clarence Nishihara
 Senator Sam Slom

Re: HB 444

From: Maureen and Lee Young
84-1389 Mauna Olu St.
Waianae, HI. 96792
808-695-7032

We urge you all to vote against HB 444. The People of Hawaii have not changed their position from 1998 that marriage is between one man and one woman. The legislature is ignoring the mega-majority of the people as already expressed, being opposed to civil unions and/or same sex marriage. HB 444 is just another attempt to get same sex marriage in through the back door. If this passes it will just be a matter of time for civil union to be renamed marriage, as it already has happened in at least one other state.

There are already plenty of laws on the books such as the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Act and others to protect the Civil Rights of the Hawaiian people. They can have contracts to cover the relationship they have with their partner. They don't need to call it civil unions or marriage. Truthfully many are getting tired of the homosexual network forcing their agenda on our country, on our schools and on our children in their informative years. Homosexual tendencies or attractions are against nature and are unnatural and destructive to our society. This lifestyle should not in any way be encouraged. This lifestyle should be resisted. Every society which has encouraged the homosexual lifestyle has been destroyed...recall the degraded Roman Empire in which homosexuality was rampant, and the Khazars (the Turkish empire of the 700s) whose King forced his people to become Jews because the kingdom was dying a slow death due to homosexual immorality, just to name a few.

We will be attending and watching your votes and if you vote yes on HB 444 we will work to prevent your re-election. Listen to your constituencies! We are truly fed up with this seemingly unending push by the Homosexual network to normalize the homosexual lifestyle and to reprogram our children to accept it as just another lifestyle! Homosexuals have the right to do what they want in their private lives. They do not have the right to force their destructive lifestyle on the mega-majority of our citizens who oppose the lifestyle. Read the Homosexual Manifesto (below) if you really want to know what they plan for our children!

Sincerely fed up and disgusted,

Maureen and Lee Young

<http://www.feastofhateandfear.com/archives/homosexual.html>

The Homosexual Manifesto

This is outrageous, madness, a tragic, cruel fantasy, an eruption of inner rage, on how the oppressed desperately dream of being the oppressor.

We shall sodomize your sons, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. We shall seduce them in your schools, in your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your locker rooms, in your sports arenas, in your seminaries, in your youth groups, in your movie theater

bathrooms, in your army bunkhouses, in your truck stops, in your all-male clubs, in your houses of Congress, wherever men are with men together. Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and adore us. Women, you cry for freedom. You say you are no longer satisfied with men; they make you unhappy. We, connoisseurs of the masculine face, the masculine physique, shall take your men from you then. We will amuse them; we will instruct them; we will embrace them when they weep.

Women, you say you wish to live with each other instead of with men. Then go and be with each other. We shall give your men pleasures they have never known because we are foremost men too and only man knows how to truly please another man; only one man can understand with depth and feeling the mind and body of another man.

All laws banning homosexual activity will be revoked. Instead, legislation shall be passed which engenders love between men.

All homosexuals must stand together as brothers; we must be united artistically, philosophically, socially, politically, and financially. We will triumph only when we present a common face to the vicious heterosexual enemy.

If you dare to cry faggot, fairy, queer, at us, we will stab you in your cowardly hearts and defile your dead, puny bodies.

We shall write poems of the love between men; we shall stage plays in which man openly caresses man; we shall make films about the love between heroic men which will replace the cheap, superficial, sentimental, insipid, juvenile, heterosexual infatuations presently dominating your cinema screens.

We shall sculpt statues of beautiful young men, of bold athletes which will be placed in your parks, your squares, your plazas. The museums of the world will be filled only with paintings of graceful, naked lads.

Our writers and artists will make love between men fashionable and de rigueur, and we will succeed because we are adept at setting styles. We will eliminate heterosexual liaisons through the devices of wit and ridicule, devices which we are skilled in employing.

We will unmask the powerful homosexuals who masquerade as heterosexuals. You will be shocked and frightened when you find that your presidents and their sons, your industrialists, your senators, your mayors, your generals, your athletes, your film stars, your television personalities, your civic leaders, your priests are not the safe, familiar, bourgeois, heterosexual figures you assumed them to be. We are everywhere; we have infiltrated your ranks. Be careful when you speak of homosexuals because we are always among you; we may be sleeping in the same bed with you.

There will be no compromises. We are not middle-class weaklings. Highly intelligent, we are the natural aristocrats of the human race, and steely-minded aristocrats never settle for less. Those who oppose us will be exiled. We shall raise vast, private armies, as Mishima did, to defeat you.

We shall conquer the world because warriors inspired by and banded together by homosexual love and honor are as invincible as were the ancient Greek soldiers. The family unit spawning ground of lies, betrayals, mediocrity, hypocrisy, and violence will be abolished. The family unit, which only dampens imagination and curbs free will, must be eliminated. Perfect boys will be conceived and

grown in the genetic laboratory. They will be bonded together in a communal setting, under the control and instruction of homosexual savants.

All churches who condemn us will be closed. Our only gods are handsome young men. We adhere to a cult of beauty, moral and aesthetic. All that is ugly and vulgar and banal will be annihilated. Since we are alienated from middle-class heterosexual conventions, we are free to live our lives according to the dictates of the pure imagination. For us too much is not enough.

The exquisite society to emerge will be governed by an elite comprised of gay poets. One of the major requirements for a position of power in the new society of homoeroticism will be indulgence in the Greek passion. Any man contaminated with heterosexual lust will be automatically barred from a position of influence. All males who insist on remaining stupidly heterosexual will be tried in homosexual courts of justice and will become invisible men. We shall rewrite history, history filled and debased with your heterosexual lies and distortions.

We shall portray the homosexuality of the great leaders and thinkers who have shaped the world. We will demonstrate that homosexuality and intelligence and imagination are inextricably linked, and that homosexuality is a requirement for true nobility, true beauty in a man.

We shall be victorious because we are fueled with the ferocious bitterness of the oppressed who have been forced to play seemingly bit parts in your dumb, heterosexual shows throughout the ages. We too are capable of firing guns and manning the barricades of the ultimate revolution. Tremble, hetero swine, when we appear before you without our masks!

This essay was originally printed in the February 15, 1987 issue of *Gay Community News*, later reprinted in the February 15-21 1987 Congressional Record.

You can't always choose whom you love, but you can choose how to find them. [Start with AOL Personals.](#)

From: Mari Kasamoto [mari.nalani@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:34 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1!!

Testifier: Mari N. Kasamoto

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

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"It is not how much we do, but how much LOVE we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much LOVE we put in the giving."

~MoThEr TeReSa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 10:20 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: victoryohana@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Gary Shields
Organization: Individual
Address: 94-104 Pupuole Place Waipahu, Hawaii 96797
Phone: 497-8931
E-mail: victoryohana@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/20/2009

Comments:

This Bill comes against the very fiber that hold any society together which is the "FAMILY". Secondly it amazes me how any of our elected officials would blatantly come against the already heard voice of the majority of our States people. Same Sex Marage is out no matter if you call it by a differant name, such as civil union, when the people already know it is an unholy and demonic union. Let the voice of our elected official contituants stan, NO to this bill (HB444).

From: Stone Christine [stonec@prel.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:28 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STOP CIVIL UNIONS - STOP-HB 444-

Christine N. Stone

HB-444

Public Hearing Scheduled – Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM.

I think this bill SHOULD NOT PASS, because if it passes, it would lead to same sex marriage and who knows what other groups might want to have things passed that should not be passed. I do have some guy friends and I am really good friends with them, but I think it is just NOT RIGHT for two people of the same sex to receive benefits or to be married.

Christine N. Stone

Clerical support - Executive Office

PREL

900 Fort Street Mall, suite 1300

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone - (808) 441-1339, Fax -(808) 441-1385

E-Mail - stonec@prel.org, Website - www.prel.org

"Building Capacity Through Education"

From: John Honold [john@hopechapelkapolei.org]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 10:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: John F. Honold, IV
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am opposed to the passage of HB 444 HD1 regarding the legalization of Civil Unions.

In the 1990's, the Legislature amended HRS 572-1 to clarify that marriage "shall be only between a man and a woman."

When the Legislature passed the Reciprocal Beneficiary Law, it expressly stated that "the people of Hawaii choose to preserve the tradition of marriage as a unique social institution based upon the committed union of one man and one woman."

On November 3, 1998, 70% of the people of Hawai'i voted that "the Legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples." [Hi. Const. 1-23]

Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiary law (HRS §572C) already confers significant benefits to same sex couples, including but not limited to:

- health care coverage;
- hospital visitation privileges;
- property rights (including tenancy in the entirety rights);
- worker's compensation;
- State employee retirement beneficiary rights; and
- Automobile insurance coverage.

Furthermore, if there are further rights and privileges the Legislature wishes to convey to same sex couples, we believe it should be accomplished through modification of the existing Reciprocal Beneficiary law, not through the creation of CIVIL UNIONS.

What is HB 444 HD1?

- It is the creation of a new legal relationship called "CIVIL UNIONS"
- CIVIL UNIONS ARE ONLY FOR COUPLES OF THE SAME SEX.
"A person shall be eligible to enter into a civil union only if the person is of the same sex as the other proposed partner in the civil union"
- CIVIL UNIONS WOULD PROVIDE FOR ALL OF THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF MARRIAGE TO THE COUPLE:
"[p]artners to a civil union . . . shall have all the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law, whether derived from statutes, administrative rules, court decisions, the common law, or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a marriage[.]"

- CIVIL UNIONS WOULD ESSENTIALLY BE THE SAME AS MARRIAGE WITH OUT USING THE SAME TERM:

“Except for part I of chapter 572, every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to “marriage”, or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to “civil unions”

My opposition to HB 444 HD1 includes, but is not limited to, the following reasons:

- IT CLEARLY VIOLATES THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.
- IT WILL NOT STOP HERE.
- IT WILL MOVE ON TO SAME SEX MARRIAGE.
- IT WILL MOVE ON TO THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN.
- IT WILL AFFECT TEACHERS.
- IT WILL AFFECT PASTORS.
- IT WILL AFFECT CHURCHES.
- IT WILL AFFECT ALL OF SOCIETY.

Is this discrimination? No! If this is discrimination, then the same charge of discrimination can be leveled at Civil Unions. HB 444 HD1 itself makes certain points of “eligibility.” These points of eligibility make the “civil union” an exclusive relationship and thus “excludes” those who are NOT eligible. The argument can easily be made by those who are “excluded” or “voided” that they are being “discriminated against” in the same way this charge is being leveled against traditional marriage.

HB444 HD1 states that “A person shall be eligible to enter into a civil union only if the person is . . .”

1. Not a partner in another civil union, a spouse in a marriage, or a party to a reciprocal beneficiary relationship pursuant to chapter 572C.
2. Of the same sex as the other proposed partner in the civil union
3. At least eighteen years of age; and
4. Not related to the other proposed partner in the civil union, as provided in section -3.

Furthermore, HB444 HD1 states that Civil Unions will be “void” if it occurs by the following individuals: “§ -3 Civil unions void; when. A civil union shall be void between the following persons”

1. A woman and her mother, grandmother, daughter, granddaughter, sister, brother's daughter, sister's daughter, father's sister, or mother's sister; or
2. A man and his father, grandfather, son, grandson, brother, brother's son, sister's son, father's brother, or mother's brother.

If the “discrimination” charge is used as an argument against Traditional Marriage, then it can also equally charged against Civil Unions. But at what point does discrimination stop?

I urge you to vote against the passage of HB 444 HD1.

Respectfully Submitted,

John F. Honold, IV

From: Bill Best [bestb002@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:28 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Best
280 Hauoli St.
Wailuku, HI 96793

All Concerning (HB444, HD1),

Marriage is a treasure and gift given by God that only profits male, female and society as a whole. I have been married for 5 years and now have 2 children with my wife. The natural design of male and females who have been given the ability to procreate is paramount to the continuation of mankind. As morality wanes across our nation, we have come to a point that will cause our nation to be brought humbly before God, and turn from our wicked ways or watch a catastrophic shift, which will rapidly bring down this nation faster than any other countries military could ever do. We have spent so much time focused on issues we thought were so broad in and more so out of our nation that we have fail to see toxic lasciviousness quietly building within our own neighborhoods. At first thought of more as a fad we are now seeing the ramifications these homosexual desires are bringing forth. The family structure is being destroyed and replace by a counterfeit posing auspiciously as the naturally intended design.

If (HB 444, HD1) is passed, understand the responsibility you have to the future generations that will struggle with. No study has shown that homosexuality is not a natural born affection by either male nor female it is a choice, which violates the conscious on each individual who partakes in it. The issue is not just the act of homosexuality it is the heart of man, meaning each one of us has the capacity to horrible and wretched things and none are guiltless. When we compare ourselves to the standards God has set in place, being His Ten Commandments we see that none of us measure up. A lie is a lie, fib, white lie etc..., they all makes you a liar, to steal regardless of value makes you a thief, Jesus said to look with lust or sexual desire is the same as committing the act of Adultery in your heart. So we see when we do the comparison honestly I'm a lying, thieving, adulterer at heart and I'm guilty before God in need of a savior just as you would be. The next question would now be now that I've admitted my guilt before God and His standard is Heaven or Hell where would I go...honestly? God came in the flesh as a man in Jesus Christ taking on ALL the sins of ALL those who would repent (turn from their sin) and put their faith in Jesus Christ.

It's like standing before the judge guilty of heinous crimes, no time or good works can offset your actions because they have already taken place. So the judge just as the judge is about to slam the gavel and sentence you to life in prison someone you don't even know enters in the court room and tells the judge they have given everything they have so that you're fine could be paid and the justice would be satisfied and you could go free. Now ask yourself how you would feel toward the individual who did this.

February 20, 2009

To pass this law is to condone the lustful acts which are single handedly driving this nation to its downfall. We must not allow this to take place, do not be a part of what will if allowed becomes this nation's demise.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kerry D. Taylor

My name is Eva Gallegos and I support civil unions and the important protections they provide for families in Hawaii. Please vote yes on HB444 HD1. This bill is an important step for Hawaii to end discrimination and support all of its citizens.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood” (Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

Civil Union involves two adults making a commitment to share life together and having it recognized by the State.

I have been in a committed relationship for 8 years and we have made Hawaii our home. We are both professional registered nurses and are strong supporters of people’s rights. As nurses, the Code of Ethics is our guiding light in our practice. There are nine Codes that we follow and I will only read the first one because it speaks volumes about the rights of people. It states: the nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.

I have promised to care and advocate for you and your family with the utmost dignity and respect no matter who you are.

However, without the passage of HB444, as a nurse, I am forced to discriminate against same-sex couples because legally, I cannot release information to the same-sex partner in the event one partner is hospitalized. What’s more ironic is that this situation applies to me and my partner, I have vowed to take care you (any one of you) without prejudice or discrimination, yet if I am hospitalized, my partner will not be acknowledged as my immediate family. She will be disrespected, she will be discriminated against and she will be restricted from knowing about my condition.

Yes, we could register as “Reciprocal Beneficiaries,” in the state of hawaii, but those rights are limited. We are still denied our right to share property when purchased jointly, claim health insurance benefits or file joint state tax returns.

I am being denied my civil rights by politicians who put forth their own personal agenda of discrimination against same-sex couples. They state that civil union is a threat to traditional marriage, but lack a legitimate explanation of "how" same-sex marriage threatens traditional-marriage. For example, Senator Gabbard made a perverted comment on the local news by attempting to explain his reason why he does not support HB444, he said, "What you do in the privacy of your bedroom, that's your business," he said. "When you start teaching to our keiki that these relationships are on equal basis as heterosexual marriage then we're opposed to it."

My question is, what should we teach our keiki today about same-sex couples. Nothing? Should we implement the same motto as the Military by "Don't Ask, Don't Tell?" Should adults 'dare' to talk to their keiki about same-sex couples or should they let them find out for themselves or

worse, from their friends? Do children even care about this social issue at their stage in development?

Yes, these are rhetorical questions, but each family has the freedom to choose how they will explain civil injustices, social discrimination or political prejudices to their children. It is not the place or business of distorted-thinking Senators, who equate civil union with "bedroom activities" to guide people toward inaccurate information or to instill fear by using innuendos that mislead parents into thinking civil union is an unacceptable behavior.

My brother and sisters are all happily married and have children. My family and friends all know and accept me for who I am. I am open and honest about my lifestyle. They are not ashamed to introduce me and my partner to their friends.

If I were to die tomorrow, I am confident they would continue my fight for civil union and not vote against same-sex marriage because they are TRULY proud of who I am and what I stand for.

On the opposite spectrum, House Member Lynn Finnegan gave a moving confession about her lesbian sister. She seemed more saddened about her sister's lifestyle than about losing her to cancer. Her speech was heartfelt, and after listening to her story, I found it difficult to understand why she opposed same-sex marriages. Unless she used her personal experience to gain credibility and momentum to oppose HB444.

Please, Senators, set aside your own personal agenda and realize that you can put an end same-sex discrimination.

Civil union is not a threat to the sanctity of traditional marriage.
The institution of marriage is alive, strong and doing well.

Today, tomorrow and forever, the gay, lesbian and transgendered community will always be a part of the American culture and every culture. We are everywhere.

As a citizen, tax payer, a professional nurse and believer in God, I'm here today, to ask each of you, to support HB444 so that my civil rights can be respected on the same level that I respect yours.

Mahalo.

From: bidwellrob@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:23 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony: HB 444 HD1 - Civil Unions

Robert J. Bidwell, MD *Adolescent Medicine*

1319 Punahou St., Room 715, Honolulu, Hi. 96826 + Tel. 808-983-8387

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 – 9:00 am
State Capitol – Capitol Auditorium
415 South Beretania Street

RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions – STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony to this committee. My name is Robert Bidwell and I wish to express my strong support for House Bill 444 HD 1 – Civil Unions. I do so as a gay man, as a parent, and as a pediatrician.

I was fortunate that my “coming out” as a young gay man took place while I was a pediatric physician-in-training at Kapi`olani Medical Center for Women and Children in the early 1980s. There I was surrounded by loving and supportive friends and colleagues who, by exhibiting the true essence of Hawai`i in their aloha for me, helped me through the difficult process of self-discovery and self-acceptance. They were there, too, to celebrate with me when I met the love of my life, a young man who was also in medical training. Unfortunately, this man to whom I committed myself was living in another state. Although by this time I was already a University of Hawai`i School of Medicine faculty member, the state of Hawai`i did not recognize our committed relationship (which had been sealed with a public commitment ceremony, complete with an exchange of rings and our pledge to love and care for each other throughout our lives). We tried in every way to bring my partner, still in training, to join me in Hawai`i as my spouse, but we were turned down at every request at many levels of the UH hierarchy. We were informed that if my partner were of the opposite sex, the request for transfer from his mainland medical school to UH undoubtedly would have been granted. That we had committed ourselves to each other was irrelevant, we were told. It is clear that if we had had the option of joining in a civil union, he would have been allowed to join me in Hawai`i to begin our lives and our family together. In keeping us apart, Hawai`i’s laws caused unnecessary heartache and harm, and did not represent the generosity and spirit of aloha that typify the people of Hawai`i.

Eventually, after clearing many hurdles placed in his path, my partner was able to come to Hawai`i to continue his medical studies, although never as my acknowledged life partner. Within three years we adopted our amazing and wonderful son, Thanh, and bought a home in Hawai`i Kai. As a family we were again so fortunate to be surrounded by supportive and accepting friends, who filled our son’s life with many loving aunts and uncles. While these many friends celebrated our family, and we derived much strength from them, we were still officially “invisible” in the eyes of the state, the message clearly being that our family was somehow “less than” other families, the love and commitment of our

son's two fathers somehow "less than" that of other parents. What sort of message does this send a child, and what does the withholding of societal recognition and validation do to a couple that struggles with the same responsibilities and challenges as other parents? And, of course, always hanging ominously over our heads was (and is) the possibility that in issues of health, sickness, and death, (and all those other issues related to civil unions raised in these hearings) our relationship as two loving and committed adults would not be recognized by the state, resulting in possible harm to our family and son. Here, too Hawai'i's present laws do not represent spirit of aloha that typifies its people.

Finally, as a pediatrician who has worked in Hawai'i over the past 25 years, I have cared for hundreds of children and adolescents growing up in homes with same-sex parents. And all indications are that more and more children will be growing up in families with same-sex parents in the future. These families face the same challenges and struggles as other families. Our society has a justifiable belief that official societal recognition of the loving commitment of two people, whether through marriage or civil unions, provides strength to that union, giving it the validation and resources to weather adversity, which naturally leads to stronger and more resilient families, and happier and healthier children. The American Academy of Pediatrics recently issued an official policy stating that children in same-sex parented family grow up as happy and healthy as other children and supported the adoption of laws and policies that recognize these families and provide them legal recognition and support.

Thank you again for your consideration of this important legislation. I hope you will look deep within yourselves for guidance, and vote enthusiastically and confidently in favor of House Bill 444, HD 1 – Civil Unions.

Robert Bidwell, M.D.

=20

From: Kenneth [POAIK001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:05 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Oppose HB 444

Debra Poai
Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, 2/24/09
Hearing Time: 9:00am
Measure Number: HB 444

Good Morning,

My name is Debra Poai. I am testifying in opposition to HB 444, Civil Unions.

In 1998, I was a part of the 70% of citizens in Hawaii who voted against same sex marriage and today, I still oppose same sex marriage.

As a trade off, the legislatures passed The Hawai'i Reciprocal Beneficiary law (HRS 572C) that established significant benefits to same sex couples, including but not limited to; health care coverage; hospital visitation privileges; property rights (including tenancy in the entirety rights); worker's compensation; State employee retirement beneficiary rights; and automobile insurance coverage.

Since HB 444 calls for benefits, it is apparent that benefits are not the issue here, because they already have it. What is being sought after is same sex marriage, called civil unions.

I have friends and family members who are gay and I love them dearly, but I will not compromise what God intended marriage to be; between one man and one woman.

Therefore I ask that you DO NOT PASS HB 444.

From: Kenneth [POAIK001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 4444

Kenneth Poai
Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, 2/24/09
Hearing Time: 9:00am
Measure Number: HB 444

Good Morning,

My name is Kenneth Poai. I am testifying in opposition to HB 444, Civil Unions.

In 1998, I was a part of the 70% of citizens in Hawaii who voted against same sex marriage and today, I still oppose same sex marriage.

Although "benefits" and "equality" is being portrayed in this civil union house bill, that apparently is not the true issue, because benefits were already granted on HRS §572C. The subject matter is same sex marriage, called civil union.

Our children have enough issues to deal with; sex, drugs, abuse, peer pressures, etc. you see it in the news, you read it in the papers, and now to add another devastating issue that they will have to deal with - legalized same sex marriage is outrageous. They will not have a "choice" to say, ok, I want to learn how / what people deal with being in homosexual relationships, but will be forced to learn of it because it's a law.

Equal rights is one thing, but dont get entangled and touch what God intended for Marriage to be - between one man and one woman.

Thank you and please DO NOT PASS HB 444.

From: Laura Haack [drlaura@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:26 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Yes to Civil Unions in Hawaii--HB 444 HD1

Yes to Civil Unions in Hawaii--HB 444 HD1
No to discrimination against same-sex couples

It is wrong to discriminate against people on the basis of sexual orientation.

If we are so supportive of "traditional marriage" why do we allow divorce?
Do we compel fathers to marry mothers when babies are conceived?
Do we stone those committing adultery?

Keep in mind that homosexuality is no more a choice than heterosexuality. Please end the discrimination now.
Please give all human beings their civil rights.

Thank you.
Laura Haack, Ph.D.
Christian Educator, West Kauai United Methodist Church

Laura Haack, Ph.D.
(808)337-1998
drlaura@hawaii.rr.com

Tehani Aina
~~1810 #312~~
University Ave
Honolulu HI 96822

Tuesday
Feb 4 2009

HB 444 HD1

Submitted Only

Oppose HB444

To Whom It May Concern

I strongly disagree with the House Bill 444. Without a traditional marriage between a man and a woman, there is no way that America's society can grow. Same sex marriage can't legitimately produce children. Without reproduction, there is no growth. This type of marriage will also force children to live with only one of their biological parents, causing many families to fall apart.

Tehani Aina Tehani Aina

Anna Shimamura

1064 Kalihiwai Pl
Honolulu HI, 96825

Submitted Once!

RE: Opposite HB444

Ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention
to House Bill HB444. I speak in
opposition to 444 on civil Unions.

I oppose this measure based on
the following facts.

Demands that 100% of children
living in these homes be
denied the right to live with one
of their biological parents

Grace Laird
1066 Kaopulu place
Honolulu Hi. 96825
808.394.5550

Tuesday, February 24,
2009 @ 9:00 a.m.
(auditorium)

RE: Oppose HB444

Submitted Only!

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House bill HB444. I speak in opposition to 444 on civil unions. I oppose this measure based on the following society:

Civil Unions law results in public schools teaching our kids homosexual marriage in social studies." I am against this bill.

I think it is very wrong. If this bill is passed then our people will be decreased because if man and man are together then reproduction will be decreased because it takes man and women to reproduce and make new life. They should keep the traditional marriage. They should not change the way it is. Think about 2010... If this bill is fully passed our future is in danger. Have you thought about what is going to happen when they want to end this bill?

It is just making a bigger problem.
More protesting, more problems, more
confusion, more hate. Just keep it
the way it is. Keep it the right way.
Not the wrong.

- Thank you for your time 🍷

~~Stacy Jarvis~~

RE: Oppose HB444 Tuesday, February 27, 2009

Ladies and Gentlemen:

9am

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444. I speak in opposition to 444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts.

~~It's wrong to have 2 moms~~

- Shortening life expectancy of citizens

- Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve.

- I also think it's wrong and evil.

- We wouldn't have much people at the end because life would depend on gay/lesbians.

- Also Sick, wrong, gross, disgusting and just messed up!

~~Nicholas Albano~~

(Nicholas Albano)

Submitted Only

Tuesday February 24th, 2009
@ 9:00 a.m.

Malachi Morgado
7018 Hawaii Kai Dr
#213 Honolulu HI
96825.

Submittal Only

RE Oppose HB444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444. I speak in opposition to 444 on civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts:

Same Sex Marriage advocates should not "redefine marriage for everyone else" (only two percent of the population has chosen to live alternative lifestyle and 98 percent should not allow this redefinition.)

I think its wrong to marry the same sex. For example: if a child grows up with only two moms and no father, when the little girl child grows up and gets married she wouldn't know what a father or a husband suppose to be because she never had a father. And ~~vice versa~~ vice versa. Any child in the whole entire ~~world~~ world should grow up and have a mother and father.

NE oppose HB 444

Ladies & Gentlemen

Submitted Only

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB 444. I speak in opposition to 444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts Civil Union by passes the will of the people.

Tiana Calvin Snow

(Tiana Calvin Snow)

RE: OPPOSE HB 444

Submitted
Only

LADIES and GENTLEMEN:

Thank you for your attention to house Bill 444. I speak in opposition to 444 on civil unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts:

I strongly feel that HB 444 should not be passed because every child needs a father & a mother. Not a father and father OR mother and mother.



(Kalana Hardy)

KALENE LABAJO
41-560 Inoa St
Waimanalo HI,
96795.

808-259-9425

Tuesday, Feb 24, 2009
at 9:00am



tuesday february 21, 2008
concern, @ 9:00am.

to who it may
I think that
shouldn't be passed
through
wrong, ~~and~~ because it's
and every child ~~perverted~~ should
have a male influence
and a female influence,
adam and eve, not adam
and ~~steve~~ steve.

Submitted Only

Kaimana Hardy
(Kaimana Hardy)

Re: Oppose HB444

ladies and gentlemen:

thank you for your attention
to house bill HB444, I
speak in opposition to 444 on ~~on~~
civil unions. I oppose this measure
based on the following facts:
civil unions bypasses the will
of the people. Shortening
life ~~expect~~ expectancy of citizens!

~~Joshua Montgomery~~
Laydys and gentll men

Submitted Only

I think it's bad bekas

1. same-sex marriage advocates should not "redefin marriage for everyone else." (only two percent of the population has chosen this alternative lifestyle and the 98 percent should not allow this redefinition.)
2. ther needs to be a fother and a mother ors there will be no more children (ore 100% of the children will not be there no more dad)
3. the society will (and I dont mean mayby) fall apart.

Testimony in opposition to HB 444 HD1

Joshua Montgomery

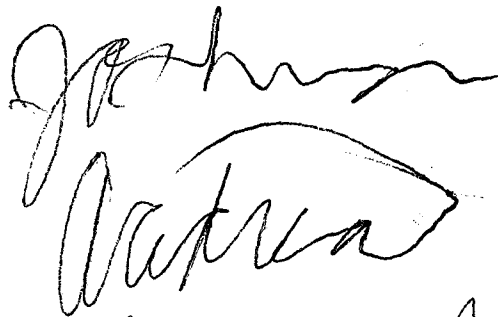
RE: Oppose HB444

Ladies and gentlemen:

Submitted Only!

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444. I speak in opposition to 444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. ~~XXXX~~ Civil Union bypasses the will of the people
2. Same sex marriages advocates should not "redefine ~~marriage~~ marriage for everyone else (only two percent of the population has chosen this alternative lifestyle and the 98% should not allow this redefinition.


(Joshua Acedera)

~~Tuesday February 24~~

~~Tuesday February 24~~

Tuesday Feb. 24, 2009 @ 9:00
a.m. (auditorium)

February 23, 2009

Senator Brian Taniguchi
Hawaii Senate Chairman
State Capitol, HI

RE: Opposition to House Bill 444

Dear Senator Brian Taniguchi

Chairman, we are appealing to you to represent the voice of the people of Hawaii to preserve Traditional Marriage and to vote "NO" on HB 444.

In 1998 the people of Hawai'i had overwhelmingly voiced their preference to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Please do not undermine the will and voice of the people for what is in style. Preservation of traditional marriage will promote healthy family structures, traditional ohanas, on which this aina has flourished for generations. Keiki who grow up with a mother and a father have shown time and time again in studies to be far more stable than any other family structures.

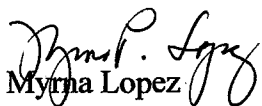
Lastly, traditional marriage has been defined by God who created us all, including you, Senator, to be a holy and blessed union between a man and a woman. To sanction unions outside this definition, that is, to approve of unholy unions, would be in as much a violation of God's trust in us humankind as to participate in one, according to Holy Scriptures. These definitions were set for us, children of God, to prevent us from falling from His grace again, and thus missing out on God's glorious blessings upon our families, our state, and our nation.

Please never forget that despite the opposition, the United States of America is founded upon Christian Biblical principles, and it is by the grace and mercy of God that America is a superpower nation in such a short time. We have been entrusted to keep the laws that are right before God and as a state we have done so until now. These laws start with our states' government leaders, you. Please do not lead this great state of Hawai'i into moral degradation, setting the worst type of precedence for the nation. Instead have courage and stand for what is morally right before the eyes of God our Creator. Vote "NO" on HB 444.

Thank you for your time, and may God bless you tremendously.

Sincerely,


Maria Cecilia Mangrobang
Grace Bible Church


Myrna Lopez
Grace Bible Church

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Annabelle E. C. Clay
(808)768-3146

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Strong Opposition to HB 444, HD1 Relating to civil unions

I am Annabelle E. C. Clay, resident of Hawaii for 41 years. I have been a government worker for 15+ years. I am also a concerned mother of students in elementary and upper school.

Although, I am a member of HGEA, I do not agree with their support of HB 444. They incorrectly submitted testimony that they represent my view and the view of other government workers on this matter. Other HGEA members were as upset and surprised as I that they submitted support in favor of such a sensitive issue without asking their members. I personally do not vote as they recommend and know of other government workers that are not influenced by their recommendations.

I understand the Board of Education submitted testimony in favor of HB 444. Are they ready to teach a truly fair, balanced, and equal education regarding homosexuality to their students? As a mother and aunt with many school-aged nieces and nephews, I wonder if they and lawmakers have done enough research in this matter. In the following pages are information obtained from non-religious groups. Below the comments from a concerned parent are a Massachusetts government study, and a professional, scientific organization.

One must also weigh the costs, both financially, economically, medically, and socially. Some of these issues do not have a specific price tag, but may cause irreversible impact on public health and safety.

Let us also look at other places where same-sex unions have been allowed, so we may learn what real ramifications, issues, and concerns must be dealt with.

The following are excerpts from "What same-sex "marriage" has done to Massachusetts

It's far worse than most people realize" October 20, 2008 by Brian Camenker

http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html

- **“By the following year it was in elementary school curricula. Kindergartners were given picture books telling them that same-sex couples are just another kind of family, like their own parents. In 2005, when David Parker of Lexington, MA – a parent of a kindergartner – strongly insisted on being notified when teachers**

were discussing homosexuality or transgenderism with his son, the school had him arrested and put in jail overnight.

Second graders at the same school were read a book, "King and King", about two men who have a romance and marry each other, with a picture of them kissing. When parents Rob and Robin Wirthlin complained, they were told that the school had no obligation to notify them or allow them to opt-out their child."

Since those who purport equality as the reason behind this measure (even the BOE), are we ready to and will we actually teach and share equally regarding both sides of this special issue? Will the BOE teach actual researched findings (see the NARTH page) such as "There is no scientific research indicating a biological or genetic cause for homosexuality... social and psychological factors are strongly influential. Examples include problems in early family relationships... Research shows that gay teens are especially vulnerable to substance abuse and early, high-risk sexual behavior. It does far more harm than good... Teens in this position need understanding and counseling, not a push in the direction of a potentially deadly lifestyle." Will they also teach that there are many resources that will treat unwanted homosexuality? Dr. Jeffrey Satinover reports that on the "success rate in the treatment of unwanted homosexual attraction... Other professionals report success rates ranging... to 70%."

<http://www.narth.com/docs/senatecommittee.html> Will they share testimonies of those treated successfully? (see the last pages)

NARTH is the National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality. NARTH is a professional, scientific organization that offers hope to those who struggle with unwanted homosexuality.

They state the following:

"Our Purpose: Defending True Diversity

Today, children from kindergarten through college are being taught that homosexuality is a normal, healthy lifestyle option with no disadvantages other than society's disapproval. Sexually confused teenagers are encouraged to investigate homosexual relationships when they are too young to make critical lifestyle decisions. If they seek counseling, they are told that change from homosexuality is impossible.

Gender-disturbed children are no longer helped to become more comfortable with their own biological sex, or with the same-sex peers they have been avoiding. Instead, counselors tell their parents, "Your child is fine--the only problem is with society."

It is NARTH's aim to provide a different perspective. Particularly, we want to clarify that homosexuality is not "inborn," and that gays are not "a people," in the same sense that an ethnic group is "a people"--but instead, they are (like all of us) simply individuals who exhibit particular patterns of feelings and behavior.

When gay advocates reframed the public debate as a discussion about "who one is" rather than "what one **does**," they successfully intimidated dissenters by casting them as *personally bigoted and hateful*. As a result, most people who defend the reality of male-female design have been embarrassed into public silence.

NARTH stands ready to advise government, educational, and mental-health agencies as well as the media and religious groups on issues pertaining to homosexuality.”

<http://www.narth.com/menus/statement.html>

Are we ready to consider other costs that will result from the allowance of civil unions?

“Since homosexual marriage became ‘legal’ the **rates of HIV / AIDS have gone up considerably in Massachusetts**. This year public funding to deal with HIV/AIDS has risen by \$500,000.” http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html

“Domestic violence

- Given the extreme dysfunctional nature of homosexual relationships, the Massachusetts Legislature has felt the need to **spend more money every year to deal with skyrocketing homosexual domestic violence**. This year \$350,000 was budgeted, up \$100,000 from last year.”

http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html

These previous statements are confirmed by a study. Some of the findings are shared below.

A Health Profile of Massachusetts Adults by Sexual Orientation Identity: Results from the 2001 – 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Surveys
Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health, Nov. 2008
http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/health_equity/sexual_orientation_disparities_report.pdf

“Gay/Lesbian/homosexuals (OR 2.98; 95% CI 2.04, 4.37) were more likely to report illicit drug use than straight/heterosexuals.”

“Gay/Lesbian/Homosexuals were more likely to report a lifetime experience of sexual assault (OR 2.91; 95% CI 2.04, 4.16).”

“However, absolute levels of health promoting behavior may be inadequate given the higher prevalence of sexually transmitted infections & HIV/AIDS among men who have sex with men (MDPH, 2008).”

From the Aids Action Committee of Massachusetts:

The lifetime cost of treating an individual with HIV is estimated to be as much as \$195,000

Updates of cost of illness and quality of life estimates for use in economic evaluations of HIV prevention programs. Holtgrave, D.R., Pinkerton S. D. JAIDS 1997 Sep 1; 16(1):54-62.

I understand the following includes costs to treat heterosexuals as well. Given the enormity of these issues then, why should we rush to pass a bill that obviously needs great consideration, study, and research. We should learn from the Massachusetts experience and study that there are great costs, both financial, medical, and social that impact the entire state. Do we have long-term plans to address these many issues? The Massachusetts State website states that their budget "Provides \$73.5 million for Substance Abuse Treatment Program. This \$11.8 million or 19%, increase over the FY 2007..."

Support Services for People @ Risk of Domestic Violence FY 2008 - \$21,690,723"
<http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/house/185/ht00pdf/ht00001.pdf>

The Massachusetts Commission on GLBT Youth plans to push for an unprecedented \$2.9 million in state funding for youth programs in the Fiscal Year 2009, a figure far above the commission's FY02 high watermark of \$1.6 million.

Bay Windows New England's largest Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Newspaper
<http://www.baywindows.com/index.php?ch=news&sc=glbt&sc2=news&sc3=&id=71898>

As you can see, many issues and concerns should be addressed first before rushing into a vote by a few lawmakers representing over a million Hawaii residents. Please also remember that overriding the majority is not "bringing people together" as seems to be the mantra of certain politicians lately.

I also have an in-law and friends who are gay. I have been able to show my love and support, and I deem them as equals. I do not believe in allowing civil unions or changing the definition of marriage. They have the same right as I do, to marry one person of the opposite gender of legal age who is not a close relative. No one has taken that right away from them.

I have included resource information should you want to do further research as well as copies of testimonies to provide a more equal, diverse, and balanced view.

This website has an excellent testimony of Mabel Sim
<http://exodus.to/content/view/256/148/>

This website has links to many ex-gay resources
<http://americansfortruth.com/pro-truth-resources>

Please vote "No" on HB 444. Thank you.



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The Three Myths About Homosexuality

Myth #1

Homosexuality is normal and biologically determined.

The truth...

There is no scientific research indicating a biological or genetic *cause* for homosexuality. Biological factors may play a role in the *predisposition* to homosexuality. However, this is true of many other psychological conditions.

Research suggests that **social and psychological factors** are strongly influential. Examples include problems in early family relationships, sexual seduction, and sense of inadequacy with same-sex peers, with resulting disturbance in gender identity. Society can also influence a sexually questioning youth when it encourages gay self-labeling.

Myth #2

Homosexuals cannot change, and if they try, they will suffer great emotional distress and become suicidal. Therefore, treatment to change homosexuality must be stopped.

The truth...

Psychotherapists around the world who treat homosexuals report that significant numbers of their clients have experienced substantial healing. Change has come through psychological therapy, spirituality, and ex-gay support groups. Whether leading married or committed celibate lives, many report that their homosexual feelings have diminished greatly, and do not trouble them as much as they had in the past.

The keys to change are *desire, persistence*, and a willingness to investigate the *conscious and unconscious conflicts* from which the condition originated. Change comes slowly, usually over several years. Clients learn how to meet their needs for same-sex nurturance and affirmation without eroticizing the relationship. As they grow into their heterosexual potential, men and women typically experience a deeper and fuller sense of themselves as male or female.

If some homosexuals do not wish to change, that is their choice, yet it is profoundly sad that gay-rights activists struggle against the right-to-treatment for other homosexuals who yearn for freedom from their attractions.

Myth #3

We must teach our children that homosexuality is as normal and healthy as heterosexuality. Teenagers should be encouraged to celebrate their same-sex attractions.

The truth...

Scientific research supports age-old cultural norms that homosexuality is *not* a healthy, natural alternative to heterosexuality. Research shows that gay teens are especially vulnerable to substance abuse and early, high-risk sexual behavior. It does far more *harm* than *good* to tell a teenager that his or her attractions toward members of the same sex are normal and desirable. Teens in this position need understanding and counseling, not a push in the direction of a potentially deadly lifestyle.

A 1992 study in *Pediatrics* found that 25.9% of 12-year-olds are uncertain if they are gay or straight. The teen years are *critical* to the question of self-labeling, so the facts must be presented in our schools in a fair and balanced manner.

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Updated: 27 February 2008

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Pioneers

by Kent Paris

View a pdf of this testimony. Copies may be distributed free of charge.

Most of us had come out of the gay life or a struggle with same-gender issues. Gay activists picketed the conference. There were bomb threats, and the Bay area newspapers featured vitriolic diatribes from gay activists seeking to discredit the idea that homosexuals could change. Thus, ex-gay ministry rose like a Phoenix from the strange ashes of several dozen people's redeemed lives. We blazed a trail into uncharted territory for others to follow. I was 25 years old, married not quite two years, with our first child on the way. I could not have predicted that my ministry and our family life were about to take a radical, unexpected turn.



In 1971, at age 19, I was terribly conflicted by my homosexuality, and on a desperate search to find a friend who felt the same way I did to love and be loved by; but God intervened. Two Christians shared the Gospel with me, and I placed my faith in Christ. Within a year, because of my dramatic conversion and background, I was inundated with invitations to speak to youth in churches, camps and conventions throughout the Midwest.

As a rock musician, I had performed alongside REO Speedwagon, Three Dog Night, Canned Heat, Country Joe & the Fish, Ted Nugent, and many other rock artists of the 60's and early 70's. Our band enjoyed remarkable notoriety for a group of teenagers still in high school. We performed in various venues for crowds as large as 60,000-- heady stuff. I quickly embraced the hippie movement with all its trappings. My life revolved around sex, drugs and rock and roll. That milieu was the locus of my distorted, shaky identity. I began drinking in 7th grade, was introduced to marijuana in 10th grade (1967), and a cascade of drugs thereafter for the next five years. It was a turbulent time in our culture--a stormy, unstable season in my own life.

This was my testimony to Christian youth for many years to come, but there was a private, more sensitive, painful dimension to my childhood and adolescence I did not include in my testimony in the early years of ministry. In Conservative settings, it would have been unwelcome. Doors that were currently opening up for me to witness would have been swiftly shut.

I recall experiencing same-gender attractions in kindergarten, though they had no conscious sexual connotation at that early age. Though I had suffered incest quite young, my volitional sexual awakening occurred at age eleven with a close neighborhood friend my own age. This friend and I carried on regular sexual activity for five years, along with another friend the same age. Two male teachers molested me as a young teen. All of these experiences had a devastating impact on my childhood development.

This website has an excellent testimony of Mabel Sim
<http://exodus.to/content/view/256/148/>

This website has links to many ex-gay resources
<http://americansfortruth.com/pro-truth-resources>

Attn: Sergeant in Arms: Late Testimony - Fax: 800-586-6659

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Subject: Testimony In Favor of HB444- Civil Unions

Date: Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9AM Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee

Hawaii is a place of much cultural diversity. Equal rights and legal benefits should be the same for all who call Hawaii home. Please do not allow one group of residents to convince you to deny the legal benefits that they enjoy from being given to another group of residents. It's about time that you give civil union rights to same-sex couples. Several countries and states already allow this. What has taken Hawaii so long to do the same? How nice it would be to see a politician stand up and say "We respect your position but at the same time we believe in protecting equal rights for all of Hawaii residents."

Please vote in favor of HB444 HD1.

If HB444 HD1 should become deadlocked in the JGO Committee, I respectfully ask that Chairman Taniguchi please allow this measure to be pulled to the Floor of the Senate so that the full voice of the Senate can be heard on the matter of Civil Unions.

Thank you,



Mr. L. Bunn
Hilo, HI 96720

Monday, February 23, 2009,

To: Senator Fred Hemmings,

From: Cindy Gomes

Attn: Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00am (Auditorium)

Bill: Measure number: HB 444 HD1

Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Please vote against the passage of bill HB 444 HD1. The morality issues are tremendously important for us and future generations. We should not condone this call for the same "rights" as man-woman marriages. It is detrimental to the public. I do not discriminate against a person choosing to live the way they prefer except when it infringes upon the majority of those opposed to an "alternative lifestyle". Civil unions between same-sex couples should not have the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a traditional marriage.

The cost to businesses will only increase, as they will put more burden on employers to provide health insurance, 401K benefits, or anything that allows partners as beneficiaries to allow civil union partners to participate in these programs by way of their "partner".

This measure will also allow other "rights" that will ultimately challenge many policies and issues that are already established. When they feel discriminated against they will cite the civil union as their "rights" being violated.

I strongly urge you to oppose the passage of bill HB 144 HD1. The people of Hawaii have already strongly opposed this matter and it should be respected and honored by our elected government officials such as yourself.

**Sincerely,
Cindy Gomes**

(Request to testify
before Committee)

Testimony in OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Brian Reynolds
75 Hanapepe Loop
Honolulu HI, 967825
808.330.7574

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice – Chair

Senator Robert Bunda

Senator Clarence Nishihara

Senator Mike Gabbard

Senator Sam Slom

HB 444 HD1

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)

RE: Oppose HB444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444.

I Speak in opposition to 444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. Traditional marriage is an essential institution of our society.
 - a. Traditional marriage is the basis of family and strong families are the building block of society. HB444 undermines family.
 - b. Homes with no female mothers have no children. Homes with no male fathers have no children.
 - c. Children whose rights are to live with both biological parents are annihilated by this law will bring hurt to their lives and ultimately the State of Hawaii.
2. The 70% to 30% vote against similar legislation in 1998 dictates that the senate carryout the will of the people.

3. Education:

Some mainland cities have a curriculum aimed at helping students as young as kindergarten embrace homosexuality.

“The Welcoming Schools program was created by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). The pilot program is in three school districts across the U.S.; HRC hopes the project will expand.

4. Homosexual marriage is not the norm. This segment of the population should not dictate the definition of marriage.

1. As reported in *WorldNetDaily*, September 16, 2005 from the Centers for Disease Control’s National Center for Health Statistics reveals that only 2.3% of the population considers themselves homosexual.
2. *“The most widely accepted study of sexual practices in the United States is the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs) found that 2.8% of the male, and 1.4% of the female, population identify themselves as Homosexual.”*
 - a. Same-sex families *always* deny children either their natural mother or father.
 - b. Same-sex family is a vast, untested social experiment with children.
 - c. Where does it stop? How do we say “no” to group marriage?
 - d. Schools will be forced to teach that the homosexual family is normal. Churches will be legally pressured to perform same-sex ceremonies.

Marriage Is Always About the Next Generation...

- A loving and compassionate society *always* comes to the aid of motherless and fatherless families.
- A loving and compassionate society *never* intentionally creates motherless or fatherless families, which is exactly what every same-sex home does.
- The same-sex family is not driven by the needs of children, but rather by the radical wishes of a small group of adults.
- No child development theory says children need two parents of the same gender, but rather that children need their mothers and fathers.

A Vast Social Experiment Inflicted Upon Children...

- No society, at any time, has ever raised a generation of children in same-sex families.
- Same-sex “marriage” will subject generations of children to the status of lab rats in vast, untested social experiment.

But we know how the experiment will turn out...

America has raised millions of children in fatherless families for three decades and that experiment was a stunning failure by every measure! We know how damaging it is to

raise children in intentionally fatherless families. Let's not create more child-suffering to satisfy adult desire.

Thousands of published social science, psychological and medical studies shows that children living in fatherless families, on average, suffer dramatically in every important measure of well-being. These children suffer from much higher levels of physical and mental illness, educational failure, poverty, substance abuse, criminal behavior, loneliness, as well as physical and sexual abuse.¹ Children living apart from both biological parents are 8 times more likely to die of maltreatment than children living with their mother and father.²

A Lesson From one of the World's Most Famous Lesbian Moms...

Rosie O'Donnell shared this story in an *ABC Primetime Live* interview with Diane Sawyer:

Six-year-old Parker asks his mother, Rosie: "Mommy, why can't I have a daddy?" Rosie answers: "Because I'm the kind of mommy who wants another mommy."³

- Two most dangerous words for a parent to utter together: "I" and "want."
- Parker has *has* said, "Momma, why can't I have a daddy?"
- What matters for children in marriage is whether their mothers are married to their fathers.

How Your Same-sex Family Will Harm My Family...

- If this were just about *your* family, there would be no real danger. But same-sex "marriage" advocates are not seeking marriage for *you* alone, but rather demanding me -- and all of us -- to radically change our understanding of family. And that will do great damage.
- **Only months after legalizing same-sex "marriage" in Canada, activists there successfully passed C-250, a bill criminalizing public statements against homosexuality, punishable by up to two years in prison! Say the wrong thing; go to jail. The same will happen here.**
- Every public school in the nation would be forced to teach that same-sex "marriage" and homosexuality are perfectly normal — *Heather has Two Mommies* in K-12. Pictures in text books will be changed to show same-sex couples as normal.
- Your church will be legally pressured to perform same-sex weddings. When courts -- as happened in Massachusetts -- find same-sex "marriage" to be a constitutional and fundamental human right, the ACLU will successfully argue that the government is underwriting discrimination by offering tax exemptions to churches and synagogues that only honor natural marriage.
- Gay and lesbian people have a right to form meaningful relationships. **They don't have a right to redefine marriage for all of us.**

Where Does It Stop...?

- If, "The right to marry whomever you want is a fundamental civil right," how do we say "no" to a woman or minor who wants to become the third wife of a polygamist...?⁵

Conclusion...

All of the family experimentation over the past 30 years – no fault divorce, the sexual revolution, cohabitation, fatherless ness -- have all been documented failures, harming adults and children in far deeper ways, for longer periods of time, than anyone ever imagined. Why do we think that this radical experiment will somehow bring good things? We all know that men and women are necessary for the family and that no child should intentionally be denied her mother or father in order to fulfill your adult desires. That is why we cannot accept the same-sex family. It serves no public purpose. The fact that Hawaii has already decided on Civil Unions through the 1998 vote and that our leaders have masterfully crafted the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law to provide all of our citizens with their needed civil rights leaves only one logical decision; civil union is not needed but divides Hawaii at a deep level. Please vote no on 444.

Rev. Brian Reynolds
KC Kapolei & KC Windward

Elise E. Kolbrek
UH Manoa School of Social Work
February 23, 2009

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Tuesday February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Written testimony in strong support of House Bill 444 (Civil Unions).

Dear Senator Brian E. Taniguchi, Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, and members of the committee, I urge you to support this bill as both an individual member of the community as well as a Social Work student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am not a homosexual individual nor am I conservative religious advocate but I do believe that I represent the perspective of many people in our community. I also believe that it is important for Civil Unions to have the same rights and protections as underlined in licenses awarded for marriages, for no other reason that all people should be treated 'equally' as declared in the Declaration of Independence which guides the laws of our great country. Mahalo for your time and I hope this testimony helps guide your decision in a peaceful effort of support.

TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
COMMITTEE

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2009

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009

9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE

Aloha, my name is Ryan McDonald and I am a 14-year-old home-educated student testifying in strong oppositions to HB 444. The promotion of same-sex civil unions and extension of marriage rights to them is not an act that the state of Hawaii should move forward with. The people of Hawaii have voted in the past for traditional, one man, one woman, marriage and it is necessary as senators to uphold the voice of your constituents and the people of Hawaii. Our country was founded upon Christian and righteous principles, and this bill directly contradicts everything that America stands for.

As you vote on this measure, think of all of the people you represent, all of the people that are counting on you to uphold their beliefs, and the people that depend on you to fight for righteousness in our state. Thousands were present at Sunday's rally in opposition to this act, and it is up to you to make their voices resound throughout the state! The pressure is there, the protests are there, but put all of that aside as you prepare to vote for morality and uprightness, which can shine as an example to the rest of the nation.

I thank the committee for taking time to read my testimony on HB 444, and would humbly ask you to vote in opposition. Thank you.

From: McIntire [mcintire@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:27 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Dear Sirs and Madams:

I urge you to defeat HB444, the "Civil Union" bill. This bill has an agenda that is not the will of the people of Hawaii. The people of Hawaii voted over 2-to-1 ten years ago to restrict the legal definition of marriage to the union of a man and a woman. HB444 goes against what the people of Hawaii want for our islands. The supporters of HB444 are a vocal and well-organized minority. Do what is right. Defeat this bill. What other state has such a motto as "The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness"? Keep it pono. Defeat this bill.

Yours truly,

David McIntire
Haiku, Maui

Dear Senators,

I am writing you as an educator asking you to oppose HB 444. The motto of our state is “the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness” and I believe that we must choose to uphold a high standard of family stability and integrity by opposing civil unions. By opposing HB 444 we are choosing to declare to our future generations that which science shows us to be fact, that man and woman were made for each other not one gender for the other. In order for the human race to continue to grow it necessitates the participation of a male and a female. Our children are being faced with poor choices that we as generations before them have made, whether it's in the mentality of I have to have it now (thus leading to the great consumer debt the nation is seeing now) or whether it's in having made allowances for abortions. Basically, both of these are teaching our children that there is no need to face the consequences of decisions that we make. As an educator I see this affecting the children's lives in other ways even in how they relate to one another, because with no need to take responsibility for one's actions or choices there is a divisiveness and lack of respect and appreciation for others. Is this what we want to be perpetuated in Hawaii? I believe that the majority of the people of Hawaii would beg to differ. We want our children to grow up with Aloha, truly seeing people for who they are as people we can grow with and from whom we can learn. As we look at others with respect and take responsibility for our actions and decisions then we learn how to interact with others with true Aloha, choosing to maintain a standard of living that more closely coincides with our motto that “the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness.” HB 444 is in direct opposition to that which we desire to pass onto future generations. Thank you for opposing HB 444.
Have a wonderful day.

Sincerely,

Heather Dozier

From: Yoshie Tanabe [yojimbo@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 6:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Fred Hemmings; Sen. Clarence Nishihara
Subject: Fw: HB444, HD1 Civil Union Bill

----- Original Message -----

From: Yoshie Tanabe
To: JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: sentaniguchi@capitol.hawaii.gov ; sentakamine@capitol.hawaii.gov ; Sen. Robert Bunda ; sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov ; senslom@capitol.hawaii.gov ; [100th bn vets Amanda Stevens](#)
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:28 AM
Subject: HB444, HD1 Civil Union Bill

February 21, 2009

Dear Senators of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

James and Yoshie Tanabe stand in strong support of HB444, HD2--a bill that extends full relationship protections and responsibilities to same sex unions therefore giving these couples the ability to care for those they love.

All we are asking for is ensuring gay and lesbian couples the same rights as straight couples--rights which are not guaranteed under the present Hawaii law. Examples: inequities in the adoption laws, laws concerning the dissolution of a union and laws related to private employers' ability to offer health benefits to same sex couples.

Very sincerely,
James and Yoshie Tanabe
1149 Namahealani Place
Honolulu, HI 96825
394-1908

HB444, HD2 to be heard on Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in the State Capitol Auditorium

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 6:03 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: mrdick@wave.hicv.net
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Don Dickensheet
Organization: Individual
Address: 422 Iliahi st Lanai City, Hi
Phone: 808 565-7564
E-mail: mrdick@wave.hicv.net
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

Quit trying to sneak this rubbish through, MARRIAGE is for Men and Women ONLY! No benefits should be provided to this silly stuff?

From: Barb & Terry Travis [terrytravis@att.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 6:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: E-mail testimony - Support of HB 444 HD 1

Members of the Senate Judiciary & Governmental Operations Committee:
Re: Hearing of HB 444 HD1; Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009, @ 9am, Auditorium.

Regarding HB 444 HD1, we submit this personal testimony asking you to please pass this bill to the Senate for a vote. We support and encourage its passage. We believe this bill is about giving civil rights to a minority of individuals and therefore is a matter of social justice. It is not about religion.

You probably will hear some testimony about this bill as something that undermines the traditional view of marriage. We do not believe this is true. My wife and I celebrated our 42nd wedding anniversary this month and we certainly don't feel that anything in this bill threatens our marriage. We know many gay and lesbian couples who have been together for years and the personal commitment they have to each other, under great scrutiny, serves as an inspiration to us. We don't see how, in a country where 50% of traditional marriages end in divorce, the passage of this bill will make that figure any worse. On the contrary, maybe the example set by those united in civil unions could actually be of benefit to traditional couples having problems.

In addition to being about social justice, we see this bill as a strong step in opposition to the bigotry and discrimination leveled against this minority, often in the name of Christianity. We were both baptized and raised Roman Catholic, yet we observe our Catholic Church acting as one of the more powerful forces of bigotry and discrimination against gay and lesbian persons in the world today.

- In the 1980's, when homosexuals were first being included in anti-discrimination legislation to the present day, the Vatican directed its American Bishops to actively work for the defeat of any piece of legislation that includes any motion toward civil rights for homosexuals. In other words, if a proposed law defined attacks against homosexuals as hate crimes, then the Vatican directed the bishops work to defeat that proposed law. To us, this stance is not Christian, it is just plain bigotry.

- Recently, you may have read in the media that the Vatican has directed Catholic seminaries to not accept homosexuals and to dismiss any homosexuals currently enrolled in training to be priests. The accompanying press release stated that this directive did not affect any gay men already priests, but this was not entirely true. There was an unpublished letter that went with this directive which stated that any homosexual who taught in a seminary or had a responsible position at a seminary was to be removed from his post. This also is bigotry and discrimination.

- The Vatican has also directed that any adoption agency run by the Catholic Church must no longer place children with homosexuals because putting children in this environment does "violence to the children." We

have personally known a dozen gay and lesbian couples who have adopted children and all provide a wonderful, supportive environment for these children. There is no evidence to support the claim that children of gay or lesbian couples fare worse than those placed with heterosexual parents.

We believe that HB 444 HD1 is sorely needed to protect gay and lesbian persons from personal and institutionalized discrimination. Thank you for allowing us to express our views. We appreciate that you have a difficult job and cannot possibly make everyone happy, but we hope that in the end each of you will follow your own conscience and do what you deem is right by taking a step to end bigotry and injustice. Please send this bill to the Senate for a vote.

Sincerely,
Barbara & Terry Travis
91-999 Laaulu St #F
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

From: jane duncan [haleiwajane@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 6:16 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jane Duncan and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept and I ask that you support HB 444. Thank you for your careful and deliberate consideration.

Mahalo,

Jane Duncan
66-303 Haleiwa Road
Haleiwa, HI 96712

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: Bob Smith [heartoheal@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:38 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I Strongly oppose all Civil Union Bills (HB-444 Testimony)

My name is Bob R. Smith
Address 84-661 Kepue Street
Waianae, HI 96792

To the **Senate Judiciary Committee**

Date and time of hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.
(Auditorium)

I Strongly oppose all Civil Union Bills (HB-444)

I frequently perform weddings, if it is a "Civil" style where the word God is not used or a religious style where Scripture and or the word God is used. it is the "Union" of two becoming one. I don't care how you masquerade it. IT IS MARRIAGE of two becoming one. Marriage is between a man and a woman, and it is not discrimination.

Please listen to what the people wanted, and clearly stated when they voted that Marriage is between one man and one woman. Marriage is a union. Read the wording in the bill. It is a marriage.

See below

Marriage - 8 dictionary results

any close or intimate association **or union:**

marriage

n.

1.

- a. The legal **union** of a man and woman as husband and wife.
- b. The state of being married; wedlock.
- c.. A common-law marriage.

d. A union between two persons having the customary but usually not the legal force of marriage: *a same-sex marriage*.

2. A wedding.

3. A close union

Main Entry: marriage

Part of Speech: *noun*

Definition: legal joining of two people; a union

Synonyms: alliance, amalgamation, association, confederation, conjugality, connubiality, consortium, coupling, espousal, holy matrimony, link, match, mating, matrimony, merger, monogamy, nuptials, pledging, sacrament, spousal, tie, tie that binds, wedded bliss, wedded state, wedding, wedding bells, wedding ceremony, wedlock

Respectfully

Bob R. Smith

heartoheal@yahoo.com

808-306-4289

From: Patrick Clay [clayohana50@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:33 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444 Testimony

Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO)

Patrick Clay

Phone# (808)622-1773

Tuesday, February 22, 2009

I strongly oppose HB444

Aloha, my name is Patrick Clay. I'm a reorder associate for a large retail store here in Hawaii. The Navy brought me here, and I have been a citizen of this beautiful State of Hawaii for 30 years.

I am testifying **against the civil union HB444**. Simply put, the people of Hawaii have already voted on this and clearly stated that marriage is to be between a man and a woman.

If you have the future of Hawaii at heart please do some research on how same-sex marriage has impacted other states. Take Massachusetts for an example. "In 2005, when David Parker of Lexington, MA – a parent of a kindergartner – strongly insisted on being notified when teachers were discussing homosexuality or transgenderism with his son, the school had him arrested and put in jail overnight." Is Dave Parker's civil rights being violated? Also take the time to calculate the cost. In Massachusetts, public funding to deal with HIV/AIDS has risen by \$500,000. Domestic violence from homosexual relationships in Massachusetts is skyrocketing. This is only some of the easy information that I could find. I know that if you were to take a casual look you could find that the negative effect of this lifestyle would be devastating to the families of Hawaii.

If this is the opportunity to make history, as civil union supporter Brian Schatz of the Democratic Party of Hawaii says, than let the people of Hawaii be a part of this history in the making and bring it to a vote.

I **strongly oppose HB444** and believe that the people again will vote that marriage should only be between a man and a woman.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Clay

From: Deb [montypac8@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:39 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STOP - HB 444

Let this testimony be as a "NO" to HB 444.

I have only lived in Hawaii since 2006. Regardless of my short time in the state I have my convictions as to what is right and wrong and would like to voice that against this House Bill 444. Marriage, as defined in the Webster's New World Dictionary-Third College Edition is: the state of being married; relationship between husband and wife. Marriage as defined in the Bible, book of Matthew 19:4-6at the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one.

This nation was built on Judeo-Christian beliefs. In a publication I received it states that 70% of the people of Hawaii spoke out in 1998 with a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman.

This publication also states, in 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS 572C (RBA) became law. This law gives those who register, benefits that equal those of a married couple. There is no need to change the definition of "marriage" to accommodate those who want/need these benefits.

My husband and I married 18 years ago and have four children. These children would not have been possible except through marriage and I believe they will lead significant lives on this planet. However you want to look at it, nearly every animal, insect and plant need a male/female relationship to reproduce. Whether you believe in Creationism or Evolution male/female relationships are required for reproduction. Humans cannot reproduce without a male/female relationship (regardless of how that relationship looks.)

Please do not vote this bill into law. It is unnecessary. It is unwanted by the majority. You have your position as a Hawaii politician probably for many reasons. I can think of two now. First, you have been voted in by a majority of Hawaii residents. And, the majority of Hawaii residents do not want same sex marriage. Second, you may be in your position to defeat this bill and move on to do greater things for Hawaii. If you allow this bill to be passed, you could be voted out of office by the majority and not given more time in your position to work for the people of this great state.

There are many things to think about. Please honor the wishes of the majority.

Sincerely,

Debra Montoya
Ewa Beach resident
744-8270

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:39 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: malama55@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Malama Minn
Organization: Individual
Address: 1050 Bishop St. 459 Honolulu, HI
Phone: 808-630-6689
E-mail: malama55@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

I support civil unions because I believe in our Constitution. Separation of church and state is a mandate not a suggestion. A limitation on the freedom of some citizens to marry based on a particular religious belief is a blatant violation of our own law. If we begin to enact laws based on religion, we cease to be a secular society. Therefore, if opponents to civil unions have no other argument besides that which is rooted in religion, then they have no argument at all. Churches and religious organizations are free to define marriage in the way their religion allows. They can refuse to conduct marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples or even refuse to recognize marriages by the state. But this is the prerogative of the church, not the halls of government. I support civil unions. Thank you.

From: Kalei Lum Lee DeMello [mskalei@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:40 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Gennie KL DeMello

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I am in strong opposition of HB 444. In 1998 the people of Hawaii clearly voted that marriage is between one man and one woman. I continue to support that vote.

As a Catholic Preschool Educator I agree with the exact thoughts recently shared in a letter by Bishop Silva to Senator Bunda.

- One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial, is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the same dignity or protection as marriage.
- Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and a father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 and ask that you please do the same!

Kalei DeMello

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me

Phil 4:13

From: Kevin Pope [popek0522@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To whom it concerns,

I believe marriage to be only between a man & a woman, therefore I want you to vote down house bill 444 HD1 relating to civil unions.

Thank you,

Aloha,

Kevin M. Pope
95-716 Kelewaa St
Mililani, HI 96789
(808) 754-5971

Windows Live™: Discover 10 secrets about the new Windows Live. [View post.](#)

From: affronherring@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:20 PM
To: Rep. Jon Karamatsu; Rep. Ken Ito; Rep. Della Belatti; Rep. Rida Cabanilla; repcarrol@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Robert Herkes; Rep. Sylvia Luke; Rep. Angus McKelvey; Rep. John Mizuno; repmorito@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Blake Oshiro; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Clifton K. Tsuji; Rep. Glenn Wakai; Rep. Barbara Marumoto; reptheilen@capitol.hawaii.gov; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; JGO Testimony
Subject: ADAMANTLY APPOSE HB-444

Aloha,

This is Affron Herring. I live on Koauka Loop in Aiea.

I adamantly APPOSE HB 444 and DO NOT believe in civil unions, as the bible clearly states that marriage is meant to be between ONE MAN and ONE WOMAN!!!!

Please listen to the voice of the citizens of Hawaii and DO NOT support let HB444.

Sincerely,
Affron Herring

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: della.bungcayao@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Della Bungcayao

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

With Aloha

From: cept@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:25 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444

Aloha,

This is in reference to HB 444 which a hearing will be at 9 am on February 24,2009

I live on 92-1431 Palahia Street in Kapolei. I also own a business in Honolulu which employs approximately 75 employees.

Please let all Senators know that I strongly oppose all bills related to Civil Unions including HB 444

I would encourage our Senators to protect traditional marriage and our government already has enough law protecting the rights of its citizens.

Mahalo,
Colleen Paparelli
808-672-6594

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: dr mele welte [mewelte@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Writing in strong support of HB444HD1 CIVIL UNIONS

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee...

As an Intern Minister with a doctoral degree in Religious Studies from Emerson Theological Institute, a Master of Arts in Social Foundations of Education and a BA Philosophy from a Catholic University, as an ex Catholic nun, having taught for many years in both Catholic, Private and Public Schools, having been an executive manager in a Fortune 500 Company, having been in management and organizational consultant work in another major Fortune 500 company, having traveled around the world doing management training and development work, having been a PR Director for a large Girl Scout Council and having done much volunteer work in helping agencies, after a fine long and continuing education, with extensive experience and after much exposure to peoples of many different ways of life and beliefs, throughout this nation and around the world, having been born and raised in this American Democracy - - - I stand firmly in support of HB444HD1 and ask you to pass this long overdue Law here in the State of Hawai'i. Soon it will go to the US Supreme Court and it will become a Law of the Land. Let Hawai'i now speak in behalf of all citizens of this beautiful island state, where so many come to be united in a committed partnership, by passing this Law as a statement to the rest of the nation, that we here champion and respect the rights of all of our citizens! May Hawai'i stand as a beacon of enlightened justice for all to the whole nation.

I stand firmly in support of the HB444 HD 1 for recognition of Civil Unions under the Law, for all citizens who wish to commit to each other in a committed union with equal rights and protection under the law here in Hawai'i. It is time that both homosexual and heterosexual citizens have all of the same equal rights and privileges in committed unions under the law here. This is a question of justice and civil rights. Please support this Bill before you, to give honor and respect to all couples who wish to unite in love and in a unified commitment to each other. Not to vote in favor of this Bill is to deny a class of citizens their democratic rights. This is not a religious issue or a moral issue, but an ethical issue before the State of Hawaii. Please honor our separation of Church and State and pass this Bill. Hawai'i has always been known to be a state where peoples of all races, religions, cultures, and ethnicities can live together in peace and harmony with respect for each other's rights, this Bill simply states what Hawai'i stands for. It is difficult to understand why there is opposition to Civil Unions by any American citizens. Fear and hate mongering must be stopped by the Law which will affirm the rights of all citizens for Civil Union and the rights and privileges under such unions by any name. Religion and religious beliefs must have no part in this HB444HD1. To vote against this bill is to give in to bigotry, hatred and injustice. The time has come for the Hawai'i State Law to not just permit but to support and protect the participants in Civil Unions.

Me ke aloha, imua,
Dr. M. E. Welte

Resident of the State of Hawai'i for 25 years
291 Kipukai Place
East Honolulu 96825
808 396-5490

From: Mark and Kim Hepburn [mkhepburn@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:43 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Vote NO on HB444

We respectfully request that you vote NO on HB444

Mark and Kim Hepburn
452 Iliaina St
Kailua, HI 96734

From: Reid Y Uratani [uratanir@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:22 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB444

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee. My name is Reid Uratani and I am here to fervently support House Bill 444. I cannot provide the astute knowledge of national jurisprudence and legislation on matters of same-sex unions that I know others in support of House Bill 444 are capable of speaking to. Instead I can speak of the hope that the bill engenders.

As a 23-year-old resident of Hawaii, my formative years were shaded by the specter of the 1998 vote on civil unions. I was 13-years-old at the time and understood that a normative aspect of American civil participation had been foreclosed from my horizon of possibilities. The prospect of civil unions for same-sex couples is a testament to the hope of civil equity for thousands of people in Hawaii; for many in the present but for countless more who will understand their lives as unbarred from a crucial aspect of community recognition and belonging.

In your vote, please consider carefully the tenuous hope that is now beginning to form within Hawaii communities. Under the specter of the 1998 constitutional amendment, Hawaii is regularly viewed among queer youth as an environment hostile to their full lives, culminating in the eventual emigration from the state to cities and states perceived as more hospitable. Incalculable talent is drained from the state in this manner.

Please do not foreclose another decade of hopeful imagination among the residents of our state, especially those young people who look to this bill and its symbolic gravity as an indicator of the future viability of living here in Hawaii. Please allow the future citizens of Hawaii to come to maturity in a landscape of expansive intimate possibilities. Please consider the legacy that this vote will establish and the impact it will hold for future sustainability. I respectfully ask for your support of House Bill 444 and thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

From: Gary Fuchikami [wh6c@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:03 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony HB444 Senate JGO 2/24/09 9:00am

To the Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair, and members of the JGO Committee:

I'm writing to express my opposition to HB444, relating to Civil Unions. I'm opposed because this is NOT an issue of rights, but rather a redefinition of traditional marriage. The FACT that this so-called "civil union" has all the requirements of marriage between a man and a woman, it is obviously just a ruse to push homosexual marriage through by calling it something else. Gay marriage by any other name is still gay marriage.

If this is TRULY an issue of equal rights and benefits, then it should be addressed by amending the existing Reciprocal Benefits bill referred to by Lt. Governor Duke Aiona.

Please do NOT push this bill through as it goes against the will of Hawaii's voters. If you do, the voters will make our voices heard very loudly and clearly in the next election.

Sincerely yours,
Gary Fuchikami
Ewa Beach, HI

*Alan E. Wickens
Ko Olina Fairways
92-1537 Aliinui Drive # E
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707-2230
808 679 0396*

22 February 2009

Members of the Judiciary Committee

I ask that you support HB 444.

I am a retired Marine who landed at Inchon, Da Nang, and other places not featured on the 'News at Five'.

I knew I was "GAY" when I was eight -- I didn't know what it was called then, but I later found out. "GAY" meant you were a criminal -- there were (and are) laws against being. Laws against being me.

I hid being me for too many years. As a rising and promising Officer I was asked by a senior to consider marriage as, "It would remove all doubt" and therefore clear the way to higher rank.

I retired as a junior officer, but with my honor intact.

I am 75, my partner 51, I ask you to give him the dignity he deserves. Allow us to be who we are. Let him be who he is. Give us equality!

CIVIL UNIONS

Introduction: Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities to partners in a civil union.

Aloha Chair Taniguchi , Vice Chair Takamine and members of the committee. My name is Bradford Ka'iwi Tin Cheong Lum , I'm a Native Hawaiian Studies Teacher , Kumu Hula ,of Halau Hula 'O Ka'iwi, Chanter, Historian , and Teacher of Native Hawaiian Culture. I wanted to take this time to thank you for testifying in strong support of Bill HB444 HD1 Civil Unions.

I would like to tell you my personnel story of defeat and triumphs for my own rights , benefits , and protections under the Law of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii. I was born and raised in McCully , Honolulu and I come from a musical family , my father being of pure Chinese and my mother being of Native Hawaiian , Irish , Dutch , English and German. In 1982 I left Hawaii for San Francisco California to pursue a better life , I lived in San Francisco for the next 12 years. In 1995 my father asked me to come home to take care of him and my mother. My father had diabetes ,gout , high blood pressure and a aneurism in his stomach and my mother was just diagnose has having breast cancer. It was a hard decision leaving and It took a whole month to really decide to come home after leaving a 40k secure job , a secure sense of family that I created and a secure network of friends and support. I really did not want to come home but as my father had said no one in the family was taking care of them and I felt It was my sincere duty to do this. So I went to work taking my mother and father to the doctors and making sure that they were well taking care of under my guidance and care. I did not have a social life because I could not be the person I really wanted to be and could not have the relationship with a partner as an adult should have. I could not be a good son that I wanted to be with my parents and tried my best at everything that I could to build trust , compassion , and love with my parents. My father passed away on December 4th 1996 and my mother passed away on March 1st 2008. I did everything that I could to make sure that my parents where well taken care of and every wish they had would be taken seriously with full cooperation from me. There was a

battle of wounding , crippling , alienating , painful , and unjust , within me and my family. It stopped me from being the person I 'am today a prophetic leader of liberation , service , leadership , mentor ,and body and spirit integration. I was being exiled by my own family because I made a decision that was based on loving another man and developing a deeper meaning of kinship so I can be happy and content for the rest of my life. Many people have thanked me for changing my life for the better for inspiring them or changing their lives as well. As soon as my mother passed away I felt I could now live consciously and responsibly ,to be vibrant and alive, to fully embrace my destiny to be mindful at every moment, every encounter no matter how seemingly insignificant and to have the potential of radical transformation of myself, and my partner or even a whole civilization. I now consider myself as a pioneer of Native Hawaiian Rights in a Civil Union because most of us Hawaiians consider coming out shameful , keeping it a secret from the outside world , and I believe that such actions inhibits oneself to grow and have a sense of freedom . This only deviates us to become liberators and life-giving contributors to our island life style and to honor how big or small our contributions are in a society. When non gay people oppress us or label us then I believe it only liberates me to liberating myself to teach love and commitment to one another, tolerance, and to claim love without the support of a dominant culture. And it only teaches me not to discriminate no matter what your views are toward a society and to be tolerant rather being intolerant.

As being this pioneer I' am being a trailblazer for others to come and follow. In our day to day struggles to survive I have become a leader not only for Native Hawaiian rights but all people in Hawaii as well. I know for a fact that I have changed for the betterment of my life and I know I have changed for the good that I can contribute something to our island lifestyle. HB 444 HD1 gives me the courage and takes me out of the dark past that I have endured. It gives me the extraordinary possibilities and outrageous adventures that await us if we uncross our fingers and take a deep breath and embrace my destiny to be the best I can be. This means that Civil Unions should be part of our society and part of the definition of "Ohana " family. It may be hard to come out to our family and communities and its hard for us as island people to talk about

our sexuality and to support such a measure. But with that stigma it gives us strength as island people that we have “Hanohano” Tolerance , “Ha’aeo” Pride and most important we have “Aloha” Love. This brings us back to not to discount where we come from and our Native Hawaiian roots and as a small island community let us not ostracize people who are different. Civil Unions is about “Kulena” responsibility and “Malama” taking care of each other and most important “Ho’omalua” protecting the good for all people in Hawaii.

From: Darrell Bungcayao [darrellb2006@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:56 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Darrell Bungcayao
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. – Capitol Auditorium

Re: HB 444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Mahalo nui for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB444. My name is Kalei Kailihiwa.

Honorable senators, I believe that all people, all families should be treated equally under the law. HB444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

My partner and I have been together for 8 years and we have a three month old son together. He is the light of our lives. By all intents and purposes, we are a family. Our son will be raised knowing that he has two loving parents who are committed to loving him and each other. We are fortunate to be surrounded by friends and family who support us. We wait in hopeful anticipation for the day when our beloved state will also support us by ensuring equal rights and protections to our family and families like ours.

We are simple people who work hard. We pay our taxes. We vote. We don't expect anything more than to be treated fairly by the system of laws that we believe so strongly in.

Currently, my family is not treated fairly. I am treated like a single parent by the law, when in truth; my son has two loving parents. This unequal treatment that my family experiences is unfair and unjust. We know in our hearts that Hawaii is not a place that would allow unfairness. Hawaii is a place that values the ohana and in an ohana, nobody gets left behind. Civil unions are a way to support all families in Hawaii. Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives, and by our family.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Please don't leave us behind. I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo nui,

Kalei Kailihiwa
94-512 Kupuohi St. #101
Waipahu, HI 96797



Mr. Eric T. Yuasa
2162 Ala Mahamoe Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –
AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

I ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. I strongly believe that the voters in the State of Hawaii overwhelmingly affirmed in 1998 that marriage is between one man and one woman. I also believe that the people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage.

Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Please be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds.

We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Eric T. Yuasa

**Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium**

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I have been a resident and businessperson in Hawai'i for over 42 years. I moved to Hawaii in 1966 to attend the University of Hawai'i.

During the time I have lived in Hawai'i I have been a responsible and contributing citizen. I have paid, or caused to have paid, tens of thousands of dollars in local taxes and my companies have paid millions of dollars in payroll. Also, I have served eight years on the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, as a commissioner.

I love Hawaii, and I love living here. However, I do not feel like a full citizen of Hawai'i because I am Homosexual and I do not have equal rights, before the law, as my non-gay brothers and sisters of Hawaii.

Why am I served second-class rights?

I did not choose to be gay-believe, me I fought my same-sex attraction through my teen and early twenties years.

I did not become a whole person until I accepted me as I honestly am.

I am not asking to infringe on others' religious beliefs, because Civil Unions is a secular matter. However, I attend the Honolulu Society of Friends, The Quakers, who recognize and bless Same-Sex Unions, as do many other faiths. One of the main principals of Christian-Judeo thought is "Treat others as one would want to be treated".

Please give me the same rights and therefore treat me as an equal citizen of Hawaii. Please Pass HB 444.

Mahalo,

Jack Law 4690 Sierra Dr. Honolulu, HI 96815
808-737-8862 jlawhnl@gmail.com

From: Melvin Ah Ching
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:34 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: FW: Testimony - HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil unions

From: Emi Game [mailto:emigam4@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:29 PM
To: All Senators
Subject: Testimony - HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil unions

Testimony STRONGLY OPPOSING HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Hawaii State Senator
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009; 9:00 a.m.
Location: Auditorium

Submitted by: Elaine Chu

I, along with fellow citizens, have tried, to the best of our abilities and capabilities, to be active and productive participants in the critical political issues that have confronted us these past few decades. But now it seems we're getting closer and closer to a time when we can no longer criticize government leaders of other countries -- leaders who do not truly respect and/or listen to the people they are called to govern, and who dictate according to their own values, morality and benefit. We will have no right to criticize because our own government leaders who we have voted into office and financially support, and who should technically be our "employees," are now making a mockery of the majority of their constituents' earnest efforts to participate in government. The government leaders of this state are manipulating and changing, against the will of the people, a Constitutional Law decided upon by the people.

The time and effort that thousands spent participating in the last Constitutional Convention and casting votes to preserve traditional marriage apparently meant/means nothing, for it seems that our "employees" feel they have the power to go against the will of the majority so that they can fulfill their own beliefs and agendas and that of a minority.

It seems our voices via our votes were not and are not important enough to be heard. It is heartbreaking to believe, as I and others now do, that making a request of you to honor the voice and will of the people who have put you in leadership positions, by **preserving** what is already in our Constitution and **not adding** any language that would include or change anything other than what is intended in our Constitution -- the preservation of traditional marriage between a man and a woman -- will eventually be to no avail.

So I ask you, is this what the "power of our vote" means.....that we give you power to decide, not only what's best for the people, but also what's morally right? Do the votes you receive from your constituents give you the right to manipulate and change laws in the Constitution of the State of Hawaii because you feel that these laws are no longer relevant or morally or politically correct?

This letter is being written from a vantage point of helplessness and a feeling that **my vote meant/means nothing** and that our present government leaders and an aggressive political minority wish to be, and more and more are, in control of the lives and future of the people of our state.

Sincerely,

Elaine Chu

From: omcreations@riseup.net
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:33 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support of civil rights in Hawaii

Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions

**Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Auditorium
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9 a.m.**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I strongly support H.B 444 HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions.

The Dalai Lama suggests that creating peace with all our disparate parts is the only human way to act. I am the oldest in a family of 11 children, and there are 3 who are not heterosexual. 2 females and a male. I love them all equally and would like to see our progressive state take this bold step into the future. Do not step us backward with fear. Especially because I am a heterosexual male, I want you to vote to give gay, lesbian and transgendered couples in our community the rights and protections I enjoy. I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.
Respectfully submitted,

Rob Kinslow
2351 Pauoa Rd.
Honolulu, Hi 96813

Testimony in OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI

Karen Kramer
1055 Kalihi Wai Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96825

HB 444 HDI

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.

RE: Oppose HB 444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB 444. I speak to oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. Civil Union bypasses the will of the people.
2. Civil Union law will result in public schools teaching our children homosexual marriages and acceptance will be mandatory
 - a. As a high school educator, students need to be equipped with knowledge/skills/subjects to advance them into college and passing the SAT.
 - b. Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) is urging public schools in Minneapolis to resist pressure to implement a curriculum aimed at helping students as young as kindergarten embrace homosexuality.
 - c. Students generally learn about adolescence and puberty in 6-8th grade. Parents are informed about the female/male human development (not sexual choice) being taught and are asked to give parental consent
 - d. The "Welcoming Schools program was created by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a homosexual agenda," If HRC merely cared about bullying, they would simply endorse the school district's vigorous bullying and hazing policy. Parents and school officials need to be aware of what HRC is really trying to do.
 - e. Schools will be forced to teach that the homosexual family is normal.
 - f. Pictures in text books will be changed to show same-sex couples as normal.

I oppose House Bill 444 due to the outcome it could have on schools, educators, not to mention families and most importantly our students.

Karen Kramer
DOE Educator

From: Napualani Weinrich [nweinrich@wolhawaii.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:36 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Sam Slom; senkim@cpaitol.hawaii.gov; JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 444, HD 1

February 23, 2009, 2:30 pm

My name: Priscilla N. Weinrich

My address: 99-1070 Lauole Street

Aiea, HI 96701

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

and

Copy to Senator Donna Mercado-Kim

Copy to JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov (Please receive this email as my testimony)

RE: OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

Public Hearing Scheduled:

DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Auditorium, in basement, State Capitol,

Dear Honorable Members of Senate Judiciary Committee,

I respectfully submit this email as my testimony in opposition to HB 444, HD 1, and all other bills relating to Civil Unions, including, but not limited to HB 444.

I encourage all of you to protect traditional marriage and vote "NO" to civil unions. The people of Hawaii, including myself, overwhelmingly voted against same-sex marriage in 1998. My position has not changed. I strongly oppose civil unions and same-sex marriages.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Napualani Weinrich

99-1070 Lauole Street

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:10 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: ljhoopai@earthlink.net
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: testimony.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Judie Ho'opai
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: ljhoopai@earthlink.net
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

Dear Legislative Representative,

Out of concern for my children, I am writing this testimony in opposition to HB#444.

In 1998, my daughter was born and in that same year 70% of Hawaii voters said 'No' to same-sex marriage. I was able to breathe a sigh of relief to know that the majority of Hawaii's citizens still believed in the stability of a traditional family unit.

Here in 2009, this similar issue is back again in the spotlight and my baby is now an eleven year old pre-teen. I cannot sit back and allow a vocal minority to redefine traditional marriage under the term civil union. HB #444 is legally complicated and socially explosive to the tender hearts and minds of our keiki.

As an elected official, you have been tasked with making decisions that will affect many. As a mother, I am tasked with making decisions that will affect my children. I would hope that your decisions would not adversely impact the decisions that I would have to make for my children. And yet, that is what this bill would do, create undue hardship for your constituents, especially those who are concern with the development of our children.

Our world is already a complicated one. The passing of this bill would further complicate the raising of children. For instance, if this bill passes, how will the law confer parenting benefits and responsibilities to the same sex partner of a mother without adversely affecting the parenting rights of the mother and the parental rights of a birthfather? The civil union aspects related to children and parenting raise extremely complicated issues of family law and are unfortunately focused on the rights of the adults and not on the needs of the children. This opens a nearly-unending number of legal possibilities, which will require complicated and expensive litigation to resolve. What will the children be taught?

Finally, what will be taught to children in public school? Will children be taught that the law says same-sex couples are just like married couples but with a different title? If not, why not? That would be the law. If it would be taught, then, we're right back to the heart of the same sex marriage debate and this issue is among the primary reasons people opposed same sex marriage in the first place.

For these reasons, I ask that you oppose HB444.

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Measure: HB 444 HD1 (Opposition to HB 444 HD1)
Date and Time: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00 am

My name is Kenneth Wong. I am an attorney and I oppose the proposed civil unions bill for a number of reasons. The underlying assumption for the bill is that it removes "discrimination" against homosexuals because homosexuals are "born that way". That logic is terribly flawed.

1. **THERE ARE NO REPLICATED SCIENTIFIC STUDIES THAT PROVE HOMOSEXUALS ARE BORN THAT WAY.**

There are no replicated, scientific studies that have established that people are born homosexuals. There are no replicated, scientific studies that have isolated a homosexual gene. In this era of rapid breakthroughs of DNA and genetic discoveries, there are no replicated, scientific studies that establish homosexuality as something that is procreated.

If someone is born black, people can immediately see that by the color of their skin. If someone is born male or female, people can immediately see that through their physical attributes. Not so with homosexuals. People cannot immediately look at someone and say, "That person is a homosexual."

The greater evidence is that homosexuality is a chosen behavior. This is confirmed by the thousands of people who have left the homosexual lifestyle.

2. **GIVING A GROUP OF PEOPLE SPECIAL RIGHTS BECAUSE OF THEIR BEHAVIOR CHOICES, LIKE THE CIVIL UNIONS BILL DOES, WILL BE A DANGEROUS AND TERRIBLE PUBLIC POLICY PRECEDENT.**

Homosexuality is a lifestyle choice, not a naturally occurring gender or ethnic class.

To elevate homosexuality, a lifestyle choice, to a protected class in the area of marriage, would open a Pandora's box and set a dangerous public policy precedent. For example, polygamists can claim they are being discriminated against because they cannot marry more than one woman. They are law-abiding citizens and they love their multiple wives just like a typical husband and wife, and want the benefits of marriage for all of their wives. Will the Legislature give them special rights to marry multiple wives? What about a widow and her unmarried son who wish to get married in order to get the benefits of marriage? Surely, they love each other? Will they be entitled to get married?

These examples are all lifestyle choices. If special status is given to same sex marriages, where do we stop?

3. THE VOTERS SHOULD DECIDE AFTER AN EXTENDED PROCESS OF VETTING, PUBLIC DEBATE AND DISSEMINATION OF FACTS. THE CIVIL UNIONS BILL SHOULD BE TABLED UNTIL THIS CAN TAKE PLACE.

Only approximately 1% of the population chooses to live a homosexual lifestyle. Imposing civil unions on society will have a greater negative impact on the remaining 99% of society than any positive impact on the 1% of the homosexual community. What will happen in the public schools? What will happen with sex education in the public schools? It is well established that the homosexual community has the overwhelming proportion of HIV cases and other sexually transmitted diseases. What will be the health, medical and economic impact on Hawaii of disease transmission? What will happen to those who oppose this lifestyle? What societal impacts have occurred in the states that have passed civil unions or same sex marriage laws? There are a lot of what ifs that have been hidden and kept away from the electorate.

Why is the civil unions bill being ramrodded through the Legislature without a full vetting and public debate on the scientific, medical, genetic and behavioral facts and the positive and negative impacts on society?

The civil unions bill deals with society's morals and values and lifestyle choices. This should reflect what our society wants, not what 51 house members and 25 senators want, especially since 70% of the people voted against same sex marriage 11 years ago. There is absolutely no truth to the assumption that today in 2009, a majority of the people support same sex marriage. For the Legislature to base their vote on this faulty assumption is specious.

The civil unions bill may have a greater impact on Hawaii's society than rail transit. Yet, there were 4 years of public vetting, debate and factual dissemination to the public and the public was given the opportunity to question, collect the facts and intelligently vote up or down on the rail transit bill. Even the leader of the Senate, Colleen Hanabusa called for a transit vote.

There should be the same process of public vetting and voting on this civil unions bill. Why the rush? Why the lobbying behind closed doors by the homosexual community? Why is the public not allowed to be heard? Why is there no extended public debate? There is no homosexual marriage crisis. This is not like the stimulus package in Congress that needed urgent attention.

This is such a divisive and controversial piece of legislation that there should be a full public debate and subsequent vote by the public, perhaps a proposed constitutional amendment. Let the people be educated and let the people vote.

FROM: James LIM (print name)

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

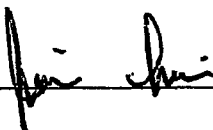
HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!



FROM: Youngmin Yoon (print name)

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO. ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

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FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Youngmin Yoon

FROM: Thomas Kim (print name)

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

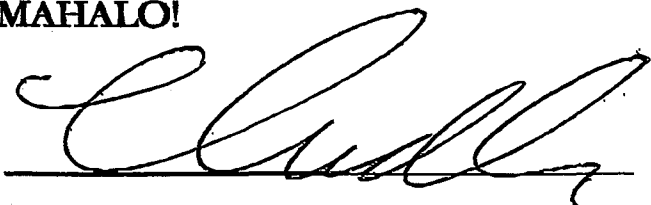
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FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!



FROM: TAI WON KIM (print name)

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALOI

TAI WON KIM

From: stephkonnnect@yahoo.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:38 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Stephanie Kon, and I am a resident of Honolulu. I strongly OPPOSE HB 444 HD1. This bill has far reaching, negative ramifications for our state and future generations. I urge your committee NOT to pass this bill as is and at the very least, to recommend this bill be put to ballot. My appeal is as follows:

- This bill is NOT about equal rights, it IS about manipulation; Individuals with deviant lifestyles are asking government and society to give them a license to do what they want. This is imposing an agenda. We must have discernment to know the difference. DON'T BE MANIPULATED.
- This bill is about the distortion of marriage in legal and moral terms; If the Federal law will not acknowledge a civil union, why should the Hawaii Revised Statutes' definition be altered? The age-old definition of marriage is the union of a man and a woman, and it should be honored.
- On a spiritual basis, the union of a husband and wife is a sacred covenant, which was ordained by God - the highest level of authority there is. The Bible is a primary source of this truth. Traditional wedding vows used by a Judge and Minister alike often state, "What God has joined, let no man can put assunder (or seperate)." This implies great authority, value and blessing that includes family. God has NOT JOINED same genders, nor given blessing to it. We should honor what is blessed and NOT become contenders with God. God has already spoken for Himself on this matter. Please take God's testimony into account.
- Two people of the same genders CANNOT reproduce FAMILIES and IS a threat to the continuation of the human race ... legalizing civil unions IS the next step toward genocide and/or promoting unnatural/artificial childbearing. Would these persons have been born themselves? What extent are these couples willing to go to create a family?
- Is society ready to accept responsibility for UNBORN or damaged children & adults should this bill be passed? Consider all the emotional, psychological, social, spiritual implications for these children and their adulthood. Will government take responsibility to care for any damages to future generations?
- I charge the committee to change the wording in this bill from Civil Union to Civil Marriage, if you can by conscience, because no rewording can hide or shrug the legal and moral responsibility that hinges on this reality. Have the integrity to call it what it is and take responsibility for this action.
- Finally, I ask all committee members to recall the 1998 vote by nearly 70% of Hawaii's citizens that opposed civil unions, and to put the issue to ballot once again to allow citizen participation in deciding such a critical issue.

Legalizing psuedo unions anywhere in the world is a danger to marriage, family and future generations. I don't want to see this beautiful land of Hawai'i become tainted with immoral, irresponsible laws like HB 444 HD1 proposes to set into motion. As a Christian I believe God's testimony and I am confident there will spiritual and moral consequences of which Hawaii's people, land and government are unprepared.

I urge you to OPPOSE this bill and at the very least, to recommend the issue be put to ballot by Hawaii's voters.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on this matter.

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My name is Brooks G. Bays, Jr. I am a resident of Honolulu, and would like to express my support for House Bill 444 (Civil Unions).

My life partner, James R Ness, died five years ago from complications of lupus and cerebral vasculitis. It was not unexpected, which did not make it less crushing. Although we were together richer and poorer; in sickness and in health; loving, honoring, and cherishing each other; and forsaking all others until death did us part, in the eyes of the law we were nothing more than friends or business partners. Although we had jumped through all the legal hoops we could, setting up powers of attorney and joint accounts and living wills and other legal documents, they still provided only a fraction of the legal protections our married brothers and sisters take for granted. The process was burdensome and stressful, and was still incomplete when he died. If we could have had a civil union that provided those protections all at once, it would have been a great help and comfort.

We were considered "lucky" that his doctors treated me as a member of his family, allowing me to participate in his care more completely, which reduced his stress and helped me to help him. I was considered "lucky" when, on the night he died, the emergency medical team treated me with respect and sympathy -- as more than just a housemate. I was "lucky" that because his family respected our relationship, they did not try to challenge his will, or try to turn me out of the house we built -- out of the home we made. Despite all that "luck" I was still unable to get answers from the coroner's office because I was "not a family member" and so had to rely on his parents for information.

I do not pretend that civil unions are marriage, and I respect that there are those who wish to reserve the word "marriage" for mixed-sex couples. I do believe, however, that our relationship was as deserving of protection and support as are our brothers' and sisters' mixed-sex relationships. Supporting couples who love and care for each other strengthens the family, and strengthens society as a whole.

I appreciate your time in considering my comments, and I appreciate the great honor in being able to participate in this process.

With much aloha,

Brooks G. Bays, Jr
1673 B Paula Drive
Honolulu, HI 96816

bgbaysjr@commspeed.net
808-352-4809

From: Catie Martin [catie.martin@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:01 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (civil unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony is strong SUPPORT of HB444 hd1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

First of all, I would like thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony before this committee. My name is Catie Elise Martin, and I am here to express my very strong support for HB 444-(civil unions). I stand firmly behind this bill, and support it with all of my heart. I was so excited when I first heard about this bill. I have two very close friends that would be directly affected by this. They would finally be able to receive some kind of recognition as a couple with their partners. They would have benefits, and the responsibilities that go with them. They were excited! This is by no means "marriage", but it IS something. Who could deny someone this right as a person?

Someone can, and is trying to. This breaks my heart. I was raised to believe in the goodness that my country was founded on. I was taught that all men were created equal, and that I have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as an American Citizen. So why is it that I can have these rights, but two people very close to me would be denied the very same? How are two people loving each other, willing to stay in a committed relationship, and share the responsibilities that come with that ,a threat to traditional marriage? I, myself, am getting married soon. I do not feel "threatened" by the idea of gay or lesbian couples having civil unions. I was raised not to discriminate against anyone. My parents taught me that NO ONE deserves to be treated like they are dirt. That no one deserves to be told that they are not worthy of love. That, regardless of gay or straight, we are all people who should be treated EQUALLY.

This is a civil rights issue, pure and simple. Why are we treating people ,who are most likely co-workers, friends, and maybe even family like they are second-class citizens? How can we, as a state, treat our fellow people in such a deplorable manner?

I ask you to please support HB444.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Catie Elise Martin

1442 Wilder Ave. #4
Honolulu,HI
96822

Personal Testimony

**HB 444, HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

Hearing Date:
Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Time:
9:00 a.m.

Location:
State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and committee members. My name is Carol Ho'omanawanui. I am a resident of Hawai'i and a registered voter. I **strongly oppose** HB444, HD1 relating to civil unions.

In 1998, the people of Hawai'i sent a clear message that marriage in Hawai'i must remain between one man and one woman. HB444, HD1 relating to civil unions is an attempt to legalize same-sex marriage by using another title. The people of Hawai'i have already spoken and settled this issue. We are asking the legislature to align itself with the people of Hawai'i and oppose HB444, HD1.

I'm sure each of you and many people in Hawai'i are thinking about the impacts and ramifications this bill will have on our people and future generations. May I suggest, if we have not already, we review data from other States, like Vermont and Connecticut, and countries, like Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Finland, and Hungary, that have already legalized same-sex marriage or partnerships/unions in order to identify the possible impacts on our people and future generations before passing similar legislation here in Hawai'i.

Please oppose HB444, HD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE CHAIR KARAMATSU, VICE CHAIR ITO, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I am a deeply concerned wife (married to a man), mother, and full-time employed citizen, born and raised in Hawaii. I strongly urge you to **OPPOSE** this bill. The proponents of HB444 would like us to believe that this is a civil rights issue, when it is not. Everyone, whether black or white, gay or heterosexual has equal access to all the rights granted to any U.S. citizen. The only reason for taking up the time of the House legislation and our resources is to promote their agenda of gay marriage. The people of Hawaii have made it clear that they value the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman and would not desire to have it any other way. Homosexuality is a lifestyle choice, as is smoking and drinking—it is a choice. We do not believe that their rights to this choice have been infringed.

If this bill were to pass, the ramifications would be great and the floodgates for numerous other detrimental issues would be opened. Hawaii should not pride itself in being the most liberal state in the U.S. There is no honor in being the first state to allow abortion—even prior to Roe v. Wade! There is no reverence in embracing atrocities. Let us not waste anymore time allowing another tragic bill to become law.

Although I will be unable to attend the hearing, many of my friends, family and colleagues will be in attendance. I thank the committee for allowing me to submit my testimony.

Respectfully,

Leslie Tyson

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 3:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: milliesm001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Myron A. Millies
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone: 808-682-2520
E-mail: milliesm001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

Please do not pass this bill. Marriage is between (1) Man and (1) Women period. If passed it will be a disgrace to the people of Hawaii.

February 22, 2009

Email TESTIMONY TO: JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 9:00am. Auditorium (Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations)

Honorable Senators Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair, Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair, and Members of Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Subject: HB 444, HD-1, Relating to Civil Unions

Honorable Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and JGO Members,

As a concerned citizen of the Waialae area, **I urge you to OPPOSE HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions.** We (Over 70 percent) the people of Hawaii voted to keep traditional marriage between a man and woman. This bill will allow Civil Unions, which we believe is a means to under cut the true meaning of traditional marriage (between a man & woman) and the will of the people. This Bill is a clear violation of the Constitutional process and a direct attack on our moral view of traditional family values.

We understand that there are some of the concerns relating to benefits for reciprocal beneficiaries, but please, consider any adjustments to that already existing law. We urge you ... do not erode our definition of marriage and our moral and fundamental values for traditional families.

Please OPPOSE HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions... and follow the will of the people with our moral values and protect our traditional Family Values.

Sincerely,



Lester Fukuda,
Concerned Citizen

From: Lincoln Simmons [lincolnsimmons@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:05 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support of HB 444

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Lincoln Simmons in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am writing today in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 relating to civil unions.

Current Hawai'i state law does not allow for same-sex couples to adopt children jointly. State law also fails to protect members of same sex-couples in the event that the couple chose to separate. This bill could also help to encourage employers to offer health benefits for their same-sex employees. Gay and Lesbian citizens deserve to be afforded the same protections under the law as you and I.

I believe that it is the responsibility of all citizens to stand up for equal rights in our community.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,
Lincoln Simmons
Warehouse Supervisor, Pepsi Co.
46-116 Ohala Pl.
Kaneohe HI. 96744

Windows Live™ Hotmail@...more than just e-mail. [See how it works.](#)

From: sohira@yahoo.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:39 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Against HB 444 HD1

Shaun Ohira, HB 444 HD1, Feb. 24 at 9 a.m., Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee.

The people of Hawaii have already spoken and we do not support any type of gay marriage or civil unions. Is this something that really needs to be brought up again and again. Our economy is in ruins and I have to waste my time with petty issues as this. There are more important issues at hand that need to be dealt with. So please count me against any type of civil unions and also tell the elected official to do something about traffic or education and stop wasting our time with non-issues.

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Bill Potter, and I write to express my support for House Bill 444—Civil Unions. I support this legislation because of my conviction that all people should be treated equally under the law, as required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Some will think that as a single person, I am not qualified to say much about marriage or civil unions. But my experience growing up as the children of loving parents who were together for more than 60 years before my father died, supplemented by years of observing all manner of couples, have taught me something about this institution.

Many of the couples I know best are my fellow members of the Lutheran Church of Honolulu, a diverse congregation that for the last twenty years or so has welcomed people of all sexual orientations and many different family types. We are proud of the same-gender couples in our congregation who have raised children and supported each other "in sickness and in health." We value the contributions these couples and families make to our *'ohana* and the larger community.

I am pained that some of my church friends can be prevented from taking responsibility for their partners in health situations, are taxed differently, have to go to extraordinary lengths to share their finances, and in short, miss out on all the benefits that flow from marriage.

Equality is a simple concept that has been a major theme in the history of our country and our state. The unequal treatment that same-gender couples and families experiences is unfair and unjust. Fortunately, things are changing and civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and even the majority of the Hawai'i House of Representatives.

I urge you not to be swayed by the vocal minority I understand have been bombarding with calls and letters. Local research by QMark shows that a majority of the people of Hawai'i support equal treatment for same-gendered couples. And of course, HB 444 is only about civil matters. It contains nothing that will force any religious group to change their practices with regard to marriage.

I respectfully request that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,
J. William Potter, Jr.

From: Rick Lazor [lazor@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:50 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 444

TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE...

TESTIMONY FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 444 ON CIVIL UNIONS

Aloha Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawai'i and please know that you are always in our thoughts and prayers as you serve.

I write today pleading with you to oppose House Bill 444 and the similar civil unions and homosexual "marriage" bills currently under Senate consideration.

There are many valid and compelling arguments currently being made against civil unions and homosexual "marriage." I would imagine you have heard them all.

And there is also the fact the people of Hawai'i spoke clearly and quite convincingly in 1998 that they support the same definition of marriage that has well-served thousands of societies for thousands of years.

However, with this letter, I would like to speak more specifically to a contention I have heard repeatedly over the past month that "times have changed" and "a lot has happened in the past ten years since then."

I would whole-heartedly agree that the past ten years have taught us much alright.

Consider what we have been taught — in the past ten years — by numerous experiences in states which have enacted civil unions or homosexual "marriage" statutes:

- Since 1998, a California district wherein the school board (backed recently by the court) has banned elementary school textbooks which use the terms "husband" and "wife" in reference to marriage. The new required term is "partner."
- Since 1998, one of the finest, faith-based adoption agencies in all of Massachusetts was forced by the courts to cease operation since it could not, for the sake of conscience, assign children to homo-sexual couples.
- Since 1998 (just a few weeks ago, actually), the popular e-harmony.com date-matching website was threatened by court action in New Jersey because it did not provide "men seeking men" and women seeking women" services.
- Since 1998, a New Mexico couple was sued and lost all legal recourse when as professional photographers, they could not, in good conscience, accept a commission to photograph a lesbian "commitment" ceremony.
- Since 1998, courts in Massachusetts ruled that while parental notification is required whenever human sexuality issues will be addressed in their child's school curriculum, it is not necessary at all when the subject is homosexual sexuality and lifestyle! This exception boggles the mind!

- Since 1998, a California fertility physician had his practice threatened when, for the sake of conscience, he would not artificially inseminate a woman in a lesbian relationship who desired for her and her partner to have a child together.

In every state where civil unions or homosexual "marriage" is now the law in 2009, it's opponents along the way were scoffed at and ridiculed for suggesting that civil unions were nothing but a slippery slope that would eventually lead to homosexual "marriage;" and then subsequent legal action against educators, parents, adoption agencies, small businesses, landlords, Boy Scouts, campgrounds, et al. Today, one realizes that they could not have been more correct.

These past ten years have indeed taught us that civil unions opponents were right nearly every time.

Why on earth would you want this same experience for Hawai'i?

Those who press most ardently for the passage of civil unions legislation — in the past ten years — have proven repeatedly that they have no interest in civil unions as compared to homosexual "marriages." They readily admit on blogs, websites and public addresses that civil unions are just a step toward homosexual "marriage." Further, it turns out for most such activists that homosexual "marriage" is not so much about marriage as it is about forced acceptance of their lifestyle by all the rest of society.

Yes, civil rights matter. And those rights have been sufficiently protected by reciprocal benefits legislation already enacted into law here. This current bill is not about human rights. It is about Mainland activists taking advantage of Hawai'i's tolerant and loving spirit toward all her people and foisting upon us radical social engineering that runs counter to the best practices in human relationships in nearly every culture.

I urge you to vote "no" on House Bill 444 and other similar stealth legislation advocating the support of homosexual marriage and/or civil unions. Please protect our families, small businesses, schools and children from the certain onslaught of litigation and harrassment coming our way if this bill or anything like it becomes law in the Islands.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rick Lazor, M.S.W.
OlaNui!

From: Ray Estes [chaplainestes@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:52 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions

Testifier: Raymond L. Estes
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: 24 February 2009
Hearing Time: 0900
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

May the record show that as a registered voter of the state of Hawaii, city and county of Honolulu I adamantly oppose House Bill 444 HD1 allowing for civil unions to be recognized in the state of HI. The traditional and religious definition of marriage being defined as being between one man and one woman must be upheld. To my understanding 70% of the state's population opposes this bill and support the traditional/religious view of marriage and the House should honor the wishes of it's constituents, which is clearly a strong majority in this case.

Sincerely,

Ray Estes

From: Kyoko Nakayama [peko_chan@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:25 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Sen. Robert Bunda
Subject: HB 444 HD1 (SUPPORT)

To:

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

I am writing in support of HB 444 HD1 (civil unions). I believe that all Hawaii residents should be treated equally, and that legal unions between two persons should not be limited to two people of the opposite gender. Discriminating against people does not show aloha. I ask that Senator Bunda vote for equality, as guaranteed by the Constitution (Article I Sections 2,3, and 5), which he took an oath to uphold when elected to public office.

Mahalo,
Kyoko Nakayama
Waialua, Hawaii

From: James & Lorrie Roller [jerlmr@flex.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:43 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Below testimony pertains to HB 444 HD1 Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of our children and grandchildren, I STRONGLY encourage you to oppose civil unions in Hawaii. Just yesterday I read where France has reported that 92% of civil unions performed last year in that country involved opposite sex couples. This statistic means that commitments to marriage are being eroded because it is easier to dissolve a civil union than a marriage. Is this what we want for our future generations? I think not. Anyone who says civil unions will not harm traditional marriage needs only look to the statistics in France where civil unions have been in effect for years. PLEASE for the sake of our future generations, OPPOSE civil unions! Thank you for your continued public service.

James & Lorrie Roller
Mililani, HI

From: Aileen Ramos [smlgrl@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Why I am Strongly Opposed to HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions

Testifier: Aileen W. Ramos
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME: Aileen Ramos
ADDRESS: 92-678 Nohona Street, Kapolei, HI 96707
PHONE: 808-220-0578

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Aileen W. Ramos

Testimony for House Bill 444, HD 1; Relating to Civil Unions
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Tuesday, February 24, 2009; 9:00 am
State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Senator Taniguchi, Chair, Senator Takamine, Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations. My name is Lisa Zamber and I am Master's student at the University of Hawaii Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am here today to **strongly support HB 444, HD 1.**

Many have testified in opposition to House Bill 444 citing Leviticus 18:22, which states "You shall not lie with a man as a woman; it is an abomination." Any argument against civil unions that appeals to Leviticus is extremely problematic for a number of reasons. While it's true that Leviticus defines same-sex relationships as an abomination, Leviticus also defines handling pig skin (11: 6-8) and eating shrimp or lobster (11:11) as an abomination. Leviticus was written thousands of years ago and is filled with laws that no one would ever think of enforcing today. For instance, Leviticus prescribes the death penalty for disrespecting your parents, eating catfish, and violating the sabbath, and it also explicitly condones slavery (25:44). **Selectively invoking these ancient laws exclusively for homosexuals is unfair and unethical.**

However, the bigger problem with appealing to Leviticus is that the Bible's view on marriage is not relevant to this debate. This is not a religious issue and need not involve debates about religious texts such as the Bible. This bill is about *civil* unions, not *religious* unions. *Civil* marriage is a government institution that grants hundreds of state rights and over 1,100 federal rights to married couples and has nothing to do with religion.

If a particular church doesn't want to recognize same-sex unions and chooses instead to continue their discriminatory practices, they are well within their rights and are free to do so within the privacy of their church. However, their private religious views have no place in public policy.

By denying homosexual couples the rights that accompany marriage we are not only denying them basic civil rights, but are implicitly condoning prejudice and discrimination in our society. America has a long, sad history of discriminating against minority populations and denying them civil rights. America also has a history of rectifying its mistakes. I ask you today to help put an end to discrimination against homosexuals by passing HB 444.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lisa Zamber
737 Olokele Ave, Apt. 1404
Honolulu, HI 96816

From: gdchung@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:05 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: Re: HB No. 444, HD1, Feb 24 at 9 am Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

With reference to HB 444 HD1, the Civil Union Bill, I strongly urge your committee to report out this bill with a favorable recommendation.

My name is Geoffrey Chung, and I was born and raised in Hawaii. I have been together with my partner, Doug, for five years and together, we share co-parenting responsibilities for our thirteen year-old daughter. The stress of not being recognized as a family, created in large part by legal inequities for gay/lesbian families, cannot be understated. My place of work will not permit me to list Doug as a legally-recognized partner; he is therefore ineligible for any of the benefits that married couples enjoy. In the event of that one of us dies before the other, we are expected to go through more legal and administrative hassles to inherit each other's property and assets, and we can expect to be hit with more inheritance tax. In the event of my daughter's sudden illness/injury and lacking my immediate availability, Doug cannot make any decisions regarding her medical treatment, thus creating unnecessary delays. Furthermore, our wishes as spelled out by legal documents (e.g. will, power of attorney) are open to challenge by family members who may disagree with our personal decisions.

It is hard to for me to witness and experience a possible replication of the anti-gay sentiment that predominated in 1998, where the heated debate became heavily steeped in (and influenced by) religious right values. Although it is hard to convey the full gravity of injustice experienced by gay/lesbian families in today's society, I am convinced that laws which do not support our families legitimize discrimination and mistreatment. While in San Diego, my daughter and our family were victims of a hate crime-- a smoke bomb was thrown into a crowded event, resulting in respiratory distress; the perpetrator was never found. If you are not influenced by my personal experiences and worries, I urge you to read what behavioral scientists have reported in large-scale studies on the adverse effects of anti-gay measures on gay/lesbian families (<http://www.apa.org/releases/glb-stress-1108.html>).

Please understand that the measure before you is an equal protection matter, not a religious one. The state and its electorate may be able to legislate what constitutes marriage, but it should not be permitted to support inequity. How can we achieve equality and parity? The Civil Union Bill, to my understanding, is the way to engender fairness without rehashing the old arguments of 1998.

Thank you for your consideration of this Bill. I appeal to your sense of justice, and ask that you please support HB 444 HD1.

Geoffrey Chung
1621 Dole Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822-4838

From: Judith Park [awakechaos@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:48 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I support civil unions in Hawaii

I am strongly in favor of civil unions for ALL in Hawaii. I personally believe that this is a fundamental right for ALL Americans, not just some, and certainly not for just the heterosexual (which I happen to be, but that is completely beside the point).

If two people love each other enough to make a life-long commitment to one another, they should be allowed the opportunity to make that a binding & legal commitment if they choose to do so.

Re-read our nation's Constitution. As I see it, it guarantees the civil rights of ALL Americans, not just some.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter, Judith Park

From: Jessica Faul [faul@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:54 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Stand for equal rights, Support H.B. 444, HD1

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Jessica Faul in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am writing today in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 relating to civil unions.

This bill is a step towards equal rights for lesbian and gay couples in our community. Current Hawai'i state law does not allow for same-sex couples to adopt children jointly. Current law also fails to protect members of same sex-couples in the event that the couple chose to separate. This bill could lead the way for more employers to offer health benefits for their same-sex employees.

I believe that it is our responsibility to speak out in support of equal rights for all groups in our community.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Faul
MSW Student, UH Research Assistant
46-116 Ohala Pl.
Kaneohe HI., 96744

Jessica Faul
MSW Student
808-358-1102

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Leona Ka'apuni
89-148 A Pililaau Ave.
Waianae, Hawaii 96792
808-668-7308

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Strong Opposition to HB444 HD1, Relating to Civil Union

As a wife and mother of five children with a strong foundation in the Christian faith, I have done everything within my power and God's guidance to raise my children to believe that what is written in the Bible is God's law. We need to live according to what the Bible says. I have also taught my children that they must also obey the laws of the land. Therefore, I strongly oppose HB444 "Civil Unions". This is just another way to legalize same-sex marriages, and it contradicts everything I believe in and contrary to what I have taught my children.

By passing this Civil Union bill, you are not only allowing a man/man or a woman/woman to marry, but you are also forcing the heterosexual population to accept and normalize homosexuality. When in fact, homosexuality is a choice they have chosen; as there is no proof otherwise. We all know that with choices, there are consequences. They knew before hand that homosexuality was never an acceptable sexual practice. Yet, this is the path they have chosen. So why now is the heterosexual population being forced to accept it?

We as human beings are designed to procreate. There is no way for a homosexual couple to procreate by themselves. God designed a marital relationship to be between a man and a woman. In fact, the definition of marriage as stated in Webster's dictionary is as follows: Marriage is the social institution under which a man and woman establish their decision to live as husband and wife by legal commitments, religious ceremonies, etc.

When the issue of same-sex marriages was placed before us in 1998 the people of Hawaii spoke out loud and clear with a resounding NO! Yet, we have this Civil Union Bill HB444 here before us today. The definition of the word union, according to Webster's dictionary is, the act of uniting two or more things together and civil means pertaining to, or consisting of citizens. I don't know about you, but it sure sounds like same-sex marriage to me. I don't mean to sound sarcastic, but I don't appreciate the fact that our lawmakers are deliberately ignoring our voices, and thinking that we are ignorant. When in fact, Civil Unions is just another name for same-sex marriages. Which, I believe was voted AGAINST by the people of Hawaii in 1998. I don't like it when someone tries to pull the wool over my eyes. Yet, that is just what I feel our lawmakers have done by introducing this HB444 placed before us today.

In just a little over five years ago, Massachusetts has legalized same-sex marriages or quote "Civil Unions", which has been destructive. It has torn down the foundation of the family structure and values, as we know it. Having children in the second grade read stories such as "King and King" which tells a story about two men who have a romance and marry each other, passing out literature on same sex marriages and how it is now a normal part of society. Having literature such as "The Little Black Book – Queer in the 21st Century" which was written by the Boston-based AIDS Action Committee, with help from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Boston Public Health Commission. This booklet was distributed to hundreds of kids (middle school age and up) at Brookline High School in Brookline, MA, on April 30, 2005. It contains hideous work of obscene pornography, gives tips to boys on how to perform oral sex on other males, masturbate other males and how to safely have someone urinate on you for sexual pleasure, and includes a directory of bars in Boston area where young men meet for anonymous sex. I don't know about you, but this does not sound like normality to me. In fact, it sounds like a very disgusting piece of work: yet the language used in this book is how many homosexuals converse. I heard it myself. Please feel free to look at it, here's the URL: <http://www.article8.net/downloads/LittleBlackBook.pdf>

I as a parent want to appeal to you not just as our lawmakers, but as parents, aunties, uncles, and grandparents: is this what you want for our children? We are looking at possibly passing this bill and looking at the State of Massachusetts as a guide. My question for you is: do you want our children to be subjected to this type of information and graphic material? If this bill is passed, you will be placing our young and vulnerable children at risk.

Other effects on Massachusetts since homosexual marriage became legal are the rates of HIV/AIDS have gone up considerably in Massachusetts. Just this year alone, public funding to deal with HIV/AIDS is up to \$500,000. Domestic Violence is on the rise as well. We must not let this happen in Hawaii.

Are we as a population becoming so desensitized to these immoral practices that we are willing to normalize it? Will we soon become desensitized to murder, rape, stealing, pedophiles, and so forth and will one day deem it, normal? Are the circumstances and problems being faced in Massachusetts today, something the state of Hawaii will have to look forward to? Let's not forget we as a state took a stand against this matter in 1998 and proclaimed marriage to be between a man and a woman. Therefore, I would like remind each and everyone of you here in the Senate that you are held accountable not only to the people of Hawaii, but to God as well. Each of you will be held personally responsible, for the decisions made here and how your vote will affect the future of our island, and our children. As a wife and mother I strongly advise the state senate to vote against HB444 legalizing Civil Unions here in the state of Hawaii. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

From: Janie King [janiel.king@clearwire.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:33 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

Janie L. King, Retired Teacher and Counselor, DOE HB 444 HD1 Feb. 24, 2009, 9 a.m.
To: Senate Judiciary and Gov't. Operations

Dear Committee Members:

This e-mail is in support of HD 441 HD1, the Civil Unions Bill. As a former teacher and counselor, I worked with many gay teenagers in a support group situation. A number of them were fearful of their classmates' finding out that they were gay, and several of them were physically and verbally abused while they were students at the high school where I worked (King Kekaulike High School on Maui). I believe that if a Bill such as HB 444 HD1 had already been passed into law years ago, these students would have encountered a less hostile atmosphere at school and would have gotten more out of their academic experiences. As it happened, four of my students ended up dropping out of school . . . three of them in their senior year because of the constant harassment they met with on a daily basis.

Also, my partner and I would deeply appreciate the passage of this bill because we do believe that gay people deserve the same rights and benefits that straight people enjoy. Isn't it time for the State to acknowledge this?

Please pass this bill. Thank you very much.

Janie King

From: bellylove@sbcglobal.net
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: 444 HD1

I strongly support civil unions and domestic partnership benefits.

I urge you to please support this bill.

Kind regard
Lisa black
Taxpayer
Sent from my iPhone

From: AVALON GUSMAN [avy66@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:56 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

FROM: Avalon L. Gusman
ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

I implore you in this hour to respect the will of the people of Hawaii and OPPOSE HOUSE BILL 444!

The people of Hawaii recognize that marriage should be between one man and one woman. In 1998, Hawaii voters sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title.

The definition of marriage must remain clear and consistent and NOT be SUBJECT to the changing whims and legislation of man. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already been settled by the people. As a follower of Jesus Christ and a Hawaii resident, I stand for righteousness and holiness in this most crucial hour and I behoove you to not let the most basic marriage laws be rewritten to suit the needs and desires of adults.

Mahalo & God Bless You!
Avalon L. Gusman

From: michael.poore@mindspring.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Russell Kokubun; Sen. Gary Hooser; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Josh Green
Cc: albeeman@yahoo.com; howarddavidbennett@yahoo.com
Subject: HB444- Civil Unions

I am writing to urge you to support Civil Unions in Hawaii. The spirit of Aloha demands nothing less. It is my understanding that HB444 HD1 is deadlocked in the JCO Committee. Please pull to the Senate floor HB444 so that the full Senate may let its voice be heard on Civil Unions.

Not only do other states within our great country already support Civil Unions but other countries, even countries which many Americans consider far less progressive than the US, countries such as Argentina and even Columbia already support Civil Unions. The European Union has in fact outpaced the US on this important social issue. It is important that Hawaii at least keep up with the rest of the world on this issue. Now is the time for incorporation of Civil Unions into the laws of our wonderful and great state, now is the time for equality for all people in Hawaii.

Michael Poore
Hilo

From: Nolan Yogi [nyogi7@msn.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Nolan K. Yogi, Esq.
Bill No. and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

To: Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chairman
Sen. Dwight T. Takamine, Vice Chairman
Sen. Robert Bunda
Sen. Mike Gabbard
Sen. Clarence K. Nishihara
Sen. Sam Slom

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and Honorable Committee Members:

I am submitting this written testimony in strong opposition to House Bill 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions, which I understand will be heard by the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on Tuesday, February 24, 2009.

I along with a vast majority of the people of Hawaii believed that we had settled this issue in 1998 when we voted for a constitutional amendment which delegated to the Hawaii State Legislature the task of defining marriage. As you are well aware, the language of this legislation arose from a compromise between those who favored and those in opposition to the Hawaii Supreme Court decision that held same-sex partners were entitled to the right of marriage. We believed, however, that this overwhelming vote of the people approving the amendment was a very clear affirmation of the normal definition of marriage, the union between one man and one woman.

Now it appears that the Legislature is intent on fostering an experiment in "social engineering" through legislation. This bill, unlike the reciprocal beneficiaries law, has been devised to grant full marriage rights solely to one group of people, the homosexuals. Further, even if passed, homosexual rights proponents promise this will only be the first step on their agenda to obtain same-sex marriage.

This bill is really an attempt by advocates of same-sex marriage to tear down the institution of traditional marriage, which they believe is oppressive to their lifestyles. Despite its problems, traditional marriage between a man and woman has been the bedrock of civilization "from the beginning." When same-sex marriage aka civil unions is written into law, it debases the institution of marriage itself. We need only look at the merciless decline of marriage in Scandinavia once homosexual marriage was written into their law: children born out of wedlock in greater numbers, family instability with people "living together" rather than legally committing themselves to each other and the lifetime raising of their children. The children of course, suffer the most from a loss of either a mother or father role model.

The passage of this bill will also be the first step in the persecution of people who disagree on religious and moral grounds with the concept of homosexual marriage. Will the legislature in its haste to create this new kind of marriage also implement laws and regulations forcing people to accept the concept and prohibit criticism or objection--possibly as a "hate crime based on gender?" Will the passage of this bill lay the groundwork for future intolerable restrictions on free speech, employment, association rights, etc.?

The nondiscriminatory reciprocal beneficiaries legislation was designed to respond to the homosexual lobby's concerns. It is designed to be used by any couple who cannot marry. It provides the benefits that some same-sex marriage advocates claim they do not presently have (e.g., hospital visitations). This is not an issue of civil rights, since the homosexual couple already have an avenue to obtain the rights they claim they are lacking. No, this is a full frontal attack upon traditional marriage between one man and one woman. Once this door is opened you will never be able to repair the damage done to the institution of marriage and to the social stability of our state

Very truly yours,

NOLAN K. YOGI, ESQ.
P.O. Box 700964
Kapolei, Hawaii 96709-0964
Tel. No. (808) 672-0105

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

Karen Kahn

Co-Author of *Courting Equality: A Documentary History of America's First Same-Sex Marriages*

617 Kua'aina Way

Kailua, HI 96734

Testimony Submitted Regarding Support for HB 444 HD1

Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

Hearing: Feb. 24, 2008, at 9 a.m.

To the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am sending you this testimony in support of HB444 HD1, the Hawaii Civil Unions Bill. Were it not for a work commitment, I would be at the hearing on Tuesday morning as well.

I am a part-time resident of Hawaii. The rest of the year I live in Massachusetts, where my spouse, Patricia Gozemba, and I are married. For almost five years now, gay men and lesbians in Massachusetts have been able to marry. We have the same rights and benefits and the same responsibilities to our families as all other families in Massachusetts. And how has this affected our state?

Though many will tell you that same-sex marriage will destroy the family and all of civilization, the fact is that same-sex marriage has been an unmitigated success in our state. Civilization has not unraveled; in fact, all that has changed is that some families have greater protection under the law than they did previously, and there has been a great deal of joy and good will in the wake of over 11,000 same-sex weddings. The family as an institution is secure in Massachusetts, where divorce rates remain the lowest in the country.

Possibly, you believe that family equality is a mainland issue, not relevant to families in Hawaii. But according to the last US census, self-identified gays and lesbians live in 99 percent of the counties in the US—including on every island of Hawaii. Moreover, there are gays and lesbians raising children in 96 percent of counties. I personally know many such families here in Hawaii.

Throughout much of the US, same-sex couples and their children suffer from various forms of discrimination: they may be denied hospital visitation during a family crisis; they can't benefit from joint property rights of married couples; as individuals their taxes are higher than they would be as a couple; they often cannot both be the legal parents of their children; and there is no legal structure within which to easily dissolve their relationships.

When I think of the discrimination gay and lesbian couples endure, I often think of story I learned while writing my book, *Courting Equality*. It is the story of a male couple from the Midwest who owned a farm together. When one of the men died, distant relatives came to claim his share of the farm. Though the man who died had a will, which left the farm to his partner, the will was invalidated by a court that refused to recognize their relationship. The surviving partner could not afford to buy out the relatives who now owned have the land; he lost his horses, the farm, and his home. This story showed me why it

is essential for gay couples to be able to have legally recognized relationships, with the same rights and benefits as all other families.

With HB 444, Hawaii is taking an important step toward equality for its gay and lesbian residents. Hawaii will join eight other states around the country that offer the legal protections of marriage to families headed by same-sex couples. These states include: Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Washington, Oregon, and California. I don't believe you will find that in any of these states, there has been a devaluing of heterosexual relationships, or a spike in gay and lesbian relationships. In Massachusetts, after five years of marriage equality, about 4 percent of the couples married each year are same-sex couples. Hardly earth-shattering numbers.

Arguments against civil unions and same-sex marriage are based on religious beliefs. But many faith traditions support same-sex unions and bless them in their houses of worship. In Massachusetts, over 1000 clergy from 23 faith traditions support same-sex marriage. At the same time, no House of Worship opposed to same-sex marriage is required to marry same-sex couples.

Finally, I would like to remind the members of the judiciary committee that your responsibility is to all the families and all the children of Hawaii. Let's not forget the children bullied in the school yard because they are different. These may be children who have different gender expressions; youngsters who show a special affinity for someone of the same sex; or kids who are straight themselves but have two parents of the same sex. The high suicide rate of gay teens is all the evidence that is needed to determine that children need to be protected from the hatred and shame of homophobia, not from proud gay and lesbian parents.

Civil unions offer the rights, responsibilities, and benefits of marriage to same-sex partners and their children. This important step will provide these families with the legal protections, economic benefits, and social recognition they are now denied. One of Hawaii's greatest strengths as a community is its respect for differences. The Civil Unions Bill carries on that great tradition.

From: Susan [susanonmaui@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To all members of the Senate Judiciary Committee on HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

As a retired educator with nearly forty years of experience from Head Start through community college levels, I have spent a lifetime nurturing and educating our children and youth.

In Social Studies we uplift our nation's struggle to win independence from England and to keep the nation united during the Civil War.

We celebrate our wonderful Constitution of the United States of America.

We inspire our children to cherish our Bill of Rights.

We remind our children of the great sacrifices made by our military personnel in every war to win and spread freedom.

Now, auwe! How do we explain that you, our elected lawmakers, have chosen to circumvent the clearly expressed will of the voters on the

Issue of what marriage means. Civil Unions is merely another name for marriage.

THE LINE WAS CLEARLY DRAWN IN THE SANDS OF HAWAII by the voters. Please, legislators, do not erase or blur that clear line, the vote defining marriage.

Main arguments:

Do not ignore the clear vote of the populace on this issue. To bring it up again is like kicking sand in the face of all those voters.

Do not allow this bill to pass because it sets a precedent for other non-traditional unions/marriages:

Polygamy (practiced in America by

1. off-shoot Mormons . Testimonies by the multiple wives reveal they buy into the concept and are in loving relationships.
2. Muslims worldwide practice polygamy with one man and multiple wives and many children of those unions. Muslims believe multiple wives are legitimate in their faith and culture, if they can provide for the many children as their mothers.

Muslims are moving to the USA.

How will they "throw away" their legitimate wives and children when in our culture?

Bi-sexual people can have both male and female partners. Some even live together as a family unit. They may claim "love" basis for the relationship.

What about a bi-sexual male or female with multiple mates of both sexes operating as one family unit?

The members may claim love, mutual consent, etc. like HB 444 partners are claiming.

This is a legitimate argument. It sets a precedent for other non-traditional unions of one sort or another. Our children of the future depend on you to make the wise decisions for the good of the whole, not the wishes of a few.

UA MAU KE EA O KA AINA I KA PONO THE LIFE OF THE LAND IS PRESERVED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS A HIGH STANDARD . IT REQUIRES MEN AND WOMEN OF GREAT COURAGE, WISDOM, AND MORAL INTEGRITY.

OUR GREATEST PRESIDENT, ABE LINCOLN, HAD A CLEAR MORAL COMPASS FROM THE BIBLE WHICH HE STUDIED.

Like, Pres. Lincoln, may I suggest you consult the Word of God as he did? Start with Genesis 1.

Study those past civilizations that had no moral standards: Rome in the days of Emperor Nero, for example. What happened to those empires?

Look at our American culture after the lawmakers did their best to get God out of the schools, public places,

etc.

I trust you will DO THE RIGHT THING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN.

MAHALO AND ALOHA. KE AKUA PU.

Susan Lussier, Maui

Ps. I have friends and colleagues who are not straight.

I respect their contributions as productive and creative members of our community.

They can do their own thing. However, if it means opening the door to all manner of "different unions," a'ole,

no.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:49 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: andrea@malamakauai.org
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Andrea Brower
Organization: Individual
Address: 4900 Kuawa Road Kilauea, HI.
Phone: 808-828-0685
E-mail: andrea@malamakauai.org
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

This is long overdue legislation that only begins to correct a major injustice in our legal system.

From: Crystal-Marie Alpiche-Kanae [cmahi@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:52 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Crystal-Marie Alpiche-Kana'e
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00AM
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I am a resident of Hawai'i and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444. In 1998, the people of Hawai'i sent a clear message that marriage in Hawai'i remain between one man and one woman. In my heart and in my mind, I firmly believe in the overwhelming mandate of 1998. I ask that you find the wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawai'i. Civil Unions are just another attempt to impede upon the will of the people. Furthermore, this civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage by simply using another title. We have already compromised with the establishment of Hawai'i's reciprocal beneficiary law, which provides benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sex partner status test—to same sex partners. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage between one man and one woman. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already been settled by the people. Traditional marriage is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold onto in this ever changing world. I am a Hawai'i resident and I ask that you represent the people. Please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

From: Stanley Colt [stan.colt@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:43 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Stanley T. Colt, Keaau, HI
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am strongly opposed to the passage of HB 444 HD1 since its wording is obviously a poorly written document which is an attempt to circumvent the Hawaii marriage law. If this law is passed as written by the Legislators the State should follow up by rescinding all State marriage laws since there would be no difference between marriage and civil unions.

Since a civil union could be between members of the opposite sex as well as the same sex why have marriages in Hawaii any more? Since same sex couples are already afforded the same civil rights as the single or married individual the intent of this legislation is not to remedy civil rights issues as claimed by some. This would merely afford a class of individuals, single partners in a same sex relationship as having more rights than another class of individuals, single partners in an opposite sex relationship.

Since after the State constitution was amended in 1998 to read "The Legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples," the Hawaii legislature passed a law prohibiting marriage for same-sex couples; and since HB 444 HD1 states that "Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to the status of partners in a civil union; and Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to the status of partners in a civil union; one would have to presume the State would only issue Civil Unions to opposite sex couples without a Constitution challenge in the courts.

Since the language of HB 444 HD1 is so poorly written and contains ambiguities, if passed it will end up in the courts, effectively shifting the decision concerning same sex marriages and unions within the State from the Legislators to the Courts. Given the language it is likely same sex marriages would then have to be allowed since there is no meaningful difference between marriage and civil unions. This is in opposition to what the Legislators previously voted on after the State constitution was amended in 1998 and opposed to what I believe the majority of citizens in the State want to happen. The citizens of Hawaii should be afforded an opportunity to vote on whether they want there to be civil unions or same sex marriages to be issued in the State. There will be no turning back if HB 444 HD1 is passed. It will change Hawaii forever and this should not be taken lightly! Accordingly please vote no on HB 444 HD1.

William Ouellette
Senate Judiciary Committee and Government Operations
Hearing: February 24, 2009, 9:00AM

Testimony Supporting HB 444 HD1

You are being asked to vote on Senate Bill 444 HD1 to allow civil unions in the state of Hawaii. I am writing today to ask for your affirmative vote.

Opponents of civil unions might argue, quite persuasively, that same sex unions must not be sanctioned by the state. The assumptions that inform this position are several and often rooted in religious doctrine that places a high value on the heterosexual couple that procreates. Of course, not all heterosexual unions result in children—because of biology or by choice. However, any heterosexual couple of consenting age may marry, even if they just met, even if they don't love each other. They simply have to pay the fee and prove that they're not related. And they may marry, within reason, where they wish, in a church or elsewhere. And that union may be blessed in a religious context or it may simply be legally sanctioned. And that couple may say, regardless of where and under what circumstances their union becomes officially recognized, that they have married. And that couple may continue to call their relationship a marriage as long as they two shall live. My partner, Bill, and I may not marry; nor, under current law, may we enjoy the legal benefits of a sanctioned union.

Perhaps opponents of civil unions might reconsider their position if they knew Bill and me. The issue might no longer represent such an abstraction. Bill and I have been together for six years. We met at a going away party for a mutual friend. After some scheming, other friends put us together and we had a first date. A month or two later I caught the flu and Bill left work early to bring me cold medicines, popsicles and chicken soup. Except for business trips we haven't been apart since. I have children from an earlier marriage, and Bill has lovingly welcomed them into his life as his step-children. Both of our employers recognize us as a committed couple. He is uncle to my nieces and nephews, and I for his. My siblings are ready to embrace him as brother-in-law when, this summer, we fly to Boston to marry each other in one of only two states where that is legally allowed--regrettably, that ceremony will be, in the eyes of the federal government and, more notably, here in Hawaii, merely symbolic. Bill's family has been scraping together money to travel from the west coast to witness our commitment ceremony; they, too, have lovingly welcomed me and my children into their family.

What's remarkable about our story is that it is essentially like so many other peoples' stories. Like other people in committed relationships, I can't imagine my life without my partner, and I know he feels the same. We are lovers, companions, friends, and we are each other's husband, or at least we think of each other that way.

What we lack is not just a certificate, though. I dare say that those of you who are married regard your bond as deeply as Bill and I regard ours. Those of you who are waiting to marry understand, as we do, the commitment that the marriage certificate implies.

Lawfully recognized or not, Bill and I will remain together, and should one of us require hospitalization, the other should be able, if required, to make end of life decisions for the other. Our fortunes should be combined. All the benefits that one spouse may share with the other should be ours, too. Lacking the legal acknowledgement of our union, we must rely on the good and reasonable discretion of hospital administrators, employers, family members and judges.

Bill and I know that we have loving, accepting and supportive families and friends whom we trust to do well by us. We also know other same sex couples who don't enjoy the kind of support we do.

As you consider your position on this issue, as you consider the vote you will cast, please understand that you are being called right now to rise above bigotry—yours or that of the constituent who presses you to vote against my civil rights because I happened to be born gay. You are being called right now to respect the separation of church and state that is so foundational to our Democracy. As a representative of that system of government, you are being called right now to show the same moral courage that the school administrator who protected the handful of African American children selected to attend an all-white school showed during the early days of desegregation, despite his deeply held belief that black students should not attend school with white students. It was his job, and he did it courageously. Please do your job. Please protect **all** our civil rights.

Respectfully yours,

William Ouellette
1212 Nuuanu Ave. #1108
Honolulu, HI 96817
348-3119
billat40@yahoo.com

From: Da Kamas [dakamas@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:31 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Karen Kama
Bill Number and title: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24th
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Legislatures:

I am a wife and mother to a young family. My husband and I are committed to being a family unit: with one husband and one wife. We believe this is the foundation of a family and a solid environment to raise our son. Please do not support bill 444 as it would seek to shatter and destroy what an ohana means to Hawaiian families. I do not want my son's future to be blurred by what the definition of a marriage should be. Same-sex couples in our state already enjoy many equal rights that married couples do. I believe that this should remain the status-quo.

Thank you.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:22 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: asatoa001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Margaret Asato
Organization: Individual
Address: 59-615 Alapio Road Haleiwa, Hi. 96712
Phone: 808-6387168
E-mail: asatoa001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

February 23, 2009

From: Melanie Stanley

TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:


TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Dwight Takamine, and JGO Committee,

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie Stanley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

From: Katherine C G Bougard [bougard@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:17 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB444

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am writing in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Please vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Gardner Bougard

3773 Kanaina Ave, #206, Honolulu HI 96815

808-554-2641

From: Randall Ching [randyching@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1 (Opposition)

Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Auditorium
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dearest Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee,

I humbly ask that you consider opposing HB 444 HD1, if not for anything but one premise alone...the preservation of our State motto.

"The Life of the Land is perpetuated in Righteousness."

These words are important and the world must know that here in Hawaii, we're not just about "words", but that what we say, we mean, and honor. We have Life in our Land because we have been a state that stands for righteousness. I fear that if we do not choose on the side of righteousness, just the opposite will happen. Please truly consider a righteous vote on Tuesday, and preserve the honor of our State and our Hawaiian islands.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Lorilei Ching

From: Kimberly Selden [kimberlyselden@me.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:09 PM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom
Cc: Rep. Ryan Yamane; Sen. Michelle Kidani
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Aloha to Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Sen. Dwight Takamine, Sen. Robert Bunda, Sen. Mike Gabbard, Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Sen. Sam Slom, Senator Michelle Kidani and Representative Ryan I. Yamane

My name is Kimberly Selden I live in Mililani and I am strongly opposed to Measure Number HB 444 HDI to be heard on February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

A marriage is between a man and a women, not any other way around.

Respectfully,
Kimberly Selden
808.625.4204

From: Melissa Kunz [mmkunz@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Melissa Kunz in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Kunz

Captain Cook, HI

From: Michelle Weaver [designsbymics@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:45 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 444

Testimony of Michelle Lee Weaver

TO: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO)

Re: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing Date: 9:00 am Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Dear members of the Senate JGO Committee—

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 444 Relating to the establishment of Civil Unions.

I understand that HB 444 HD1 is going to be heard in your JGO Committee this coming Tuesday. I am writing you before that time regardless of the disposition of that committee hearing to share with you my strong opposition to HB 444 Relating to the establishment of Civil Unions.

As an elected official you are supposed to act in accordance with the people's will. On this issue, the people spoke clearly in 1998 when a clear majority of over 70% voted to retain the "one man-one woman" definition of marriage that has held for millennia.

Many of you are swayed by the arguments of "equality" and "tolerance"; be assured that I am for equality and tolerance, but that is not the issue in this case. This is not an issue of equality, as those in favor of the bill will acknowledge that the legal rights purportedly denied them are already available to same-sex couples through Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. No, be assured that the aim of this bill is to redefine marriage to include not only same-sex couples but also any other behavior-based group that desires civil approval of their lifestyle choice. Can those practicing currently unacceptable sex-based behavior such as polygamy, pedophilia or bestiality be far behind in their demand for "equal rights" and for their right to "marry" the ones with whom they practice their preferred behaviors?

You may say that you do not support same sex marriages, just civil unions, but a vote for this bill is a vote to establish a different definition of marriage to include same sex and other pairings.

PLEASE VOTE NO on HB 444 HD1!

Thank you,

Michelle Lee Weaver

3466 Pinao Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

February 21, 2009

Relating to HB 444 HD 1
Testifying in Support

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Mahalo for this opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 444, House Draft 1, relating to Civil Unions. My name is Mele Chillingworth. I am a 26-year old straight female graduate of the Kamehameha Schools with an Ivy League diploma, born and raised on the Big Island, and I believe that same-sex couples should be allowed to enter into a Civil Union.

Our aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, friends and relatives are being treated as second class citizens. They are voters. They are tax payers. They are soldiers in our military. They are teachers and lawyers and laborers. Our government expects the same of them as it does of heterosexuals, but does not provide the same rights, privileges, or protections.

Our gay friends and family members have a harder time obtaining health and life insurance for their partners and children. They pay more in taxes than we do. If any of them choose to adopt a child, they have a much harder time going through the process, and that child has fewer rights than a child born of, or adopted by, same-sex couples.

Simply put, this is not right. It's not fair or just. It's not pono.

Please help us end this injustice.

Mahalo,

Mele Chillingworth
2318 Lipioma Way
Honolulu, HI 96822

**HONORABLE CHAIRPERSON TANIGUCHI
HONORABLE VICE-CHAIRPERSON TAKAMINE
MEMBERS OF THE SENATE JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

HOUSE BILL 444, CIVIL UNIONS

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2009

My name is Dan Abrahamsson and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in favor of House Bill 444, Civil Unions, before this Committee.

In November 2000, my long time gay male partner of 24 years died of lung cancer. Until he was diagnosed with cancer, 16 months earlier, we lived a wonderful harmonious loving life together. Just like any heterosexual married couple, we enjoyed our relationship of love, planned for our future and for our retirement at old age.

However, there was a big difference at the end. We could not marry, or obtain the many benefits and privileges that heterosexual couples were given for a secured and protected future in old days, simply because we were a same-gender couple. When my partner died, the property and the assets we both had worked and saved so hard for were taxed much higher and differently than if we had had the opportunity to marry. Because my partner's relatives accepted our loving relationship, I was fortunate to be allowed to care for and visit my partner at the hospital during his illness. I was allowed to arrange his funeral according to his own wishes. I know of friends that did not have relatives who were as tolerant as ours. These friends were not allowed to care for or visit their partners, let alone to attend the funeral of their loved one.

The time has come to stop wallowing in antiquated dogmas and superstitions. Attempts to stop the Civil Unions Bill have nothing to do with legality; they simply respond to uninformed public opinion as well as political and religious ambitions. Gays and lesbians are equal Hawaiian and American citizens and have a right to enjoy the same protection and privileges as anyone else in the Hawaiian and American societies.

From the bottom of my heart, I implore you to support the Civil Unions Bill (HB444), which will provide gay and lesbian couples, and their families, with a good measure of equal legal rights and privileges when compared to those of married heterosexual couples.

Me ka aloha Pumehana,

Dan Abrahamsson
1473 Frank Street
Honolulu, HI 96816
(808) 753-6287

From: NJHawaiiWalter@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 2:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1 Feb 24 at 9 a.m.

To Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

My name is Walter Mahr and I live at 95-1020 Paemoku Place, Mililani, Mauka. I am writing to ask you to vote YES in favor of HB 444 HD1 at your hearing on February 24 at 9 a.m. This legislation means so much to me and my family because it will extend both the benefits and obligations that you and your families enjoy. I pay taxes just like you do so why should I be treated as a second class citizen without the same rights as you?

Have you forgotten so quickly how so many Japanese Americans were the victims of discrimination during World War II? Have you forgotten the discrimination against African Americans who had to ride in the back of the bus and drink from the "colored" water fountain or wait in the "colored" waiting room at the bus depot or swim in the "colored" swimming pool or attend the "colored" schools?

Have you forgotten that President Obama's parents couldn't get married when there was a law against different races marrying?

Have you forgotten that baseball players couldn't play on the all white teams?

This list could go on and on but the point is that DISCRIMINATION IS WRONG no matter how you try to justify it with the religious beliefs of certain groups or for any other reason. DISCRIMINATION IS WRONG!

Please don't discriminate against me and my family. Please vote YES on HB 444.

Walter Mahr

95-1020 Paemoku Place
Mililani Mauka, Hawaii 96789

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: dmpase@gmail.com on behalf of Douglas Pase [douglas@pase.us]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 2:56 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support For House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions

Dear Sir and/or Madam,

I wish to voice my support in favor of passing **House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions**. I do believe that passing this bill is the fair, honest and equitable thing to do. It harms no-one and helps a significant part of our population, one who has been unfairly discriminated against for most of our great nation's history. Hawaii, a state who has been the target of more than its share of prejudice and discrimination, can lead the fight for a more equitable and just nation by passing this law. I hope we have the sense God gave us to do so and pass this law.

Sincerely,

Douglas M. Pase
13-3557 Kupo Drive
Pahoa HI 96778
douglas@pase.us

From: Nathan Leo [nathan@nathanleo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 2:57 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I support Civil Unions

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

I support Civil Unions, insuring equal rights and responsibilities for all citizens of the state of Hawaii.

All families deserve equal treatment under the law.

Civil Unions will help create a stronger democracy, advancing social and economic justice in Hawaii, a state that is truly remarkable for its diversity, inclusiveness, and aloha spirit.

very sincerely,

Nathan Leo Braulick
917 16th Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96816

808.265.0508

From: Kekipi K [byjove@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 3:11 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444 Testimony

in re: HB 444 HD1, relating to civil unions

to be heard by the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

from: Stephen and Daniel Tschudi
1743 10th Ave
Honolulu HI 96816

Esteemed Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

It is with great emotion that we offer this testimony to you. For twenty-five years (as of 14 February) we have shared our lives as members of a committed pair, supporting one another in sickness and in health, in harmony and in conflict, because of the strength of our love for one another, a love sprung from our perception of the divine spark in each other.

Recent events have inspired us to hope more than ever before that our bond, which is a normal, natural human phenomenon, as right and proper for us as any opposite-sex couple's relationship is for them, might receive the same civil recognition and protection that married couples enjoy.

We are sure you have reviewed the evidence which shows that marriage automatically confers a host of benefits and responsibilities that serve the interests not only of married couples and their children but also of society as a whole. Extending these benefits and responsibilities to same-sex couples, far from doing harm to the family and society, will only serve to strengthen and stabilize the family -- in all its varied shapes and sizes -- and to protect the interests of children raised by couples of the same sex.

We urge you to consider the human toll of NOT recognizing and protecting loving relationships of the same sex. The marginalized status of same-sex couples legitimizes the emotional and physical violence our society wreaks on gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people. Most members of these groups have suffered this violence repeatedly in their lives, ranging from small indignities such as having to calculate whether it is "worth it" to be out at work, to the physical harm of being gay-bashed. We are talking here about our own lives and experience; we ourselves have suffered physical assault for being perceived as gay.

As for those who decry this step as "special rights" or "condoning immoral behavior," we say: peace. Our great Constitution allows you to believe as you please, but you are not free to abridge our rights and freedoms. Today we are standing up for our rights and asserting the truth of the legitimacy and dignity of our life-partner relationship. We justly demand our place in this polity of which we are full -- not second-class -- members.

Esteemed Committee members, support this bill so long in the making and let Hawaii once again be a beacon of human rights and justice to the nation and the world.

Yours sincerely and respectfully

Stephen Tschudi
Daniel Tschudi

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: Sharon Takamiya [stakamiya001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 3:17 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: garret@hopechapelkapolei.org; Agcaoili, Rogelio B' Jr. 2LT NGHI; debra_hiramatsu@yahoo.com; lennydfarm@hawaiiantel.net; Nadine Watabu; Art Takamiya; delro@hawaiiantel.net; kelli.tarner@gmail.com; mkalua@yahoo.com; Linda Farm; Lori Ching; themimster45@earthlink.net; kokualani808@yahoo.com; John Honold
Subject: RE: Strongly opposing Same Sex Marriage HB 444
Importance: High

Good afternoon~

My name is Sharon Takamiya, housewife, mother of 3 children, I strongly opposed of this same sex marriage bill.

Honestly, I am very uncomfortable and not happy with this HB 444 bill. Our God of Isra'el has created marriage to be between one man and one woman.

Genesis 2:24 THEREFORE, A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE AND THEY SHALL BECOME "ONE FLESH".

Oh, how my heart aches and creation groans at the thought of having same sex marriage in Hawaii. Please, I humbly ask that you would extend your mercy and NOT be in favor of such a bill that will allow such same sex marriage in our beautiful islands.

Praying for the next generation of children in Hawaii!

Praying from HIS mercy seat.

With his Love,
Sharon

From: Noelle Herring [noelle619@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:16 PM
To: Rep. Jon Karamatsu; Rep. Ken Ito; Rep. Della Belatti; Rep. Rida Cabanilla; repcarrol@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Robert Herkes; Rep. Sylvia Luke; Rep. Angus McKelvey; Rep. John Mizuno; repmorito@capitol.hawaii.gov; Rep. Blake Oshiro; Rep. Joseph Souki; Rep. Clifton K. Tsuji; Rep. Glenn Wakai; Rep. Barbara Marumoto; reptheilen@capitol.hawaii.gov; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; JGO Testimony
Subject: I adamantly APPOSE HB-444!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Aloha,

This is Noelle Herring. I live on Koauka Loop in Aiea.

I adamantly APPOSE HB 444 and DO NOT believe in civil unions, as the bible clearly states that marriage is meant to be between ONE MAN and ONE WOMAN!!!!

Please listen to the voice of the citizens of Hawaii and DO NOT support let HB444.

Sincerely,
Noelle Herring

From: Donna Steinel [donna.steinell@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Donna Steinel in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Steinel
444 Mananai Pl Apt A
Honolulu, HI 96818

From: Brian Lax [laxbk@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:14 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Brian K. Lax
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I would like to take this opportunity to express my concerns about HB 444 HD1 which is currently working before your committee. This is the bill regarding "Civil Unions."

Having read the bill, I am opposed to this legislation because of two items that I have seen in this bill.

The first is Section 1, SS-2, (Eligibility) paragraph (2) which states that in order to be eligible to enter a civil union, a person must be:

Of the same sex as the other proposed partner in the
civil union

Based on this wording, this bill does not offer equal rights, but instead provides special priveleges to same-sex couples, since a man-and-woman couple are expressly NOT allowed to enter into a civil union.

The other section which bothers me is Section 3, which begins:

Except for part I of chapter 572, every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage," or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions,"

which proves that this bill is simply an attempt to sidestep the vote of 70% of Hawaiian voters in 1998 to define marriage as being between one man and one woman.

I urge you to vote against this bill.

Thank you.
Brian Lax
Waikiki

From: hwsimons@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:57 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fwd: Testimony opposing HB-444 HD1

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Brian Taniguchi (Chair)
Senator Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair)
Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1
Meeting at Hawaii State Capitol
Auditorium at 9 a.m. on 2/24/09

Senator Taniguchi and Members of Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Harry W. Simons and I live in the State of Hawaii at 87-189 St. John's Rd. Waianae, HI.
I STRONGLY OPPOSE the Civil Union Bill
HB-444 HD1!

SHAME on you for the sham that you are purporting on the voters and people of the State of Hawaii. One of our local representatives adamantly defends her stand on the issue of "civil unions" because it is NOT "same sex marriage." While the language of the bill says "civil unions," the definitions and characteristics of the bill as found in S - 9 "Same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as marriage" mirror the definitions and characteristics of marriage as found in chapter 572 Part 1 of Hawaii Revised Statutes. There is an old saying that says, "A skunk by any other name still smells like a skunk." So it is with same sex marriage. Same sex marriage by any other name still smells like same sex marriage.

It has been pointed out there are some major flaws in Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1. The proponents for civil unions are defending their cause as a civil issue only and NOT as a religious issue in any way. But Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1 does include both issues with the outcome being decidedly for civil issues! The religious issue is addressed when it says in S - 4b those who are licensed by the State of Hawaii to solemnize marriages but refuse to solemnize civil unions will not be subject to fines or penalties. While this sounds good by protecting the religious freedoms of licensed clergy of Christian Churches, the bill does not say anything about the church that refuses to rent its facilities for civil union ceremonies. If Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1 passes, any church that refuses to rent its facilities for civil union ceremonies could be sued for discrimination under state law.

Also if Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1 becomes state law, it would allow gays and lesbians to infiltrate the Christian Church at will. They could volunteer to serve at any Christian Church using the equal opportunity law. They could apply for open positions in leadership/board/administration, Church School/Sunday School/Bible Study, praise and worship team, day care workers, greeters, and ushers. The church could be forced by state law to consider them and ultimately accept them for those positions. If accepted, the gay person could openly practice his/her beliefs in that Christian Church without reprimand or consequence. If Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1 becomes state law, the Christian Church would lose its authority and autonomy to control its traditional religious integrity and structure.

This is most definitely a religious issue for the Christian Church, but from a civil issues viewpoint, the Christian Church will lose in court if Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1 becomes state law! This means that the Christian Church and all Christian Para-Church ministries are being held hostage by this civil unions issue without regard to their traditional

Biblical doctrines and teachings on homosexuality. Civil Union Bill HB-444 HD1 appears to protect licensed clergy from being forced to participate in civil union ceremonies but all aspects of the religious community need to be included and protected as well!

Any church or ministry that has a 501(c)3 non-profit license would be subject to the "law of the land." The Christian Church as we know it would be put out of the business of preaching and teaching the doctrines of the Christian Church. It IS happening NOW in Canada.

FRIGHTENING - ISN'T IT!

I believe homosexuality to be a sin as defined by the Christian Bible.

It is considered an abomination by God because it denies and thwarts His differentiation of a man from a woman and denies and thwarts His participation in the act of procreation. This denying and thwarting of God the Holy Spirit's work is called blasphemy in God's Word and an unpardonable sin. For the homosexual lifestyle to be considered an "alternative lifestyle" is reprehensible to me.

Sincerely,
Harry W. Simons

From: Diana Tizard [dtizard8@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

Diana & Tom Tizard
591 A Keolu Drive
Kailua, HI 96734

February 20, 2007

Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Honorable Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair.
Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee
Subject: HB 444

We are long time residents of Hawaii and speak in full support of HB 444.

We believe that allowing civil unions is a just and reasonable action. Hawaii has always been proud of its reputation of embracing all people. It is time to make that reputation true by creating real inclusiveness and equality.

Thank you for considering our testimony on this bill.

Sincerely,

Diana Tizard
Tom Tizard

From: Tim B Rogness [mauiwahine1@juno.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HDI Relating to Civil Unions

Testifier: Angela Rogness
Bill No. HB 444 HDI Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I oppose HB 444 HDI Relating to Civil Unions in the State of Hawaii. The people of Hawaii made their decision clear some 11 years ago strongly opposing same sex marriage in our state. Nothing has changed. I will continue to stand in oppositon for the sake of all families in our state, my children and my children's children.

Thank you for the oppportunity to voice my opposition.

From: awsumida@msn.com on behalf of Andrea Ward [andrea.wardsumida@hawaiiintel.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:50 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Suzanne King
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Andrea Ward and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I believe that traditional marriage is a religious institution and serves a purpose for those who worship and want their union recognized within their own faith community. I believe that civil unions are non-secular and should be recognized in a non-religious environment so that partners and families like yours, have the same opportunities and benefits that marriage otherwise allow.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,
Andrea Ward

PO Box 1315
Kailua, HI 96734

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

**THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2009**

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Hearing February 24, 2009
Testimony on HB 444
(Relating to Civil Unions)**

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, members of the Committee:

I strongly support the passage of HB 444. Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on this matter.

I am an Attorney and CPA practicing in the estate planning area, with a significant client base of same-sex couples. I also work with clients on estate and income tax planning and tax preparation and represent clients before the Hawaii Department of Taxation and Internal Revenue Service on tax matters. In my capacity as a CPA and Attorney, I have previously testified, in 2007 and 2008, before the Legislature on matters affecting same sex couples, including urging adoption of previously proposed legislation regarding Civil Unions and urging rejection of most other legislation which would provide for the piecemeal addition to, and changes of, Hawaii's existing Reciprocal Beneficiary laws and benefits.

In my past testimony, I have always stressed to legislators and staff members that what is really needed is a comprehensive basis of laws which can efficiently and completely address the administration of the hundreds of rights afforded married spouses and their families (and more than a thousand statutes which address them) and which would provide parity and equality between the provision of those rights to married spouses and their families and unmarried same-sex partners and their families.

If you believe that it is important to ensure parity and equality between unmarried same sex couples and married couples, I urge you to vote for HB444. Since the Reciprocal Beneficiaries provisions were enacted in the late 1990s, I have, in my professional experience, found them to be very weak law, without much substance or applicability to most of the citizens of Hawaii. RB laws do not allow for joint adoption, joint income taxes, joint foster parenting, or the right to private communication between parties, nor do they address the rights of, and obligations toward, children who are the products of same sex relationships. I believe that the present RB laws are profoundly unequal and unfair to couples that consider themselves to be a family, yet are prohibited by law from marrying one another. The present RB laws are also inadequate to deal with the situations and issues facing these couples and their families on a daily basis today. To add to a flawed and incomplete set of Reciprocal Beneficiary laws only builds on a weak foundation, without addressing the underlying issues of equality for same sex couples and their families. Hawaii needs a comprehensive basis of laws creating Civil Unions, as proposed in HB 444, to complement and add to the current laws that provide for the formation of Reciprocal Beneficiary relationships and opposite sex marriages (on a mutually exclusive basis).

Civil Unions currently exist in Vermont, New Hampshire, and New Jersey, California permits legally sanctioned Domestic Partnerships, and Massachusetts and Connecticut provide for same-sex marriages. No profound negative affect on the institution of Marriage has resulted in any of these states as a result of extending civil rights and benefits to a larger group of taxpaying citizens of any of these states. Please pass HB444. The time is now—and the opportunity to make history and do what is right is yours. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lee M. Yarbrough
Attorney at Law & Certified Public Accountant

From: taxhawaii@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony; JGO Testimony
Subject: Civil union bill

HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
fr: jeff hino

Please keep traditional marriage as the only recognized, lawful union between 2 people: A man and a woman. We don't need to send the wrong message and proliferate a mass of homosexuals and lesbians "coming out" and rushing to lay claim to the same entitlements rightly reserved for those unions of the opposite sex, as has been traditionally and historically recognized for a millennium of years. That traditional marriage, should be compromised to include those of the same sex is sacrilegious and down right blasphemous. Many heterosexuals of the same sex cohabitate as roommates to better manage their living expenses, most don't get intimate or push for entitlements. What about them? Are they supposed to sit silently as you decide to pass legislation that will force them to become willing participants in condoning a lifestyle that encompasses sodomy and unnatural sexual activity? Or, are they to sit idly by as you draft this bill that will eventually end up costing them more taxes to subsidize, yet not provide them a single benefit! Fellow Senators and Representatives let's please be rational.

With out reserve and with quick resolve we must stop this wiled gambit. You must act on our behalf to put these people in their proper place with swift and decisive actions and not allow their ideologies, agendas, and immorality to seep into our main stream of living and silence once and for all, their continued nagging bid to become part and parcel of our status quo. There is simply too much integrity at stake, especially for the future of our children. They must know the difference now and they must know it with certainty! Thank you.

From: Bob Hallman [bob@calvarykauai.org]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:53 PM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Clarence Nishihara
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

From: Pastor Robert Hallman, Calvary Chapel Kauai

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

Bob Hallman

From: Jazmine Beebe [cockettj@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:10 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: testimoney HB 444 HD1

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Re: Measure Number: HB 444HD1
To be heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM

I am strongly in opposition to HB 444 HD1. As a lifetime resident of Hawaii, a Kanaka Maoli, a young mother, and a student at the University of Hawaii, I am moved to think of the consequences of this bill for the future of Hawaii. I am in strong opposition simply because the people have spoken. It has been proven that an overwhelming majority of the public is in favor of traditional marriage. To allow civil unions in Hawaii is to undermine the people of Hawaii. Not only is it ethically wrong, it is a misrepresentation of your role as a voice of the people. It then undermines the purpose of democracy and rights of us, the people. I urge you not to let this happen.

Sincerely,
Jazmine Beebe
February, 21, 2009

23 February 2009

FROM: RAYMOND L. / TOYO F. TRADER (print name)

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALOI

Raymond L. Trader
Toyo F. Trader

1

From: Maxine Allayne Darlene Mowe [maxinemowe@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:15 PM
To: PBStestimony
Subject: Written Testimony

"Dear State Representatives and Senators,

23 Feb, 2009

I OPPOSE HB-444 Civil Unions in Hawaii. In 1998 the people of Hawaii voted Traditional Marriage with a clear resounding 70% majority. HB-444 is a veiled means to impose "same-sex" marriage upon the people of Hawaii, against their stated will. By recognition of:

- 1) Partners to be equal with traditional "spouses,"
- 2) The solemnization being performed by same persons licensed to perform "marriage,"
- 3) Planned recognition of "same-sex marriages" performed in other states as a "civil union" in Hawaii,
- 4) Proposed extension of chapter 572, Family Relations (except part I) every reference to:
 - a)"marriage" as equal to civil unions and
 - b)"husband", "wife", or "spouse" as equal partners,
- 5) Every reference to marital status, including...procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution,, shall apply equally... to civil unions and to partners in a civil union.

Thank You,

--
Maxine Mowe

From: Christmas Starks [chrissymas@live.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:12 PM
To: PBStestimony
Subject: Written Testimony

"Dear State Representatives and Senators,

23 Feb, 2009

I OPPOSE HB-444 Civil Unions in Hawaii. In 1998 the people of Hawaii voted Traditional Marriage with a clear resounding 70% majority. HB-444 is a veiled means to impose "same-sex" marriage upon the people of Hawaii, against their stated will. By recognition of:

- 1) Partners to be equal with traditional "spouses,"
- 2) The solemnization being performed by same persons licensed to perform "marriage,"
- 3) Planned recognition of "same-sex marriages" performed in other states as a "civil union" in Hawaii,
- 4) Proposed extension of chapter 572, Family Relations (except part I) every reference to:
 - a) "marriage" as equal to civil unions and
 - b) "husband", "wife", or "spouse" as equal partners,
- 5) Every reference to marital status, including...procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution, shall apply equally... to civil unions and to partners in a civil union.

Thank You,

Christmasedna Starks

Christmasedna Starks 

1475 Linapuni St. Apt. 405A
Honolulu, HI 96819
(808)927-7290
chrissymas@live.com
cstarks1@campus.hpu.edu

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: Monique Akaka [moniqueakaka@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:17 PM
To: PBStestimony
Subject: HB-444 Civil Union testimony

Dear State Representatives and Senators,

I OPPOSE HB-444 Civil Unions in Hawaii.

I respectfully ask that you consider my viewpoint on this matter.

Thank You,

Monique Akaka
91-1016 Kaipoua St.
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

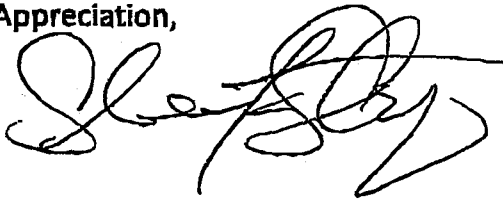
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



Sloane & Stanley
PO Box 492620
Keaau HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Irene Abalos

Irene Abalos

P.O. Box 722

Honokaa, Hi.
96727

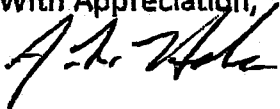
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With Appreciation,



ALBERT L. HALE
RR3 Box 1283
PAHOA HI 96728

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Dorothy J. Schlotman

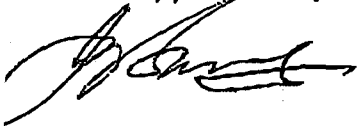
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With Appreciation,



GREGORY SANTIAGO

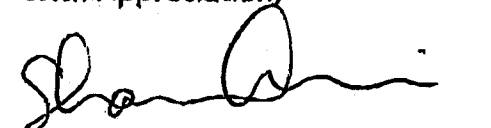
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With Appreciation,



Shannon Carmichael
P.O. Box 1717
Keaau HI. 96749

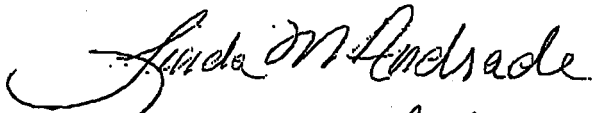
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With Appreciation,



LINDA M. ANDRADE

P.O. BOX 433

MT. VIEW, HI 96771

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Eleanor R. Hood
ELEANOR R. HOOD
1025 ULANA PL.
Hilo, HI. 96720

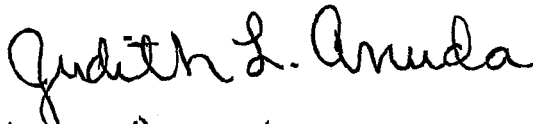
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With Appreciation,



Judith L. Arruda

P.O. Box 63

Kurtistown, Hi. 96760


February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

 Ray Yanez
15-2618 Keano-Pahoehoe Hwy
Pahoehoe HI 96778

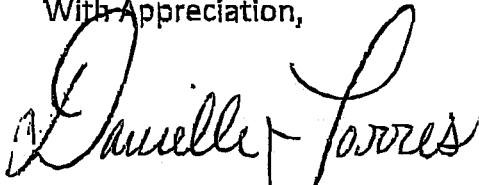
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Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,


Danielle Torres
15-2618 Keaau-Paho Rd
Pahoa, HI 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Charles K Kekahu
HC2 Box 6974
Keaanu HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

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February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Andrea Miday
Andrea Miday
P.O. Box 1798
Keeau, Hi. 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Andrea Miday
Andrea Miday
P.O. Box 1798
Keaua, Hi. 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Mary E. Cabatbat
Mary E. Cabatbat
P.O. Box 1166
Pahoa, Hawaii 96778

Carmen Geo, Wawa Dr.
Cabatbat, Dean M.
POB 1166
Pahoa, Hi. 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Candice Jackson

Candice Jackson

P.O. Box 5529

Hilo, HI 96720

(808) 982-7688

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Lev 18:22

~~Lev 18:22~~

CINDY ANDRADO - 

PAUL ANDRADO - 

PO BOX 1887

Keaau Hi 96749

BOB 968-8140

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Alonso Baker

Alonso Baker

Po Box 5341

Hilo Hi 96720

15-1539 18th St

Keanu, Hi 96749

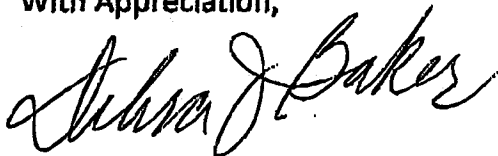
February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



Debra Baker
PO Box 5541
Hilo Hi 96720

15-153 9 18th St
HPP, Keaan, Hi
96749

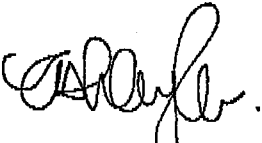
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With Appreciation,


Ashley Lee
P.O. Box 1142 Pahoa, HI.

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Darston m Eddins

Darston m Eddins

16-1936 Pahoa Hwy
Keeau Hawaii 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Shane Castillo

SHANE CASTILLO

P.O. BOX 583

Hanalei, HI 96716

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Catherine M. Seagquist

Catherine M. Seagquist

P.O. BOX 1512

KUERTISTOWN, HI

96760

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Steven Amirian

Box 6909

Hi lo Hi 96720

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Korey ML Medeiros
Korey ML Medeiros

Hcr3 Box 13002
Keanu HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,



Richard K. Wise Jr.

200 Kanoelehua Ave. FMB 455

Hilo, HI 96720

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Alfred Yadao Jr
Alfred Yadao Jr
RR3 Box 1047.
Peru HI. 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Raeleen M. Yadao
Raeleen M. Yadao
RR3 Box 1047
Pahoa, HI 96728

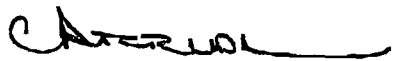
February 22, 2009

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SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,



Clayton Arruda

P.O Box 63

Kurtistown, HI.
96760

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

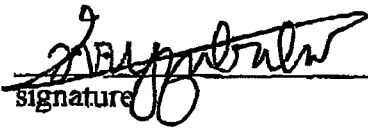
Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.


signature

Ian Zabala
printed name

92-1214 Palahia St. Apt X-104
address Kapolei HI 96707

(optional) phone and/or email address

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

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Carl P Bendis
signature

CARL P BENDIS
printed name

1925 KALA-KAUA AVE
address

808 941-5041
(optional) phone and/or email address



February 21, 2009

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Capitol Auditorium
415 South Beretania Street

RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions - STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

The Aloha Bears come before you today to ask that you support House Bill 444 House Draft 1 the Civil Unions Bill. We represent over 100 members and more 1,500 supporters. We cover couples that have been together for more years than almost anyone here today, business owners and your average run of the mill member of the gay community.

This testimony is a first for the Aloha Bears as we are just a social club. We were formed in 1998 as a gay oriented social club that gives back to our community. Over the 11 years that we have been in existence we have raised over \$20,000 for local and national charities. Our biggest event is Bears in Toyland, an event that raises money and collects toys for children that may not have a toy to open on Christmas morning.

We hope that you all see the irony that we have to come here today to ask for you to extend to the gay community the same rights, privileges and responsibilities that you bestow on straight couples. The same couples that we work so hard to ensure that their children have a present to open on Christmas Day.

We have heard a lot about family this past month and you all need to know that by granting same-sex couples the rights in this Bill will only strengthen the family as an institution. All studies have shown that children raised by same-sex couples are just as well adjusted as their counterparts that are raised by straight couples.

Since we are talking numbers we would like to point out that every legitimate poll shows that where the majority may oppose same-sex marriage the majority does support Civil Unions. The leader of the United States of America – President Barack Obama supports Civil Unions. He carried this state by a 3 to 1 margin.

Civil Unions is a matter of justice and equality for the gay and lesbian community. Please vote yes on the House Bill 444 House Draft 1.

Mahalo,


Michael Golojuch, Jr.

President

ALOHA BEARS – A SOCIAL CLUB
92-954 MAKAKILO DR. SUITE 71, KAPOLEI, HI 96707
ALOHABEAR@GMAIL.COM • WWW.ALOHABEARS.ORG

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

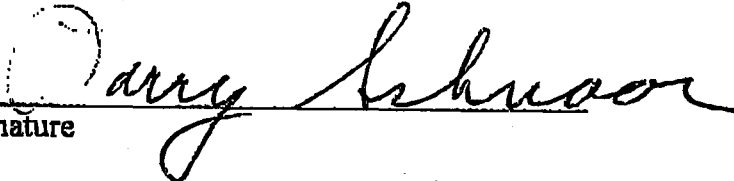
Date: February 22, 2009

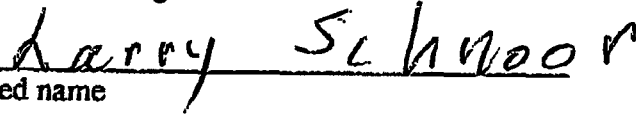
Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

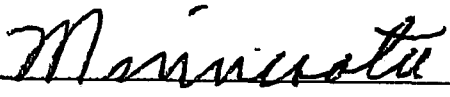
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Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.


signature


printed name


address

(optional) phone and/or email address

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

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signature

Ralph Nani
printed name

address

(optional) phone and/or email address

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

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The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Name: *Carlos V. Hernandez*
Signature: *[Handwritten Signature]*
Address: _____

717 Kamekui St H/H 96826

**Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Judiciary and Government Operations Committee**

(PRINT) Name of person providing testimony

SARA ROSE

(PRINT) A contact phone number or address - *required*

360-513-6113

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m., Hawai'i State Capitol Auditorium**

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee.

My name is SARA ROSE and I am submitting testimony with regards to House Bill 444 – Civil Unions. I wish to express my support for this proposed legislation.

I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic Party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the members in the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask each of you support HB 444 and I appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo.

Testimony In **OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Unions**

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 A.M.

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Seventeen years ago my brother, Brandon Bray, died of the dreaded A.I.D.S. disease. Brandon was mostly known as a singer and songwriter, and won a Na Hoku Hanohano Award. He spoke and wrote fluent Hawaiian, had Bachelors Degree in Hawaiian Studies, and a Master's Degree in Social Work. He later worked for the Public Defender's Office and was an Administrative Social Worker for a nursing home.

Entertainment writer, Wayne Harada, wrote in Brandon's obituary article that Brandon's passing was due to Leukemia, not A.I.D.S. We, his family, were ashamed that Brandon's death was caused by H.I.V.

I am writing to you in opposition to HB 444.

HB 444 not only legalizes same-gender's civil benefits, it encourages homosexual relationships.

When my brother was dying of A.I.D.S., he wanted everyone to know that homosexuality is wrong--that it leads to suffering and death. No good could become of it.

Until now, my family and I have never made a public statement about the truth of Brandon's death. I believe that the time is right to speak-up against the promotion of rights, which will only lead to the deterioration of Hawai'i's people.

Please consider the death of HB 444, before it becomes the death of our loved ones.

Very sincerely yours,



Colette Oshiro
2/22/09

From: luyeda@gmail.com on behalf of Lance Uyeda [lkuyeda@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:39 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Lance Uyeda in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium Subject line: Testimony of Lance Uyeda in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Lance Uyeda
98-045 Uao Pl Apt. 502
Aiea HI 96701

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:39 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: ares.shar@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Sharlene Ares
Organization: Individual
Address: 2760 Henry St. Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
Phone:
E-mail: ares.shar@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I strongly oppose the Civil Union bill. HB 444 is against the will of Hawaii's people. This is not a civil rights issue. Please protect traditional marriage and vote NO to civil unions. Thank you.

From: shannon rudolph [shannonkona@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:37 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: YES on H.B. 444, HD1

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government
Operations
Hearing Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the
Date/Time: Auditorium
Subject line: Testimony of Shannon Rudolph in Strong
Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil
Unions

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Mahalo,
Shannon Rudolph
P.O. 243 Holualoa, Hi. 96725

From: jrcarpenhi@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:35 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda;
Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Mike Gabbard
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifiers: JAMES R. CARPENTER, 5175 Nohu Street, Honolulu, HI 96821
JEANNE F. CARPENTER, 5175 Nohu Street, Honolulu, HI 96821

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Senators:

This testimony is being sent to let you know that we very strongly oppose House Bill 444, to enact a law establishing civil unions between same sex partners.

As citizens of the State of Hawaii it disturbs us greatly that our legislature has taken it upon themselves to push through a bill that clearly counters the desires of the people of Hawaii. We voted to affirm marriage as being between a man and a woman.

Thank you for listening to the people of Hawaii and not allowing a minority to rule.

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Gene Seybold [reflections37@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:31 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Gene Seybold in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium
Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee
on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Gene Seybold
Hawaii Resident
1750 Kalakaua Avenue
Suite 103 #3166
Honolulu, HI 96826

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I am in STRONG SUPPORT of HB441 hd1 (Civil Unions). This bill is about human rights and equality. It's about protecting and providing for families whose lifestyles have been forcibly labeled by others as an abomination. I feel that if we do not pass this legislation, we are only breeding more animosity amongst ourselves. If we do not pass this legislation, our children will grow up and continue to label and discriminate against others based on who they choose to love. Our nation needs to come together and be accepting of people for who they are and not on the basis of who they love.

In Solidarity (and as should you all) and in SUPPORT of the Civil Unions Bill,

Renee Leotele Togafau

From: Terry Hunt [thunt@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:39 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT OF CIVIL UNIONS

RE: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of civil unions. Please vote yes on this bill. Now is the time to bring basic civil rights to all of Hawaii's citizens.

Thank you for your support of fairness on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Terry Hunt

///\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//\\V//

Terry L. Hunt, Ph.D.

Professor

Department of Anthropology

University of Hawai'i-Manoa

2424 Maile Way, Saunders Hall 345

Honolulu, HI 96822 USA

Phone: 808-956-7310

Please visit our webpages:

<http://www.anthropology.hawaii.edu/faculty/hunt>

<http://www.anthropology.hawaii.edu/projects/kauai>

Testimony Supporting HB444, Hearing of February 24, 2009

Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice chair

I am in a wonderful marriage. The loving relationship my wife and I enjoy is a precious source of happiness and security in our lives. We are committed to each other, and our commitment has been recognized and celebrated by our friends and family. Our commitment is recognized and guarded by the civil law of the larger community surrounding and including us as well. And we are assured and secure in that law.

So now, I have to ask the question: Why are my gay and lesbian friends who are in loving relationships not accorded the same security and protection, the same civil rights, that my community grants to me and my life partner? I hear opponents of HB444, the bill that if passed and enacted into state law would grant equal civil rights to my friends, I hear them say that our marriage will somehow be threatened if these rights are granted to my friends. This is entirely false. Such a law, such a clear assurance of justice for all persons in committed and loving relationships, will not threaten, it will enhance the joy of our marriage, and it will strengthen our ties to our larger community. We will celebrate the reality that our community is truly just.

I, therefore, ask you today to pass HB444 out of committee. I am hopeful that the Senate will pass the bill, and that, as it becomes law, thereby equal civil rights will be extended to all. Please do the right thing.

Respectfully,

Chuck Huxel

Address: 99-1362 Hele Mauna Pl., Aiea, HI 96701

Phone: 258-3615

From: Steven Yoshimoto [steven.yoshimoto@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:33 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony against HB 444

Testimony for Senate Judiciary Committee
Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 at 09:00 am
Topic: HB 444

Senators of Senate Judiciary Committee;

As a resident and voting member of State of Hawaii, I am compelled to speak out against attempts to sneak HB 444 through and speak out for traditional marriage. I have never sent testimony to legislative process or even sent email or mail to my legislatures in my entire life. However, there comes a time in life where one is moved to action. For me it is HB 444. From beginning of time, marriage has been between man and a woman. If it was woman and a woman or man and a man, civilizations would have ended thousand years ago. Family need uniqueness and differences of man and a woman and their importance in healthy emotional and physical growth of children. Hawaii's people spoke their wish ten years ago when they voted down same sex marriage. Now some of our legislatures think that they know what the people of Hawaii thinks. I believe legislatures who believe people of Hawaii wants civil union are out of touch with the people and are self-serving. Why don't you ask the people of Hawaii again like ten years ago if you really want to know what the people of Hawaii believe. I urge you to serve the people of Hawaii and vote NO on HB 444.

Steven K. Yoshimoto

From: Satsuye Tanaka [satsualoha@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:38 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STOP HB444

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

RE Measure Number: HB 444

Public Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM

Please STOP HB 444. Same sex civil unions should not be allowed. Marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Very respectfully,

Satsuye Tanaka
2639 Laau St, Apt 2
Honolulu, HI 96826

It's the same Hotmail®. If by "same" you mean up to 70% faster. [Get your account now.](#)

Aloha,

I would like to make known today that I **OPPOSE** the bill at hand called **HB444_SD1**.

The purpose of opposition is that it is against the nature of law by God and by man. For if we continue to encourage such acts in regards to same-sex marriage, or under a new camouflage of deception entitled "Civil Union", the population of humanity shall decrease dramatically. For neither two females nor two males can conjure a child just between themselves for this would be an impossible task to defeat.

For God made both male and female and expressed to them that they need to be fruitful and multiply. The Bible also noted that during the time of the flood of Noah, he needed to take in two of every beast, fowls, creatures, and all living things; each of a male and a female. If the non-religious partisans who believe in evolution or some other means of creation of the universe, also can not disprove that the only way of reproduction is only possible, by either a human or an animal, is through the opposite sex, which means a male and a female type of organisms.

Even if the "same-sex" are able to live together, they will not be able to produce a child without a third-party intervention. With this bill being active and approved by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii, having a third-party intervention will now cause the so-called couple to commit adultery, which adultery according to the Black's Law Dictionary state, "Adultery is a voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than the person's spouse". In addition to that, adultery is still considered a crime even though it is rarely prosecuted to the full extent.

I here stand now against this bill, HB444_SD1 – Civil Union, and declare my opposition against the bill to you, the leaders of the Legislature of the State of Hawaii.

Thank you

Phuong Nga Kapaona

From: Maryann Overstreet [overyule@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:19 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support for HB 444 HD1

To: Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee

Re: Support for HB 444 HD1 (Time of hearing: Feb. 24, 9 a.m.)

Please support this measure (Civil Unions)! It is the pono thing to do.

From: Maryann Overstreet, Associate Professor of German, UH Manoa

•

From: tobymurata@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:46 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444HD1Relating to Civil Unions

Measure Number: HB444 HD1

Testimony for State Judiciary Committee Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear State Judiciary Committee,

I strongly oppose HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions. HB444 HD1 states that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil union." This statement by itself makes "marriage" and "civil union" virtually identical and indistinguishable from each other.

The people of Hawaii clearly stated their position in the Constitutional Amendment in 1998 that marriage should be reserved for one man and one woman. HB444 HD1 by its own definition is marriage under the name of "civil union", and is therefore attempting to redefine marriage to include same sex couples under the disguise of Civil Union which is against the majority will of the people of Hawaii.

Marriage (one man/one woman) and family are the foundation of our society and the integrity of this institution must be maintained if we are to leave a lasting legacy of strength for our children

I respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,
Noreen S. Murata

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From: rickkathleen [rickkathleen@earthlink.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:50 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: RICK F. MCKITTRICK
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

DEAR SENATOR - Chair Taniguchi
- Vice Chair Takamine
- Senator Bunda
- Senator Gabbard
- Senator Nishihara
- Senator Slom
- and Senate President Hanabusa

I seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Please vote against HB 444, or better yet, do not even give it a hearing.

With grace and respect,

Name: Rick F. McKittrick

e-mail: rickkathleen@earthlink.net

From: Brian Reynolds [br.kingscathedral@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:38 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fwd: Testimony in Opposition to HB 444HD1

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jeff Cochran <kenneycochran@hotmail.com>
Date: Mon, Feb 23, 2009 at 12:32 PM
Subject: Testimony in Opposition to HB 444HD1
To: jgottestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov
Cc: br.kingscathedral@gmail.com

Kenney J. Cochran
350 Auwinala
Kailua, HI 96734,
808.230.8600

To: Senate Judiciary Committee for HB444HD1 for Tuesday February 24,2009 @9:00a.m.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thanks for the opportunity to voice my disagreement and oppose this bill, it's imperative that we uphold the moral fibers of our country, where we do a gut check with where we came from as children, yes, we, you and I both had a Mother and Father. if you were raised with two Mothers as your parent, that would be troubling and confusing for me and for you. Who would you imprint, your mom's tenderness and loving care, or that of someone that did not birth you, when a Mother is carrying you around for 9 months, you are being cuddled, loved, and formed by our Father who art in heaven. He the Creator has a purpose and plan for you to prosper, not for harm. If this bill goes forward, the children and next generation will not know what a family resembles, and their imprinting and psychological state will be slanted and totally out of place, it will breed, a generation that does not have family values based on the original "Love Book" the Bible. Most of the laws of this country were founded in the Bible prior to the constitution, why because that is literally all they had to rely on. Unless it was passed down from the generation before, they did not know how to live, communicate, work and provide for the food on the table, as well as the discipline to be successful and encourage one another to greatness.

Imagine this with me, you as the Mother, and someone comes in and teaches them your own child that today we are going to study about the norms of the family, with two Fathers or two Mothers in your home, how can two dads teach the young girls about nurturing and taking care of children, nursing them properly. In this simple case, who will suffer the most, you're correct the innocent little children. In today's society and Hawaii, we have remember the people that created this great state, yes, it was our family, mom and pop businesses, farming and caring for the fields, living off the lands, this was passed on to generations. Without a Mother a family suffers, without a Father a family suffers, there is no way two males or females can feel the roles of a bonafide Dad and Mom. Statistics say that only 2% of Americans are gay, now we are willing to allow 98% to stay idle, that is not the majority last time I checked. When this came up before it was soundly defeated 70% to 30%. If this bill goes forth, your family will pay for mistakes made by you. I'm asking you to carefully consider voting against HB 444HD1. Why, for the good of the people; they don't have the right to redefine

marriage for all us. I'm again kindly asking you to consider the impact it will have on educating our children, your grandchildren, and my family. If this passes, our Ohana that attends public school would be forced to teach same sex "marriage", the texts books will have photos of two moms, two dads standing together holding hands with a baby in their hand.

Yesterday between 7500 and 10,000 plus the 3,000 that drove by, gathered to say this is a no go. Vote your conscience, one you can live with when you are not elected to office, one your family will have to deal with and one your grandchildren and their grandchildren will have to live with forever. I again thank you for allowing me to write my testimony, if you are reading this, know that I am praying for you to have the wisdom, knowledge and ability to communicate effectively, I've served in this great nation for 20 years. I dearly love my Ohana, this great state and I'm thankful for what all public servants do, they sacrifice for the benefit of all. Vote against this bill, let's make sure we take care of unfinished business and not leave anything for someone else, our children to have to pay the penalty for and spend extra time trying to resolve something that was and is common sense.

In God and You I Trust,

v/r
Kenney J. Cochran

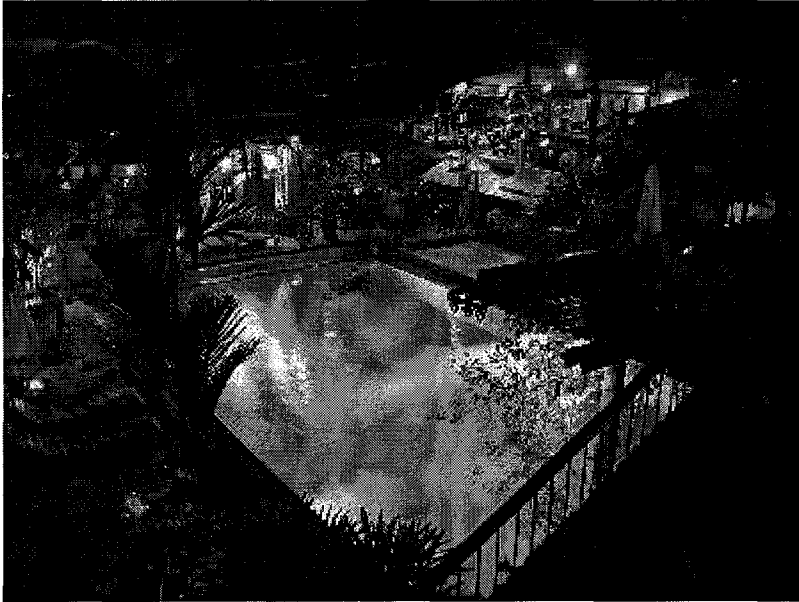
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From: SkipperO@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Supporting HB 444
Attachments: cc%20pool%20shot.jpg

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Senate,
I am a resident of Hawaii, living and working in Thailand. I am very happy to see that Hawaii is moving towards a more inclusive partnership law for it's good and honest LGBT citizens.

Please support HB444!

Robert "Skip" Burns, Jr.
CC Bloom's Hotel



Phuket. Thailand

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Testimony for House Bill 444,

A Bill For An Act Relating to Civil Unions

WRITTEN TESTIMONY in **Strong Opposition** of House Bill 444 :

Patricia St John Payne
94508 Hokuala Street
Mililani, HI 96789
808.623.7278

Hearing: February 24th, Tuesday, 9 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI

Dear Senators,

Thank you all for your hard work, dedication and willingness to serve the people of Hawaii. I believe it is the intention and desire of each and every one of you to carry out the will of your constituents to the very best of your ability.

Thank you for taking the time to review written testimony. I have taken the time to write and submit testimony because I strongly oppose HB444.

The people of Hawaii have already spoken against same-sex marriage. I encourage you to protect traditional marriage and say "no" to civil unions.

If you have any doubt as to the will of the people on this very critical issue, allow the voters to once again cast their ballot.

Respectfully yours,

Patricia St John Payne
94508 Hokuala St.
Mililani, HI 96789
808.623.7278

February 21, 2009

Re: HB 444 – Civil Unions

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please accept this as my testimony in opposition to House Bill 444 regarding Civil Unions in the State of Hawaii.

In 1998 the people of Hawaii made it quite clear that marriage is between a man and a woman. The fact this bill in question is called “civil union” does not change the fact that the proponents and supporters are again trying to go against the will of the people.

It is my understanding that the State of Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law and that it has been in affect since 1997. Therefore, it is clear that the agenda for civil union is ultimately same-sex marriage.

Sincerely,

Dan and Esther Gefroh
Honolulu, HI

From: Samuel Burris [samuelu2001@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:58 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions:

Dear Sirs:

As an active member of the Democratic Party and retired educator, I strongly support Support of HB 444 HD1 in support of Civil Unions.

For years, this group in our society has suffered the acts of discrimination by citizens and government alike. Now is the time to mke things right by voting for HB 444 HD1.

Sincerely,

Samuel Burris
1630 Makiki Street #A 104
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: Noelle Cambeilh [noellecambeilh@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD 1

We respectfully urge you to pass HB 444 HD 1 in a spirit of fairness and equality for all American citizens. There is not a shred of evidence to suggest that passage of this bill would endanger heterosexual marriage in any way. It is imperative that separation of church and government be maintained. Do not aid and abet discrimination of any kind in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Noelle Cambeilh L.S.W



EMAILING FOR THE GREATER GOOD

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From: Rev. Mike Young [revmikeyoung@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support of HB 444 HD1

Testifying: Rev. Mike Young, Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu
2500 Pali Highway
Honolulu, HI 96817
Email to: uurevmike@hawaii.rr.com

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009 at 9 am Capitol Auditorium
Bill: Supporting HB 444 HD1

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Committee:

I am Rev. Mike Young, Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu.

Though I come before you as the minister of a religious community, I wish to emphasize that this is not, and should not be, a religious issue. The laws of the State of Hawaii should conform to the constitution, to fundamental human rights of equality, of conscience, and of freedom.

I am a board member of the All Believers Network, a local interfaith dialogue group with representatives of at least 13 different religious traditions. Hawaii's laws should never expect to or attempt to conform to any of those traditions whatever proportion of the population they may represent. Some of those traditions will and do oppose Civil Unions. Many of those traditions have communities within them that differ on the issue, and each of them have individuals within them that differ on the issue.

I was also the vice-president of Save Our Constitution, one of the organizations that opposed the constitutional amendment more than a decade ago that gave the legislature the power to define marriage. At that time, my congregation sponsored a state-wide poll of registered voters. One of the questions posed was whether the voter supported same-sex marriage. Not surprisingly, 70% opposed; and the subsequent vote reflected that.

However, a second question on that poll asked if the voter supported equal rights for same sex couples. Across all religious, denominational and ethnic lines, a majority said, "Yes !" The total was 67% in favor.

Much has changed since that vote. What has not changed is that a majority of Hawaii's voters support equal rights for gay and lesbian couples, as long as it is not called marriage.

This bill reflects that growing support for fairness and equity toward all of Hawaii's families.

I urge you to support House Bill 444 HD 1 to establish civil unions, as a matter of fundamental human rights of equality, of conscience, and of freedom.

5077
**KAT BRADY
76 NORTH KING STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96817
(808) 533-3454**



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 AM

Auditorium

STRONG SUPPORT

HB 444 HD1 – CIVIL UNIONS

JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am a social justice advocate. I am testifying today in strong support of HB 444 HD1– Civil Unions.

HB 444 HD1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. (HB444 HD1).

Hawai'i's unique history – the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, the arrest and incarceration of Queen Lili'uokalani, the imposition of martial law in World War II, the arrest and incarceration of Hawai'i's people based solely on their Japanese ancestry - has informed our strong commitment to civil rights. It is imperative that Hawai'i continue to embrace equality and comply with the provisions outlined in our Constitution in Article I Sections 2, 3, and 5.

Article I

RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS

Section 2. All persons are free by nature and are equal in their inherent and inalienable rights. Among these rights are the enjoyment of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and the acquiring and possessing of property. These rights cannot endure unless the people recognize their corresponding obligations and responsibilities.

EQUALITY OF RIGHTS

Section 3. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the State on account of sex. The legislature shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this section.

DUE PROCESS AND EQUAL PROTECTION

Section 5. No person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor be denied the equal protection of the laws, nor be denied the enjoyment of the person's civil rights or be discriminated against in the exercise thereof because of race, religion, sex or ancestry.

I applaud the 25th Legislature for your anticipated support of equal rights for all citizens of Hawai'i. This bill recognizes that we live in a democracy, not a theocracy. The expression that no one is free until everyone is free could not be truer. In the dire economic times we are currently experiencing and the multiple stressors on families, denying people who love each other the rights that others enjoy, is just mean-spirited and baseless.

Each person elected to public office or appointed to a government board, committee, or commission takes an oath to uphold the laws and the Constitution. And the Constitution is very clear about equal protection.

Sadly, there are citizens of Hawai'i who are denied the rights that others enjoy. There is nothing ambiguous about the Constitution. *All persons are free by nature and are equal in their inherent and inalienable rights.* It doesn't say 'some persons are free...'; it says ALL PERSONS ARE FREE BY NATURE AND EQUAL IN THEIR INHERENT AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS. Some laws are unclear and subject to interpretation, but the Constitutional language is abundantly clear, as our courts have already decided.

I respectfully ask that you defend the Hawai'i Constitution.

Hawai'i has already been dubbed the meanest place in its treatment of the homeless, please elevate Hawai'i's standing as the true land of aloha, where all people enjoy the rights and benefits of a free society composed of communities that care for and about each other.

The Hawai'i Supreme Court's dispassionate review of the law affirmed Hawai'i's commitment to equal rights for all. Certainly our unique history has taught us something about discrimination.

As philosopher George Santayana said, *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."*

Let's move forward. This is a time when we need to pull together as a community. We haven't hit bottom yet and we need each other. I'm asking you to please support every member of our community. Now is the time for loving each other and building a strong network of support for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

There is no aloha in marginalizing people and I hope that you will find it in your heart to take a stand for equal rights for all of Hawai'i's people.

Please uphold your oath to defend the Constitution and support HB 444 HD1.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

From: Myra Lodge [mlodge@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:55 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Myra T. Lodge
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear FOR JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS & SENATE PRESIDENT HANABUSA:

Thank you for your willingness to work tirelessly in behalf of the people of our district. We appreciate your wisdom in doing what's right in your vote against HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii.

Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. As a mother of 3 sons, a wife of a Military Soldier whom seeks male role models for my children especially when my husband is deployed, I would not want it to be someone that would transform my sons thinking to being Gay is okay. By approving this HB 444 will be a start of many things that will go wrong in this society. I ask that we seek what's best for our children and the next generations to come in standing together sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds.

Should it ever come to a vote again, please vote NO on HB 444.

With grace and respect,

Name: Myra T. Lodge

Address or e-mail: mlodge@hawaii.rr.com

From: Faye Burson [FayeBurson@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Gabriella Hahn
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

To the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee hearing on HB 444 HD1 set for Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9 A.M. in the State Capitol Auditorium:

My name is Shirley Faye Burson.

Families are the backbone of the United States of America and I believe that same sex marriage weakens the fabric of our society.

Civil Unions should not be given the same rights and privileges as a marriage between a man and a woman.

The Bible says that there should not be same sex marriages.

This bill is a blatant attempt to give equal status to a relationship that the majority of Hawaiians have already said they do not want to be recognized as a legitimate relationship.

Laws are already in place to facilitate the needs of those in a civil union.

Please vote no on this destructive bill.

To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, **“extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.”**

In 1998 the voters of the State of Hawaii chose to amend our Constitution by a large margin of victory to specifically define marriage as a union between couples of the opposite sex. HB444 has only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. Our constitution does not allow for this even if you simply change the name. The legislature should not attempt to override the popular vote and the State Constitution. Is that even legal? I thought the Constitution and its Amendments were the highest authority in our state. Overriding the Constitution will set a dangerous precedent. I urge you all to vote **NO** on HB444.

Robert C. K. Crowell
94-741 Meheula Pky. 20D
Mililani, Hawaii 96789

From: stephbuck@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: oppose HB444, HD1

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
REGARDING: HB 444, HD1
STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1 in any form DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I am in strong opposition to HB444 HD1 in any form.

I urge you to represent the people of Hawaii and your district on the issue of civil unions and not be swayed a vocal minority.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.
Thank you and Aloha,
Stephanie Buck

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: windwardguy46@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Dennis Jones
Organization: Individual
Address: 45-210 Nakuluai Pl. Kaneohe, HI
Phone:
E-mail: windwardguy46@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Copy of testimony:

Dear Chair Karamatsu, Vice-Chair Ito, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Dennis Jones and although I am straight, I would like to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,
Dennis Jones
45-210 Nakuluai Pl.
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: Winnie [livingwaters4@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:02 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: CHERYL NATIVIDAD
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME Cheryl Natividad
ADDRESS 91-431 Ft. Weaver Rd Ewa Beach, HI 96706
PHONE 392-7553

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Sabrina Franks [hawaiianpsalmist@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:09 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB444, HD1 by Dr. Paul Kamanu

Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Sen. Brian Taniguchi (Chair) & Sen. Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair)

From: **Dr. Paul Kamanu**, President & Founder of Grace In Action Ministries

Hearing: **Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM in the Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium**

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444, HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions) (4 Pages)**

To the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for allowing the people to have a voice. Please allow me to share vital information, references, and quotes with you that will bring clarity and understanding to this entire issue. As a **republic**, America is still a nation that is ruled by law. Political systems of the world are set up differently and to deviate from its structure can cause great harm to the population. Allow me to share these structures:

<u>System</u>	<u>Who Rules</u>
Monarchy / Dictatorship	Rule by One
Oligarchy	Rule by Elite
Democracy	Rule by Majority
Republic	Rule by Law
Anarchy	Rule by None

For several decades we have been given disinformation by our elected authorities and educational teachers telling us that we live in the world's greatest democracy. Well history clearly shows that our founding fathers **did not** give us a democracy, they gave us a republic.

The law was to protect the individual, the republic was simply a collective force of individuals to protect the individual's right to life, liberty and prosperity. The founding fathers knew very well that a democracy was simply a temporary and transitional form of government on the way to totalitarian government.

The founding fathers were freedom-loving people who wanted to avoid all forms of state monopoly such as Communism, Nazism, Fascism and even Socialism. This disinformation being fed daily to the population has an objective to spread false information or intelligence to achieve its goals and purposes.

Today those who are seeking to pass HB444, HD1 have an agenda that is motivated not only by **disinformation**, which of course is done to confuse and deceive people, but on large scale this group is guilty of using propaganda as one of their main vehicles to change what our founding fathers set up. Allow me to define propaganda according to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

Propaganda: 1) The spreading of ideas, information, or rumors for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause or a person. 2) Ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to

damage an opposing cause.

History shows that Adolf Hitler had a Minister of Propaganda and Enlightenment named Joseph Goebbels whose job was to deceive the population and to condition them to accept and even think like Hitler. Not only did he succeed, but as we know, millions of Jews were killed because the German people believed that the Jews were evil people whose blood was not fit to mingle with the Aryan Race.

Eric Pollard the Founder of ACT-UP (A militant homosexual group) openly admitted that lying was a part of the strategy of homosexual activists. He even said that Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf was the model used for their strategy which is a strategy of lies and intimidation. Here are some excerpts from Mein Kampf:

“The magnitude of a lie always contains a certain factor of credibility, since the greatest masses of the people in the very bottom of their hearts tend to be corrupted rather than consciously and purposely evil, and that, therefore, in view of the primitive simplicity of their minds, they more easily fall a victim to a big lie than to a little one, since they themselves lie in little things, but would be ashamed of lies that were too big...

Something of even the most insolent lie will always remain a stick - a fact which all the great lie-virtuoso and lying-clubs in this world know only too well and also make the most treacherous use of. By clever and persevering use of propaganda, even heaven can be represented as hell to the people, and conversely the most wretched life as paradise.”

With those seeking the passage of HB444, HD1 there simply is no level playing field because they constantly use propaganda to further their cause and if you do not agree or submit to them they are quick to use name calling and intimidation. They say they want their civil rights, yet check the history and you will see that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. never resorted to this chicanery.

Another book that has been a beacon for the homosexual movement is called After The Ball-How America Will Conquer It's Fear and Hatred of Gays in The 90's, written by Marshall Kirk, a researcher in Neuropsychiatry & Hunter Madsen who received his doctorate in Politics.

As a founding work of the modern homosexual movement, this book covers a wide discussion of tactics and observations relating to the homosexual movement. But the overall main psychological strategies are well summarized in a ten-page section (pg 147-157) entitled “Pushing the right buttons: halting, derailing or reversing the “engine of prejudice”.

Of particular note is their tactical device throughout the book of referring to religious dissenters and other critics of homosexual behavior as “**bigots**”. By definition a **bigot** is: a person obstinately or intolerantly devoted to his or her own opinions and prejudices: especially one who regards or treats the member of a group with hatred and intolerance.

Their language is purposefully crude to enhance that idea. Much like the “Big Lie” theory developed in the 1920's and 1930's by the Nazis, the constant repetition of this eventually has the desired psychological effect on the masses of people.

Radical homosexual activists lay out a six-point strategy to radically change America's perception of homosexual behavior including:

- 1) Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and often as possible.
- 2) Portray gays as victims, not aggressive challengers.
- 3) Give homosexual protectors a “just” cause.
- 4) Make gays look good.
- 5) Make the victims look bad.

6) Solicit funds: the buck stops here (i.e., get corporate America and major foundations to financially support the homosexual cause).

Gene Edward Veith wrote about the tremendous gains made by the homosexual activist movement stating that... "Homosexuality used to be considered a vice; now even those it makes uncomfortable now must avow –as in a Seinfeld episode, **"not that there's anything wrong with it"**, while those who think there is something wrong with it are "considered to have the vice of intolerance."

Walter Shapiro, **USA Today** columnist commented on the success of the homosexual rights movement stating, "That's how lasting social change happens – the barriers suddenly come down when nobody's looking."

Another point I would like to make is that **The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's** was about living up and applying America's principles, not re-writing or re-inventing them. There was no tradition on which this country was founded that Dr. King challenged. It was upon those very traditions that he made his challenges and claim. In a fashion quite the opposite of Dr. King who challenged an unjust nation to return to its principles and traditions from which it had strayed – gay political operatives work to **re-write our traditions to suit their own proclivities**. They say their struggle is about equality, but it's really about the exercise of political power and claims for entitlement.

Even Liberal African-American Civil Rights activist Jesse Jackson refutes the claim by homosexual activists that they have legitimate civil rights concerns. When asked about the "right" of homosexuals to "marry", Jackson said that "there was no comparison with the legitimate civil rights struggles of Black Americans". He commented "The comparison with slavery is a stretch in that some slave masters were gay, in that gays were never called three-fifths human in the constitution, and in that they did not require the Voting Rights Act to have the right to vote."

Kirk and Madsen said they knew that they would have to wage a war of propaganda, just as Hitler did to get the American people on their side. They said, "even when it sticks to the facts, propaganda can be unabashedly subjective and one-sided. There is nothing necessarily wrong with this, propaganda tells its own side of the story as moving (and credibly) as possible, since it can count on its enemies to tell the other side with a vengeance. In its battle for hearts and minds, effective propaganda knows enough to put its best foot forward. This is what our media campaign must do.

As a Kanaka Maoli, who is also Native American and **African American**, my dad was born in Polaski, Tennessee 85 years ago. This is where the Ku Klux Klan was founded. My dad's father was a White share cropper who raped my dad's mother. Although my dad has Caucasian blood, because he looks black he was targeted by the Klan. This was a personal reality that he faced, and I would not be here if they accomplished their goal of eradicating the world of Blacks. Recently while in Memphis, Tennessee I visited the Black History Museum and once again saw all of the injustices done against the Black race. What was their crime?...They were Black! And according to the Whites, Blacks were not even considered to be human.

Our people were hung, tortured, subjected to cruel castration, all because the pigmentation of their skin. Blacks were not given the right to vote because according to the White people, Blacks were too ignorant to be able to think like them. The Emancipation Proclamation still did not give the Blacks the right to be treated like humans. Martin Luther King Jr. desired to see people of color be given their civil rights according to the constitution. He did not seek special interests, but just the right to vote.

I have shared much with you in this letter and testimony that I hope and pray you seriously consider and take to heart. I urge you to **VOTE AGAINST "Civil Unions" bill (HB 444 HD1)**.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Kamanu
President & Founder of Grace In Action Ministries
P.O. Box 11569
Honolulu, Hawaii 96828

From: Yamashiro [winiy07@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:20 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa
Subject: *****SPAM***** legalization of civil unions

Dear Sirs:

I wish to go on record as being against legally recognizing civil unions as an acceptable form of "marriage."

Simply enacting a law (giving civil unions, or same-sex marriage, a status equal to that of traditional marriage) does not make a lifestyle right.

The citizens of the State of Hawaii have already voted against same-sex marriage. Must we revisit this question to extend special "rights" to a small, but financially influential subculture at the expense of the best interests of the general citizenry?

As a single person, I am not able to have my significant others covered by my medical and dental insurance plans, nor be designated my survivor-beneficiary for my employer's pension plan. As a result, they do not benefit in this way from my consistent employment, as do the spouses and children of my married co-workers.

This is not something I begrudge married people, because I believe a society benefits by having a large proportion of stable, traditional, loving families.

If medical and dental insurance coverage and pension survivorship benefits are at the heart of legalizing civil unions, perhaps there is another way to provide for this.

Another way other than redefining what marriage is.

Please reconsider the outworkings of HB 444; and defeat this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Winifred Y. Yamashiro

You may contact me if you need my address and other information to confirm my Hawaii/USA citizenship.

From: MHi'ileiSilva [bhsilva@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:21 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB44

To Whom It May Concern:
We strongly oppose HB44. Please vote NO. Mahalo.

Robert B. Silva 393-3635
Maria H.P. Silva 429-2430
Kapualani E. M. Silva 469-9838
91-6605 Kapolei Pkwy.
'Ewa Beach, HI 96706
bhsilv@hawaii.rr.com

From: Myron Jim [mymejim@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:58 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITON TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Merna M. Jim

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 am Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

TO THE MEMBERS of the State Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am strongly OPPOSED to the passage of HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

A couple of years ago, the issue of civil union was brought forth in the State of Hawaii. The majority of people in Hawaii OPPOSED this.

I have been a life-long resident of the state of Hawaii and I ask the members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee to OPPOSE the passage of HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

Cordially,

Merna M. Jim

From: RJ Mendoza [rjlives@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:28 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: RE: Testimony to support HB444 HDI

Aloha Esteemed Members of the State Senate,

Thank you for your attention to this controversial, yet important matter. As a taxpaying citizen, I strongly support civil unions in the Great State of Hawaii, with reservations. I believe that it should be limited to permanent residents of the state of Hawai'i, or residents of other jurisdictions where such a union or it's equivalent would be recognized.

I invite you to vote in favor of this measure, as a homage to the values of "aloha" and "pono" for all kama'aina.

If you won't consider my reservations, just vote yes anyway. It's about time equality stop being a dream and start being reality. We have a man of color (and Punahou graduate- who coincidentally also supports civil unions!) in the white house!

Change!

Aloha,
RJ Mendoza
Hilo, Hawaii County

--

From: Annie Worth [a-b-worth@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:19 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Civil Union

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chairman
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chairman Committee On Judiciary and Government Operations

Annie Worth
Tuesday 2/24/09 @9AM

Support of HB444-HD1...Civil Union

I support HB444-HD1 relating to Civil Union; this is about equality and Civil Rights for the Gay Community. And thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Annie Worth

From: Deborah Paul [deb1203friends@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:54 PM
To: JGO Testimony

My name is Deborah

I am opposed of same sex marriage, because i think man and woman are supposed to be together..and were made for each one...

To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, **“extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.”**

In 1998 the voters of the State of Hawaii chose to amend our Constitution by a large margin of victory to specifically define marriage as a union between couples of the opposite sex.

HB444 has only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. Our constitution does not allow for this even if you simply change the name.

The legislature should not try to override the popular vote and the State Constitution. This cannot possibly be legal. I believe that the Constitution and its Amendments are the highest authority in our State. Overriding the Constitution will set a dangerous precedent. I urge you with all the power I possess to vote NO on HB444. Do not get our state caught up in the manic rush to change everything they can while the atmosphere is so unreasonable and volatile.

Sincerely
Judy and Dave Heaton
Honokaa, HI

From: Dewey R Burson [fdburson1@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:11 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**To the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee hearing on
HB 444 HD1 set for Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9 A.M.**

Families are the backbone of the United States of America and I believe that same sex marriage weakens the fabric of our society.

Civil Unions should not be given the same rights and privileges as a marriage between a man and a woman.

The Bible says that there should not be same sex marriages.

This bill is a blatant attempt to give equal status to a relationship that the majority of Hawaiians have already said they do not want to be recognized as a legitimate relationship.

Laws are already in place to facilitate the needs of those in a civil union.

Please vote no on this destructive bill.

Sincerely Dewey Burson

From: Sabrina Franks [hawaiianpsalmist@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:11 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB444, HD1 by Liza Moleta

Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Sen. Brian Taniguchi (Chair) & Sen. Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair)

From: **Liza Moleta**

Hearing: **Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM in the Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium**

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444, HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions)**

To the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing in **STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444 HD1**. Civil Unions are counterfeit marriages and are not only a bad example for the state of Hawaii but a major impact on our children all over Hawaii and abroad, but also against God's Law.

I am against this bill because this is one step away in an attempt to legitimize gay marriages. People should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors.

This kind of behaviors is unhealthy for the State of Hawaii, for the families who live here. It's not only a wrong example to our children, who are our future leaders in the State of Hawaii, but it IS an abomination in the eyes of God.

I urge and implore you to **VOTE AGAINST "Civil Unions" bill (HB 444 HD1)**.

Sincerely,

Liza Moleta

From: Mike Lum [mlum@screensandthings.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: The people of Hawaii have spoken on HB444 HD1 Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary committee
Hearing: February 24, 2009 9:00 AM
Re: HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions

In 1998, the people of Hawaii made a powerful statement by an overwhelming majority vote against same sex marriage. Any attempt by our Legislature to get around this issue by re-titling it "civil unions" is nothing short of deceitful and subversive; and clearly flies in the face of the people who elected you to represent their opinions. I strongly oppose HB444 HD1 Civil Unions, and ask that you honor the wishes of the people who elected you all to office by voting NO on this bill.

Michael Lum

From: Faye Burson [FayeBurson@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Gabriella Hahn
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**To the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee hearing on
HB 444 HD1 set for Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9 A.M. in the State
Capitol Auditorium:**

My name is Shirley Faye Burson.

Families are the backbone of the United States of America and I believe that same sex marriage weakens the fabric of our society.

Civil Unions should not be given the same rights and privileges as a marriage between a man and a woman.

The Bible says that there should not be same sex marriages.

This bill is a blatant attempt to give equal status to a relationship that the majority of Hawaiians have already said they do not want to be recognized as a legitimate relationship.

Laws are already in place to facilitate the needs of those in a civil union.

Please vote no on this destructive bill.

TO : Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Senator Brian T. Tanigushi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

FROM: Eldon L. Wegner, Ph.D.,

SUBJECT: **HB 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

HEARING: 9 am Tuesday February 24, 2009
Auditorium, Hawaii State Capitol

PURPOSE: Extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union

POSITION: **I strongly support HB 444 HD1 which would extend equality of treatment to same-sex unions.**

RATIONALE:

More than a decade ago, the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled that equal benefits should be offered to same-sex relationships based on constitutional principles of gender equity and equal protection. This bill would finally extend those rights. It is only fair.

Much could be said about how supporting strong family bonds among people who love one another serves to benefit the general community by providing stability in people's lives and promoting healthy life patterns.

We live in a civil society where no one's religious views should be imposed on others. If individuals have personal beliefs forbidding such relationships, they are free not to enter into same-sex unions, but they have no right to impose their personal beliefs on others. Furthermore, this law concerns civil unions and would not force their church to offer holy union ceremonies.

I am the past Moderator (2006-2007) of Church of the Crossroads. We are an Open and Affirming Church in the United Church of Christ and understand our Christian faith to be inclusive of all persons who follow in the path of Jesus, who extended the love of God to all persons regardless of how marginalized they were by the mainstream culture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Testimony in OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI

Karen Kramer
1055 Kalihi Wai Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96825

HB 444 HDI

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.

RE: Oppose HB 444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB 444. I speak to oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. Civil Union bypasses the will of the people.
2. Civil Union law will result in public schools teaching our children homosexual marriages and acceptance will be mandatory
 - a. As a high school educator, students need to be equipped with knowledge/skills/subjects to advance them into college and passing the SAT.
 - b. Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) is urging public schools in Minneapolis to resist pressure to implement a curriculum aimed at helping students as young as kindergarten embrace homosexuality.
 - c. Students generally learn about adolescence and puberty in 6-8th grade. Parents are informed about the female/male human development (not sexual choice) being taught and are asked to give parental consent
 - d. The "Welcoming Schools program was created by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a homosexual agenda," If HRC merely cared about bullying, they would simply endorse the school district's vigorous bullying and hazing policy. Parents and school officials need to be aware of what HRC is really trying to do.
 - e. Schools will be forced to teach that the homosexual family is normal.
 - f. Pictures in text books will be changed to show same-sex couples as normal.

I oppose House Bill 444 due to the outcome it could have on schools, educators, not to mention families and most importantly our students.

Karen Kramer
DOE Educator

From: Michael Chinaka [mikec05@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:12 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION to HB 444 HD1 - Civil Unions

February 23, 2009

Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
State Capitol Auditorium
Meeting on February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Re: HB 444, HD1

Dear Senator and JGO Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Dwight Takamine, and Committee members Robert Bunda, Mike Gabbard, Clarence Nishihara, and Sam Slom,

We are opposed to HB 444, HD 1.

In 1998 the people of Hawaii affirmed by an overwhelming majority that marriage is defined as a union between one man and one woman. HB 444 seeks to provide the same definition of marriage to civil unions:

HRS 572, SECTION 3. Except for part I of chapter 572, **every reference** in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to **"marriage,"** or any aspect thereof, **shall apply equally to "civil unions,"** including:

- (1) Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to the status of partners in a civil union;
- (2) Every reference to "husband," "wife," or "spouse" shall apply equally to a partner in a civil union; and
- (3) Every reference to marital status, including without limitation provisions pertaining to parties and procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution, shall apply equally and as necessary to civil unions and to partners in a civil union.

Please do not allow civil unions, which is a pseudonym for gay marriage, to thwart the will of the people. The Reciprocal Beneficiary Act already provides rights that were previously only granted to spouses.

Thank you for your kind attention. Please vote **NO to HB 444.**

Respectfully,

Michael and Amy Chinaka
Jason Chinaka
Mikec05@hawaii.rr.com

From: Travis Corrales [traviscorrales@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:44 PM
To: Rep. Corinne Ching; Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland; JGO Testimony
Subject: I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

Travis Corrales
821-A Puunani Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96817
808-779-0178

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Travis Corrales

--

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:31 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: frank.hernandez@halekulani.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Frank Hernandez
Organization: Individual
Address: 1920 Ala Moana Blvd #901 Honolulu, HAWAII
Phone:
E-mail: frank.hernandez@halekulani.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Frank Hernandez and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I am a taxpaying and law abiding resident of Hawaii who works within our travel industry.

I was raised catholic. I do not believe in gay marriage. I believe that marriage is for a man and a woman. Many of my friends whom are gay agree with me, some do not. That is the beauty of our country; we are free to disagree. That is the foundation of our constitution. It is our right to disagree.

HB444 is not about marriage, it's about civil rights as a human being. This is not about religion, this is about people and the rights they have as law abiding, tax paying individuals.

President Barack Obama, Hawaii born and raised believes in change. You have the opportunity to make a change. Change is the foundation of his presidency.

HB444 is the change we all need to show the rest of our country and the world the true meaning and spirit of Aloha.

I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Frank Hernandez
1920 Ala Moana Blvd
Honolulu, HI 96815

From: jfelechner@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Dear State Judiciary & Government Operations Committee,

I am sending this email to let the committee members that I am in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444 HD1. Please vote against this Civil Unions Bill and let traditional marriage be defined between one man & one woman only. This is the "Will of the People" . We voted against this in the late 90's. If you think we have changed our minds than put this on the ballot again and let the people decide! This is not remotely in the the same category as Civil Rights. Gay people freely work, live, invest, prosper, run companies, travel etc. Their sexual preference should not dictate God's sovereign design for mankind and society.

Sincerely,

Jim Felechner

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Winnie [livingwaters4@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:55 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: Davelyn Lehua Williams
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME Davelyn Williams
ADDRESS 55 Dole Road Wahiawa, HI 96786
PHONE 384-9661

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Winnie [livingwaters4@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:57 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: MASON KIMO GAYER
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME MASON KIMO GAYER
ADDRESS 91-681 Puamaeole Street Ewa Beach, HI 96706
PHONE 429-9040

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Winnie [livingwaters4@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:59 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRON OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: BRYAN NATIVIDAD JR
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME Bryan Matthew Natividad Jr
ADDRESS 91-431 Ft. Weaver Rd Ewa Beach, HI 96706
PHONE 392-7553

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: K Moon [kmoon1994@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:51 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions

Date of Hearing: Feb 24, 2009

Time: 9:00 am

I strongly oppose HB 444 and ask the legislature to please protect and preserve the sanctity of traditional marriages between a man and woman. It is an individual's specific choice to live in same-sex relationships and I am respectful of that. Some same-sex couples even go so far as bringing children into their relationships which I feel is not healthy and may be confusing to young children.

While every individual has the right to choose their sexual preference, our government should not change laws or culture that will PROMOTE such relationships. I STRONGLY BELIEVE with all my heart that a marriage is a union between a man and a woman (PERIOD) -- no "if", "and", or "but".

Thank you!

Karen Moon

HB 444 HD1, CIVIL UNIONS
Hearing: Feb. 24, 2009 at 9 a.m.
Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee
JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Below is testimony in regards to HB 444 HD1
Thank you,
Debra Kaplan
Teacher on the Island of Hawaii
Volcano School of Arts & Sciences

February, 23, 2009

I strongly support HB444 HD1 and urge the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee to pass this bill.

Equal rights are fundamental to our constitution and our lives as Americans. To participate in denying equal rights undermines the fabric of our moral responsibility and humanity.

Please embrace this opportunity to make a historic stand and establish equal rights for same-gender couples under Hawai'i law.

Vote FOR HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions.

Thank you,
Debra Kaplan
14-4330 Kapoho Rd.
Pahoa, HI. 96778
(808) 936-3102
devorah@ilhawaii.net
Teacher on the Island of Hawaii
Volcano School of Arts & Sciences

From: Rondi Heller [pastamama_007@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:22 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

FROM:
NAME: Jon and Rondi Heller
ADDRESS: 2080 Manawalea St. # 202
Lihue, HI 96766
PHONE: 808-822-4955

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

Thank you,

Jon and Rondi Heller

From: Ronny Lopez [thebiglona@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:50 PM
To: JGO Testimony

To: All Whom This May Concern

From: Ronny F. Lopez

Subject: Opposition To Bill HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Union

Aloha

I have been a resident of this of this state all my life and as a christian I can see the negitive impact goverment has created by taking God out of everyting that God HAS MADE. I would like to leave a legacy for our children of truth and morals. I pray that we as a people will stop changing Gods word to fit our desires. In Gods word we find in genesis 1: 27 (So God created man in his own image , in the image of God he created him : MALE and FEMALE he created them). We need to stop forcing sin and lies on our children and teach them the truth.I pray that you will seek Gods word and guidance on this matter and keep HOLY MATRIMONY between man and women. I would like to thank you in advance for your time on this matter.

In Christ
Ron Lopez and Family

I

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:...more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

From: Kimberley Haines [kimberleyhaines12@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG support of HB444

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium of the State Capitol

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

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

I am submitting this testimony in support of the passing of HB444. This bill recognizes civil unions as legitimate, as they should be. I am Christian in background and upbringing and throughout my life I have been brought up to treat all human beings equally and fairly. It is not fair to take away the rights of a committed couple just because they are of the same sex. I have been in a committed relationship with the same person for 33 years and certainly consider myself responsible enough to live in civil union with this person. People in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage; they did NOT vote against civil unions. Please do not confuse the two. Many people in this state support civil unions as I urge you to do by passing HB444. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberley Haines
Honolulu, HI

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: res98@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: RICHARD SHIELDS
Organization: Individual
Address: 1441 VICTORIA ST APT 403 HONOLULU, HI
Phone: 808-372-1140
E-mail: res98@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

I am a practicing health professional and also an ordained religious person in Hawaii. I want all citizens, especially same-sex couples, to have the same rights and privileges as everyone else, particularly when facing grave health situations. This is a matter of civil rights for all citizens of our state.

This is not a religious issue. The professional religious persons claiming they have the inside track on what is the will of God in regard to same-sex couples are arrogant. None of us has that kind of knowledge. And it is irrelevant to this situation anyway.

To hear a sitting senator claim that opinions expressed in a 1998 vote still accurately represent the will of the majority of Hawaiians in 2009 is ignorant and insulting to the people of Hawaii. I don't appreciate being told what I believe by someone who has not bothered to ask me.

From: Lilia Lopez-Rahman [lilia3843@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Re: HB 444 HD1

Rev. Dr. Lilia Lopez-Rahman
P.O. Box 330708
Kahului, HI 96733

I am writing in support of HB 444 HD1, a bill in support of protecting and guaranteeing the rights and freedom of all peoples of Hawaii. This bill that already passed the house concerns the rights and freedom of same sex couples.

I strongly believe that everyone is entitled to equal rights and benefits that heterosexual individuals enjoy. No one should deprive them of such rights and benefits.

The state senate must approve HB 444 HD to stop marginalizing the gay/lesbian population of Hawaii.

Yours truly,

Rev. Dr. Lilia Lopez-Rahman

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Please support HB 444 HD1

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Bridget Murphy and I am a graduate student in the school of social work at the University of Hawai'i. I am here today to support HB 444 HD1 for civil unions. No person should be denied access to the basic rights given to spouses through the act of marriage. HB 444 would allow the same benefits, equal rights, and protections in a civil union.

Same-sex partners deserve the same equality, protection, and rights as opposite-sex partners to ensure the overall well-being of all family members and individuals. Same-sex couples are people who love one another in committed relationships, have families, and have the same goals and desires for their future together as married couples except for the difference of gender.

If you look back fifty years ago, interracial marriage was illegal in several states. At that time it was an issue of regulating ethnicity, today it is a debate on regulating genders.

Same sex couples must have the same rights as those who are allowed to marry. It is inhumane to deny these people the rights to the same protections such as insurance benefits, joint accounts, financial stability, and rights to visit loved ones in the hospital.

I am in a committed relationship with my partner of several years. We may one day decide to have children; however, without the benefits made available by civil unions my children would be made to suffer by not having a complete financially stable family.

Why are so many committed loving couples made to suffer?

There are already several states that have legalized civil unions starting with Vermont in 2000, followed by Connecticut, Oregon, Washington, and finally New Hampshire.

Even President Obama "supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples."

What example will Hawai'i set for the rest of the nation? Will it follow in the footsteps of honoring equality for all?

Mahalo,

Bridget Murphy

1002A Prospect St.

Honolulu HI, 96822

Testimony in **OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1**

Hauoli Hardy
1919 Citron Street #914
Honolulu, HI 96826
808 947-9025

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for allowing me to speak from my heart against House Bill 444.

I am opposed to this Bill because years ago before same-sex marriage was so publically spoken of, my 2 cousins who were homosexuals both died of aids. One cousin in his early 20's had aids. He wrote his parents a letter then killed himself by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge.

My other cousin who also died at an early age suffered with aids till his death. It was very sad. We couldn't hug or even touch him, because every inch of his body hurt.

I would not want my grandchildren and great grandchildren and the future generations of my family to think that same-sex marriage and this lifestyle is okay.

Please vote against this Bill 444.

Thank you very much.

Hauoli Hardy

From: HOC [hoc@hcucc.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:22 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: In support of HB444HD1

Testimony in support of HB444HD1
establishing civil unions for same-sex couples

From:
The Rev. D. Neal MacPherson
2513 Stream Drive
Honolulu, Hi 96817
Home: 595-2791 Cell: 285-8921

As a clergy person with a thirty-year history of ministry in Hawai'i, I submit this testimony in support of HB444HD1. It is now the time for the State of Hawai'i to establish provisions for civil unions between persons of the same sex.

The issue swirling around this legislation has been cast in religious and moral terms. However, I would submit that the essential issue is one of civil rights. Religious leaders and communities hold differing views on the rightness or wrongness of civil unions. That is to be expected. Yet, the legislature should not permit any religious institution or religious leader to dictate what is good for all the people of Hawai'i. Legislators, I would submit, have a responsibility to act for the common good in a spirit of disinterest rather than act in support of a religious point of view, even if it is their own.

I think back to Governor John Burns when he set aside his own religious point-of-view and allowed legislation supporting a woman's right to choose an abortion to become law without his signature. In that instance, he acted for the common good.

We now need to follow his example and allow same-sex couples to enter into civil unions. Some religious communities will bless those unions; others will not. Even so, same-sex couples do need to be granted the rights enjoyed by married couples. This will not only be beneficial to them; it will enhance health, stability, and well-being of our entire community. This issue should be decided upon not as a matter of religious belief or morality but rather as a matter of justice and civil rights.

I urge the passage of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. D. Neal MacPherson, retired United Church of Christ pastor

TESTIMONY ON HB 444, HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m.
State Capitol Auditorium

Testifier: Jean Aoki LWV Legislative Liaison

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, members of the JGO Committee,

The League of Women Voters strongly supports HB 444, HD1 which would give the same civil rights to all of our citizens regardless of their sexual orientations.

We believe that scientific evidence points to the determination of sexual orientation as a natural state and not a matter of choice. Given that fact, the opposition has no grounds for denying this group all of the rights the rest of us enjoy.

Throughout the two-hundred and plus years of our country's history, many prejudices and discriminations have, if too slowly, been overcome and the equal rights of all United States citizens been accepted and laws enacted to provide for those rights except in regard to the gay and lesbian community. The prejudices still persist, This is especially true among older citizens who were brought up with the negative stereotypes passed on to them by their parents at a time when little was understood about the causes of a different sexual orientations and there was very little social interaction between the two groups, interaction which might have changed the negative perceptions harbored by the average citizen.

As more and more gays and lesbians go public in regard to their sexual orientation, including those in the public limelight, everyone gets to see that they are really no different from anyone else except in their sexual orientation -- different views on different issues like the rest of us, different ambitions just like the rest of us, etc. And as we interact with them and learn to really know them, whatever misconceptions we have had of them as a group will fade away, until finally they will just be people, a part of the human race like the rest of us.

Some people will regard this as viewing through rose-colored glasses, but I am firmly convinced that our younger generations are less apt to harbor the deeply instilled prejudices of the older generations, and each succeeding generation will become even more enlightened.

But we cannot wait for the younger generations to right the wrongs. If for the sake of the very young who may be even now tormented, not being able to handle the emotions that overwhelm them yet knowing that society frowns on their acceptance of those emotions.

The most eloquent and convincing testimony I heard at the House Judiciary Committee hearing was that given by David Henkins, the father of two children. I would like to quote his concluding paragraph in case you should miss it in the mass of testimonies you will hear today. Said he:

“My daughter is eight years old, and my son is five. They are too young at this point for me to know their sexual orientation. As a parent, my only hope is that, whether straight, gay, bisexual, or trans gender, they will find happiness in a committed relationship with someone they love. When they do, I want to ensure that they will enjoy the same legal rights as any other citizen of this state, regardless of the sex of their partner. Please pass this bill.”

I would like to repeat his plea, please pass HB 444, HD 1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:21 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: wilmayoutz@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Wilma Youtz
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: wilmayoutz@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I respectfully request that HB444 be defeated inasmuch as the people of Hawaii have already spoken on this issue in opposing same-sex marriage. While this bill is being presented under the guise of "civil unions," it is merely a revisitation of the same-sex marriage issue. HB444 is a seemingly benign attempt to gain rights for a select population. Its passage would be tantamount to the "tyranny of the minority" or "the tail wagging the dog," impinging on the rights and freedoms of the vast majority that does not embrace the homosexual lifestyle. Please protect the freedoms of the schools, churches, employers and businesses of Hawaii and do not have the audacity to disregard the will of the people of Hawaii: VOTE "NO" on HB444.

From: courageouscoward@gmail.com on behalf of Logan Laituri [logan.laituri@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:19 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1 testimony - Logan Laituri
Attachments: HB

Please consider adding this testimony to the agenda for the hearing tomorrow at the auditorium, Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.. I have attached a Word document as well as included the text below. Thank you,

Logan Laituri
2304 Makanani Dr.
Honolulu, HI 96817
(808) 227-6565

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Logan Laituri and I hope to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. The following is an essay I wrote intended to be an Op Ed for the local papers. Please consider its content as you deliberate HB 444. Thank you.

Christians find themselves on the wrong side of a pivotal social issue

By Logan Laituri
Member, Church of the Crossroads

I am an evangelical Christian who attends church regularly, so I was surprised to see a worship service on the grounds of the Hawaii state capitol this past Sunday. What struck me even more was the purpose for the service itself: to attempt to prevent the state of Hawaii from granting equal civil rights to members of our society by placing conditions upon the application of such rights. This is a problem not only of basic civic literacy, by obstructing the exercise of justice and misappropriating our system of government, but also in that it attacks the very context of the Bible itself while defaming and tarnishing the character of the Church.

To be clear, the government is commissioned to administer the law of the land, not regulate the morality of its people. Furthermore, it is to ensure equity and justice for all, based primarily on the merit of citizenship. In our society, we grant certain privileges to citizens who enter into an intimate relationship. These benefits include, but are not limited to, tax incentives, hospital visitation rights, life and health insurance benefits, etc. What the government does not have the authority to do is to dictate new merits upon which to grant or deny said privileges, namely, merits based upon an aspect of human life that one does not retain positive control over, such as one's sexual orientation. To do so would be the equivalent of rewriting our state constitution to similarly discriminate based upon race or ethnicity.

Secondly, to enter into the political landscape in order to assert a legal agenda is bad for the Church as a whole. It goes against the very message of the Bible and it reflects a faith and a god that is both selective and superficial. Christians must, as a community, repent of our own air of moral superiority and allow the universe to bend to its natural arch, which Dr. King reminds us is toward justice. For those who have succumbed to the

misconception that Sodom and Gomorrah's downfall (or any civilization's for that matter) was or may be caused by homosexuals, I must turn your attention beyond Genesis 18 and 19 (which indicates only that ten righteous people could not be found), to Ezekiel 16:49, where we find that Sodom's sin was actually arrogance, obesity, and lack of concern for the poor. Instead of proof-texting our beliefs, perhaps we may try walking humbly alongside our neighbors, honoring the Image within each of us regardless of their orientation. Shouldn't we allow fellow Image-bearers to sort out their OWN salvation with fear and trembling? Must we insist on sorting it out FOR them with fear and trembling?

Finally, I found it tragically ironic that the blessed cacophony today took place beneath the Great Seal of the State of Hawai'i, in the very midst of our soon-to-be saint, Father Damien of Moloka'i. Is the modern church's hindsight really so shortsighted so as to dismiss his very witness? It was Damien, after all, who, despite the supposed wretchedness of Kalaupapa's "lepers," chose to care for and sustain, and later to be counted as one with the people of the outcast colony. Apparently, we are, in fact, so blind that we fail to recognize how we have again found a section of society we label unclean, effectively ostracizing and rejecting God's own beautiful reflection.

Too often, well-intentioned Biblical literalism has justified all kinds of evil committed by the state, not the least of which being slavery, the oppression of women, and total war. Judging by the language used by the church lately, such as comparing homosexual relationships to rape, pedophilia and bestiality, it is apparent that she has found herself on the wrong side of yet another important social issue. I do not doubt that each protester at the Capitol today was sincere, nor do I doubt the sincerity of those who decried abolitionism as working against the will of God, I only doubt their moral courage and Biblical literacy. To the impartial observer, it should be clear that civil unions restore justice to our society by providing equity under the law. It is my hope that our state legislators recognize this as well and vote accordingly, but ultimately I hope the Church is able to learn from her troubled past and move forward with contrite hearts.

UPDATE 1:

Following the rally at the Capitol Sunday (Feb. 22), I sent the above letter as an OpEd to the local papers. In the Honolulu Advertiser, I found an opinion piece submitted by several Christian leaders opposing HB 444 on the grounds that it will create a "a parallel chapter in our law for civil unions, which constitutes de facto same-sex marriages." Interestingly, they rely on a vote over a decade old (which I personally did not have a voice in, being below voting age, not to mention the thousands of others my age or younger that this bill will affect) to define marriage as being between one man and one woman. To both of these points, I am in agreement.

It is indeed about equity under the law, a point that I agree with said Christian leaders. There should be no special treatment of one group of citizens at the expense of another (overturned "equal but separate" concept being of key importance). Our nation learned the hard lessons of this in the abolitionist, women's suffrage, and civil rights movements. To illuminate my point, I myself am a white, Christian, privileged male; Please do not give me any more dignity or respect than you, our lawmakers, give to any other demographic background in your jurisdiction! Any less is discrimination. In its essence, the commentary seemed to promote the idea that Christian morals (and consequentially Christians themselves) are to be given greater legal recognition and broader societal benefits than other members of our society. This stands as a grave violation of our civic society and undermines the impartiality of our system of our representative government.

Secondly, I am quite dismayed that the majority opposition is represented by the Christian faith. I did note, however perplexed, that a business owner also co-signed. This fact is personally disturbing to me as a Christian in particular. Too often, the Church sees their only mode of affecting the world to be through the authority of the state. I witnessed this during the House Judiciary hearing on Feb. 5th. No less than subtle threats made by a

city council person and other concerned Christians held the room aghast by implying that lawmakers were going against God's will and threatening the strands of our society by allowing civil unions (and this was before the not-so-subtle comparisons of homosexuality to rape, pedophilia, and bestiality). Allow me call attention to another deadly sin, greed, that currently threatens our very livelihood with utter collapse. Where were the rallies and worship services upon the Wall Street catastrophe?

So where does that leave marriage? If I feel so strongly in favor of a position that many leaders within my own community oppose, how may I justify myself? When I got married in 2007, I forbade the minister to utter the words "by the power vested in me by the state of Hawaii." To me this represented a fallacy; marriage is not given its power by through state, but receives its blessing from God. Religious communities will always be free to define marriage according to their specific traditions. You will notice, however, that proponents of civil union like myself are approaching the state, not the church. The state has a legal obligation to provide equitable and just treatment for all within its authority.

Any couple that accepts financial and civil reward as a result of their union does so at the expense of (and therefore remain in debt to) the public. In reality, all "marriages" that receive such benefits from the public are, in their most basic form, a civil union. I observe the sacrament of marriage, from a spiritual context, to be separate and distinct from such economic (but not social) demands. To be very blunt, and to perhaps set myself at odds with the public, I do not personally recognize the authority of the state in such an intimate sacrament as marriage. But in the civil square, our responsibility is clear. Civil unions restore impartiality and provide equal rights under the law, a point my opponents in this matter do not contend.

Mahalo Nui for considering my testimony in this matter.

Logan Laituri
2304 Makaanani Dr.
Honolulu, HI 96817
(808) 227-6565

From: Terry Sue Satta [terrysesatta@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

Dear Senators,

Please do not pass the Civil Union bill. I believe if two people are living together of the same sex- whether they are sister-sister or father -son, friend -friend, cousin...whatever..they can have some financial rights that a married couple (male-female) could have. This doesn't mean we have to concern ourselves with their romantic or sexual intimacy lives. Civil Unions should not identify an arrangement as sexual or love/intimacy in nature for 2-3-4 people of the same sex. Leave marriage as it has stood for hundreds of years

Thank you,
Terrysue Satta

From: jrdnn@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:56 PM
To: All Reps; JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Nilda I. Cabato

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:27 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: ben@choices4u.biz
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Ben Tamamoto
Organization: Individual
Address: 94-387 Hamau Street Waipahu, HI
Phone: 8086763576
E-mail: ben@choices4u.biz
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I would like to respectfully request that our Legislators do not pass this bill. The people of Hawaii have already spoken on this issue and I believe it is in the best interest of the State to support that. The wording of this bill is clearly a way to circumvent the will of the people by giving a different name to same sex marriage.

NAME Dayl Yaun

ADDRESS 46-070 Konane Place #3512 Kaneohe Hi 96744

PHONE 757-650-5886

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: _____ Dayl Yaun _____ (print name)

From: samasama2k@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:28 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition To HB 444, HD 1

Testifier: Samuel S. Asuncion
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

I ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In my heart and mind, I affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii have spoken and voted.

The Civil Union bill is just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage.

If this needs to be decided again by the people of Hawaii, then let it be voted upon and/or tabled until that time. Let it not be decided upon by the Representatives and/or Senators or otherwise.

Please be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. I am confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage.

Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

Mahalo

From: Aizen Mineshima [AMineshima@Aims4Claims.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:28 PM
To: Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Clarence Nishihara;
Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Donna Mercado Kim; JGO Testimony
Subject: FW: Opposition to HB 444, HD 1

February 23, 2009, 3:30 pm

My name: Aizen Mineshima

My address: 99-1070 Lauole Street

Aiea, HI 96701

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

and

Copy to Senator Donna Mercado-Kim

Copy to JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov (Please receive this email as my testimony)

RE: OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

Public Hearing Scheduled:

DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Auditorium, in basement, State Capitol,

Dear Honorable Members of Senate Judiciary Committee,

I respectfully submit this email as my testimony in opposition to HB 444, HD 1, and all other bills relating to Civil Unions, including, but not limited to HB 444.

I encourage all of you to protect traditional marriage and vote "NO" to civil unions. The people of Hawaii, including myself, overwhelmingly voted against same-sex marriage in 1998. My position has not changed. I strongly oppose civil unions and same-sex marriages.

Respectfully submitted,

Aizen Mineshima

99-1070 Lauole Street

Aiea, HI 96701

Aizen Mineshima
Workers Compensation Department
AIMS
Phone (808) 526-6176

From: Jingxia Zhao [jingxiaz@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:25 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM FOR HB 444, HD1

IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

May God bless you and keep you.

Jingxia Zhao

From: snakbnctr@hawaiiantel.net
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Sherri Nakamoto
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1. I believe that marriage is between a man and a woman.

Sherri Nakamoto
Honolulu

TESTIFIER: Mr. Thomas W. Peterson

BILL NUMBER & TITLE: HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

COMMITTEE: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

HEARING DATE: Tuesday, February 24th

HEARING TIME: 9:00 AM

HEARING LOCATION: State Capitol Auditorium

SUBJECT LINE: **STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 HD1**

The **VOTERS (which I am one)** of the State of Hawaii overwhelmingly (nearly 70%) in 1998 gave the Legislature the authority to define marriage as between **ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN.**

No matter what the homosexuals say or what name they want to put to it, they, homosexuals, end up making it a same sex marriage.

I am very much **OPPOSED** to HB 444 HD1.

From: Ederlie Domingo [santy112@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:18 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

My Name: Ederlie S. Domingo
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Measure Number: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Please be informed that I am strongly opposed to HB 444 HD1 legalizing same sex marriage in Hawaii. This is against the law of God that this nation is under. As a Christian wife, mother and a teacher to small children, I believe that if passed, this bill will confuse a lot of our children. Proponents may think that approving this bill will bring in more tourists and help our state's economy. However, I believe that the price that we have to pay as a state will be a lot greater. Just look what is happening in Massachusetts. If we allow same-sex marriage to be legal in Hawaii, what will be next? polygamy? since we have some minority who believe in it too?

From: Jennifer Corrales [corrales.jen@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:28 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

Jennifer Corrales
821-A Puunani Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96817
808-352-6865

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Jennifer Corrales

From: Angelina Gabat [alogabat@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:22 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Importance: High

Testifier's name : Angelina Gabat

To: The Senate Judiciary Committee

Date and time of the hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)

This is to affirm that I, with 70% of Hawaii population who voted against same-sex marriage, STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 HD1.

May God's spirit hover over Hawaii, and in the Senate room during deliberation of this House Bill.

God help and bless Hawaii and the whole America!

From: John Bickel [jbickel15@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:54 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Brickwood Galuteria
Subject: HB444

John Bickel
2415 Ala Wai Blvd
Honolulu, HI 96815
Testifying as a citizen in favor of HB444
for Tuesday Hearing

I was inspired to study Constitutional Law at Berkeley in the mid 1980s before coming to Hawaii to work for Rep. Tom Okamura. I was part of a group that sought greater equality in our laws and less bigotry. I testify today out of that same motivation. Just as we look back *on Loving v Virginia* as common sense and its opponents as anachronistic, so the future will look back on this issue. Some wish to clutter the issue by declaring that civil unions = marriage. Unfortunately these are the same people who say that marriage is holy. Therefore marriage is the purview of churches. If this bill is passed it will continue to be the purview of churches and state. This bill would make rights equal except for one key right, the right to declare oneself married. This is not asking for full equality. It is asking for partial equality. Yet it is better that the bigotry and denial of rights in the status quo. For the many same-sex partners out there who wish to have insurance rights, hospital visitation rights, tax benefits, and many more, don't buy bigotry disguised in slip-slide logic. Vote for equality.

From: Andy Yamamoto [kuriboy808@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:13 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB444 HD1

NAME: Andrew H. Yamamoto

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Maria Chomyszak [m_chomyszak@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:07 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium at the State Capitol

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

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

My name is Maria Chomyszak and I would like to express my support for HB444 hd1 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people regardless of their ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB444 hd1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

My partner and I have been together for almost 9 years - we were married in Canada in 2004. While we live together as a married couple, our own government does not treat us as such.

The unequal treatment that we experience as a same-sex couple is unfair and unjust. How would you feel if you or one of your family members was treated in this manner? All we are asking for is equal treatment under the law – nothing more and nothing less.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii Senate. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB444 hd1 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Maria Chomyszak
94-1185 Meleinoa Place, #B
Waipahu, HI 96797

Access your email online and on the go with Windows Live Hotmail. [Sign up today.](#)

From: Jenny Fujita [jenny@fmpr.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:41 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: In Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

I wish to express my support for HB 444 HD1 regarding Civil Unions for your upcoming public hearing on Feb. 24 at 9 a.m. This bill will establish equal rights for same-gender couples under Hawai'i law. It will NOT change marriage law. It is written to protect the rights of all families, and to guarantee freedom for Hawaii's diverse religious communities. In the spirit of fairness, I urge you to pass HB 444 HD1.

Thank you and aloha,

Jenny Fujita
5483 Puulima Road
Kalaheo, HI 96741



Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

STRONG SUPPORT: HB444 HD1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My name is Carrie Ann Shirota, and I am writing as a member of the Catholic faith in strong support of HB 444 HD1.

I was born and raised on the island of Maui. For most of my life, I received a Catholic education. I attended St. Joseph Elementary School, and St. Anthony Jr. High School. As an adult, I decided to continue my education and spiritual growth at Santa Clara University, a Jesuit school in California.

During my undergraduate years, I discovered Liberation Theology – the belief that God, through his son Jesus Christ, wants us to help free those who are oppressed and suffering in society. In law school, I learned about Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his work in creating the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. These teachings reaffirmed my belief that our humanity is dependent on recognizing the humanity in others, and that each of us has kuleana to fight for equality and fundamental fairness for all of our brothers and sisters.

As you deliberate the fate of HB 444 HD1, I ask that you consider the words of Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu from his book, God Has A Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time.

In God's family, there are no outsiders. All are insiders. Black and white, rich and poor, gay and straight, Jew and Arab, Palestinian and Israeli, Roman Catholic and Protestant, Serb and Albanian, Hutu and Tutsi, Muslim and Christian, Buddhist and Hindu, Pakistani and Indian – all belong....

Equality is essential to human life and well-being...

God's dream wants us to be brothers and sisters, wants us to be family...

As policy makers on behalf of all citizens of Hawai'i, I am asking for your vote in support of HB 444 HD1. You have kuleana to enact laws that provide equal rights for all of our brothers and sisters.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Ann Shirota
Wailuku, Maui Hawai'i 96793

From: Athan Adachi [athanadachi@earthlink.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony; Sen. Donna Mercado Kim; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom
Subject: *****SPAM***** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

To the Senate Judiciary Committee

Date and time of the hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)

Measure Number: HB 444 HD1

Dear Honorable Senators,

I am opposed to this Bill. We the voters of the State of Hawaii voted 70% to 30% to affirm marriage as being between a man and a woman. If this Bill is passed, you will be ignoring the will of the people of this State. If you believe this is a Civil Rights matter, then what will stop people from demanding other Civil Rights such as to be able to marry their grown children or to marry more than one person? Please don't open this Pandora's box as it will corrupt the definition of family in America.

Sincerely,

Athan Adachi
1702 Kalaepaa Drive
Honolulu, HI 96819-3011

From: Ron Locklar [locklarr@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong to opposition to HB 444

Testifier: Roanld Locklar
Bill Number and Title: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00AM
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I wish to stand against this assault on marriage and the family in Hawaii for the following reasons:

1. The people of Hawaii have already spoken. In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage is between a man and a woman. Civil unions are just another way attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title.
2. Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law. In 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS 572C (RBA) became law.
3. Peopel should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors.

Please strike down the proposal.

Ronald Locklar

check out the rest of the Windows Live™. More than mail–Windows Live™ goes way beyond your inbox. [More than messages](#)

From: Winnie [livingwaters4@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:34 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong opposition to HB444 HD1

Testifier: Leighton Mendiola
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME Leighton Mendiola
ADDRESS 91-1029 Kaiapele Street
PHONE 554-9466

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Raymond So [raymondso@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:28 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.
Measure Number: HB 444 HD1
Testimony of: Raymond So

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Raymond, aside from being a father of a soon to be two year old, and a foster father of a soon to be high school grad, I am also a full time youth and young adult worker and work daily in the trenches with kids from Jr. High to College level along with their families. I have had the joy of doing this for close to 10 years now. Because of this uninterrupted span of time, I also have had the luxury to observe transitions in the youth, from children to teenager, from teenager to young adult. I get to watch the effects of how societal norms and influences affects our kids, as well as how various trends of the past affect the current generation of young people today.

Whereas I believe that every person has a right and choice to live however they deem best for their life, unfortunately there are always repercussions to decisions, whether good or bad. When these decisions affect those around, as well as the generations following, a person's right has to yield to the benefit of the masses.

Legalizing same gender civil unions will have many devastating repercussions in our State. The proper functioning of a healthy family in regards to rearing children requires that there be both a male and a female. Research and experience has shown the destructive results of children raised with only the model and influence of a single gender. The rate at which marriages in the United States have come to divorce (over 50%) has been one of the causes and has left a trail of victims. These are the children of the next generation. And this generation will grow up without knowledge, modeling, or experience in how to rear their own children with proper balance and we see the fruit of this even in our state today. Children require both the balanced influence of both male and female throughout their developmental lives to grow into a healthy functioning responsible adult.

Here's a collection of statistics that deal with families that are fatherless and to see the dysfunction that comes from such an arrangement. <http://www.fathermag.com/news/2756-suicide.shtml>

By legalizing same sex civil unions, we are in effect authorizing and perpetuating a generation of unions that do not model the best for our children. The modeling that our children receive and grow up with will be greatly affected. Their understanding of what is historically best and what is an alternative lifestyle held by a minority will be challenged.

Legalizing same sex civil unions will pave way for more fostering and adoption of other children and will not provide the best balanced dual gender role modeling that a typical family would provide. Many same sexed partners already are forced to rely on non-traditional means of creating a "family", some medically, some through fostering or adoption, but definitely not naturally.

Legalizing same sex civil unions is also a first step to a hidden agenda. If one simply goes online and reads some of the comments and blogs that the proponents of same sex unions have written, one will find many people who outright declare that "Civil Union first, marriage next"! The definition of "Marriage" and "Family" is at stake. To me, it is vital that the true definition of marriage and family be untouched. This desire has been expressed by the people of Hawaii in the 1998 vote on this subject. It would be desirable not to revisit this debate again.

It also intrigues me that the trump card that is always pulled by the proponents of same sex unions is that of discrimination and hatred. It has come to my attention that one of the representatives that stood against this bill during the first debate on this Bill, Pastor Virginia Domligan, has shortly afterwards had her car vandalized and bullet ridden by those that didn't like her position.

Overall, I do not feel the passing of this Legislature is going to be a wise decision. The list of negative consequences above are not exhaustive. I believe that I represent many who disagree with this. Perhaps the biggest test of our comfort with this would be to ask whether we would have an issue with one day our own child or grandchild coming to us and announcing that he'll be getting married and for you to meet his fiancé boyfriend, or for your daughter to tell you she's going to be moving out to live with her girlfriend and that they plan on raising children together. What is your response? I hope that you agree with me that this bill is not in the best interest of the Keiki of the future and our beloved State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Raymond So
raymondso@hawaii.rr.com

From: Winnie [livingwaters4@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: Winnie Mendiola
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

NAME Winnie Mendiola
ADDRESS 91-1029 Kaiapele Street
PHONE 554-9466

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

From: Jacy Youn [jacy.youn@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:23 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

Re: Testimony of Jacy L. Youn in Strong Support of H.B.
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacy L. Youn

William S. Richardson School of Law, J.D. Candidate, 2010



The Church of the Holy Innocents

561 Front Street
PO Box 606
Lahaina, HI 96767-0606

www.HolyIMaui.org

808-661-4202 (phone)
808-661-8667 (Fax)

February 18, 2009

Senate Committee on Judiciary
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Civil Unions Legislation

Dear Senators:

As the leadership of Holy Innocents Episcopal Church in Lahaina, Maui, we urge you to approve the upcoming civil unions bill and move it to the full Senate for a vote. We further respectfully ask each of you to vote in favor of this bill when it reaches the full Senate. We enclose the testimony we presented to the House Judiciary Committee this year and the testimony we presented when this issue was last considered in 2007.

We believe that this is an issue of civil rights and equal justice for all of Hawaii's people. There are many gay and lesbian couples living in Hawaii who have created long standing committed relationships with their partners. We believe such stable relationships benefit society and should be accorded the respect and protection of the law. We believe supporting these stable relationships is good public policy and would benefit not only the couples affected but also the businesses, government agencies, hospitals and other entities that deal with such couples by providing legal certainty about the status of such civil unions.

As a faith community we also support the civil unions bill since it is in accord our baptismal promises to respect the dignity of every human being. We are pleased that our bishop, the Rt. Rev. Robert Fitzpatrick, Bishop of Episcopal Church in Hawai'i, has also written to you in favor of the civil unions bill. As Bishop Fitzpatrick noted, this bill would in no way infringe upon the religious beliefs of any religious body nor compel anyone to perform any act that is contrary to their beliefs.

There are thousands of gay and lesbian couples in Hawai'i who are also our sons and daughters, sisters and brothers. The reality is that they are not single and we see no rational social purpose in treating them as single

under the law. Their concerns about inheritance issues, pensions, health care decision making powers, and other such matters are legitimate. We believe it is both unjust and poor public policy to continue to ignore these claims.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane DelosReyes
Sr. Bishop's Warden

Nancy Sherman
Jr. Bishop's Warden

the Rev. William J. Albinger, Jr.
Priest-in-Charge

Vestry Members:

Chris Gale

Jackie Kelly

Scott McCoy

Marc Orgish

Donna Tarsitano

Penny Wakida

From: Claudia Webster [clwswim@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:19 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fw: Yes for Civil Unions HB444 HD1

Oops-wrong email address. cw

----- Original Message -----

From: Claudia Webster
To: JGOTwarimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:37 PM
Subject: Yes for Civil Unions HB444 HD1

Yes to Civil Unions in Hawaii--HB 444 HD1
No to discrimination against same-sex couples

From: Claudia L. Webster
14 Aulike St., #305
Kailua, HI 96734
808-262-6243
Email: clwswim@hawaii.rr.com

Full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal right and privileges equal to those of married couples should be the law of the land in Hawaii, the state that says "Aloha"--love.

I am now 72 years old and worked in public health for many years. As the HIV/AIDS Education Manager, Oregon Health Division for over 11 years I saw the tragedies brought on by lack of legal rights of gay couples. I have seen couples who have been together for 30 years or more and purchased everything in common but without legal backing have their lives ripped apart when one dies. I saw the family of a gay man whose name was on the title of the house turn his partner out after the funeral. There was no law to protect him. He lost everything he had.

There have been times, hopefully in the past, when a partner was in the hospital and the other partner was denied access. The healthy partner was not able to assist in making health decisions for the person they loved and had lived with for years. They had no legal rights.

Gay couples who have children have to go through extra-ordinary legal processes to have both names on the children's birth certificates, health insurance, school entrance forms. These couples love and take care of their children as a family. They need to have legal rights of a family.

In HIV/AIDS prevention programs we learned that to be successful all people had to have sense of self-worth, community support and acceptance. If people are going to practice healthy behaviors as safe sex, no drug use, and a healthy lifestyle to prevent HIV/AIDS or any other communicable disease they need to feel positive about themselves. When the community does not provide legal rights and privileges to them, then it is difficult to be who they are in society and be healthy.

As a United Methodist woman I served on the United Methodist Church Committee to Study Homosexuality. We were appointed by the General Conference, the highest body in the church to a four year term. At the end of our study one of our recommendations states:

5."G-Right of Homosexual Persons. Certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons. We are committed to support those rights and liberties for homosexual persons. We see a clear issue of simple justice in protecting their rightful claims where they have : shared material resources, pensions, guardian relationships, mutual powers of attorney and other such lawful claims typically attendant to contractual relationships which involve shared contributions, responsibilities and liabilities, and equal protection before the law." The Church Studies Homosexuality, A Study for United Methodist Groups, Cokesbury Press. 1994.

"Traditional marriage" between a man and a woman is a very recent idea. It probably came about after the Second World War. For those of us who have studied marriage and family relations, looking back in history there were many reasons for marriage. In ancient times as most of us know marriages were arranged for land, power, to pay off debts, etc. Looking at marriage over centuries, this idea of "Traditional Marriage" does not exist in the way it is being interpreted by those against civil unions.

So for me that is no reason at all to deny equal right for all people.

Yes, for HB 444 HD1-CIVIL UNIONS.

From: KLP [lady_on_deck@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:10 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: A vote in favor of Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1)

Monday, February 23, 2009

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Re: Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1)
Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 9 a.m.

To Whom It May Concern:

Ten years ago I marched in protest for same sex marriages in Hawaii. Ten years ago I thought I was making the right decision for myself, my family, and my community at large. But ten years have passed and now that I am a wife and mother I realize that what I voted for was unjust.

I now voice my support for a civil unions bill. Regardless of what I may or may not believe in, EVERYONE should have the same opportunities as I do.

Sincerely,
Karina Lililehua Parker

From: mzenger@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 3:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Oppose HB 444

I am writing this testimony so that our political leaders will vote according to the will of the majority of the people in the state of HI. We voted in 1998 for Traditional Marriage in the State of Hawaii. Why is this being brought up again through a HB444 without the consent of the voters. WE HAVE VOTED FOR TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE!!!

I have a brother who has been in a homosexual relationship for over 24 years. Though they have stayed together for quite sometime and raised my neice and 3 nephews the effects are their lives have damaging results. Two have chosen this unhealthy lifestyle. All 4 have social issues and a distorated view of how God intended marriage to be. Their is a brokenness in their lives that can not be restored. It was never God's plan for two men to raise children.

For the good fo society and the future of our children. Please vote NO ON HB444.

Concerned married mother of 3 children.
Monica Zenger
Kalaheo, HI

720 Mahi'ai Street, Apt. E
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826
February 23, 2009

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

Please accept my testimony **in support of HB 444, HD 1**, establishing civil unions for gay and lesbian people. Although I am not gay, I support their civil rights because of these principles:

1. EQUALITY OF ALL HUMANS

To deny gay and lesbian people the right to have legally recognized committed relationships is to treat them as if they were sub-human.

Our very humanness makes us all equal. Heterosexual people are not superior to homosexual people, and heterosexual relationships are not superior to homosexual relationships.

2. EQUALITY OF ALL RELIGIONS and SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

I am Buddhist. I do not subscribe to the religious beliefs of sects who claim that their scriptures lead them to practice discrimination. These religious beliefs cannot be imposed on the rest of us.

The Legislature must continue to practice separation of church and state in order to avoid engaging in discrimination based on religion.

3. COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS ENHANCE SOCIAL STABILITY.

Society should **encourage and support committed relationships** between adults, not try to block them.

Those who oppose civil unions are engaging in three errors:

1. Circular definition of marriage - marriage is narrowly defined as a relationship between heterosexuals; then it is claimed that marriage cannot be extended to gay people by definition. Such circular reasoning is inherently illogical.

2. Arrogance rooted in the delusion of superiority

It is arrogance that leads some heterosexuals to pretend that they are superior to homosexuals. It is the same arrogance that leads some men into the delusion they are superior to women. It is the same arrogance that leads some white people into the delusion that they are superior to people of other races.

3. Attempts to impose their religious beliefs on everyone else, violating our religious freedom.

To sum up my views, it is precisely because of the sanctity of marriage that gay people should be allowed to marry. All human beings should be able to enjoy the sanctity of marriage because they are human. Civil unions do not even bestow equality on gay people. But if they cannot marry, then civil unions are the next best thing for them at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Cain

From: Pete & Nina [petenina@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:17 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1
Importance: High

Testifier: Mrs. Nina L. Peterson

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I, MRS. NINA L. PETERSON STRONGLY OPPOSE TO HB 444 HD1

Kelsi Ju
Frear Hall
2569 Dole St. Rm 625A
Honolulu HI 96822

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the House Bill 444 HD1 regarding civil unions in the state of Hawai'i. I believe approving civil unions in Hawai'i would aid the political progression and cohesive community of this amazing state. As a full time undergraduate student at the University Hawai'i at Manoa, I have learned to appreciate and embrace the uniquely hospitable and inclusive culture Hawai'i has to offer. I feel that denying civil unions would unjustly dismiss the Aloha and Ohana sentiment of this uniquely diverse melting pot of people. Civil unions would be advantageous to all Hawai'i residents by extending common legal benefits that would add to Hawai'i's extensive Ohana and insure the protection and rights of all individuals involved.

Growing up part time here in Honolulu and San Francisco, I was fortunate enough to be raised by an extensive network of family. I am Chinese, Okinawan, and Ainu, and in all three cultures family is the backbone of a person's character. My parents, cousins, aunties, uncles and calabash family made me the person I am today. Approving civil unions would legitimize and grants benefits to two people joined on paper also known as another form of family. In order to have a family certain arrangements would have to be made in order to maintain a caring family environment, such as adoption and hospital visitation rights. If two people are willing to put the blood, sweat and tears into coming together in civil union with the same intentions of creating a family just like any other couple, I see no reason to deny them. I also believe every single person deserves to feel the love of Ohana which would be insured by the approval of civil unions in the state of Hawai'i. Thank you again for your time, understanding and the ability to testify.

Sincerely,

Kelsi Ju

TO: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
FROM: Kate Bryant-Greenwood
3498 Alani Drive
Honolulu, HI 96822
DATE: February 22, 2009
RE: **Testimony in Support of HB444**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Kate Bryant-Greenwood and I am a third year law student at William S. Richardson School of Law. I support the Civil Unions Bill (HB444) that would give same-sex partners the same rights as married couples under state law.

I myself would not benefit directly from this bill should it be written into law. Because the life partner I chose happens to be a man I was able to marry him eight months ago. But what if my partner had been a woman? It is preposterous to think that my relationship with a person of the same sex would not receive the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under the law as a person of the opposite sex.

The civil union debate is a legal issue and not a moral one. Although religious groups couch it as a moral issue, the moral arguments should not hold sway over the compelling legal arguments in favor of this civil union bill. This civil unions law would provide civil-unioned partners a variety of state-supported rights and benefits that they do not have under current Hawai'i law. This includes the right to have priority of inheritance if their partners die without wills, access to state courts and rules for division of property, and child custody upon divorce as well as for remediation of spousal abuse. This law would also cover the right of same-sex couples to receive maintenance and support from their partners and the right to adopt children.

If this law passes, churches in Hawai'i will not be forced to condone homosexuality. Religious groups will not be forced to conduct same-sex unions. There are 1st Amendment guarantees of religious freedoms that allow churches to conduct their activities without interference. It is crucial, however, that the state of Hawai'i, whose state legislature has plenary power to pass laws, formally recognizes same-sex partnerships as being equal to traditional marriage partnerships under the law.

It would be a travesty if my loved ones, friends, classmates, and neighbors could not have the same rights recognized under the law that I do simply because they are gay. Let our proud state, known world-wide for its spirit of aloha, lead the nation in this effort of equality by supporting HB444.

Mahalo,

From: Lynda Pelayo [lpelayo@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:20 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: NO SAME SEX MARRIAGE!!

I DO NOT support making marriage in Hawaii between two people. Keep it how it currently stands, the way the MAJORITY of we citizens voted to keep it.
Shame on you legislatures for doing whatever you want and ignoring the will of the people. That is not your job. Lynda

--

From: Garret Shon [garret@hopechapelkapolei.org]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:55 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strongly Opposing Same Sex Marriage HB 444

Importance: High

Testifier: Garret Shon
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Aloha,

My name is Garret Shon, born and raised in this wonderful 50th state which we call home, husband and father of 2 precious children. I want to formally voice my opinion, being strongly opposed to HB444, which is also in agreement with the 70% majority of Hawaii's people who voted to uphold traditional marriage here in Hawaii in 1998. The people have already voted and made their opinion known. As our elected legislators, you are obligated to either represent the majority opinion of your constituents, or once again, allow the people of Hawaii to express their heartfelt position and opinion through a ballot initiative.

As a husband and father, my heart aches at the thought of compromising the definition of traditional marriage and family here in Hawaii. These are the foundational values upon which our society has been built. We cannot allow such legislation to be the legacy that we pass on to our beloved children and grandchildren.

For the sake of the people of Hawaii, both now and for generations to come, I humbly ask that you make the absolute right decision in not allowing passage of HB444.

With Much Love & Respect,

Garret Shon

From: Carole Iacovelli [carole.iacovelli@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:03 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

From:
Carole Iacovelli
Executive Director of Youth Service Hawaii

Regarding: HB 444 HD1
Hearing: Feb 24, at 9am

To:
Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee.

I support the right of every individual to have equal rights under our laws. That is why I support HB 444 HD1. While I chose to be married to my husband, I believe others have the right under the law to their own individual choices. To quote President Obama, "The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness." Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 2009

I request your vote to grant this freedom of choice to those who request civil union.
Thank you. Carole Iacovelli

--
Carole Iacovelli
Executive Director
Youth Service Hawaii

e-mail: admin@youthservicehawaii.org

address: PO Box 61007
Honolulu, HI 96839

website: www.youthservicehawaii.org

808-780-7110 (cell)

From: gregboorsma@aim.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:47 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Civil Union Bill Testimony

Testimony of Mr. Greg Boorsma and Mr. William Linmark
469 Ena Road #1705
Honolulu, HI 96815

HB 444 HD1
Feb. 24, 2009, 9 A.M.
The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

We are both proud and pleased to submit testimony in favor of House Bill 444 HD1 regarding Civil Unions. Our names are Greg Boorsma and William Linmark, residents of Waikiki. We both believe that the time is now for the State of Hawaii to extend the same benefits, legal protections, rights and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a recognized civil union.

We met in 1995 here in Hawaii and have been together now for over 13 years. We moved to the mainland for five years, living in Louisiana and Minnesota. In 1999, we were granted a Certificate of Domestic Partnership by the City of Minneapolis. We moved back to Hawaii in 2001.

Mr. Boorsma, 50, is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and has been a flight attendant with Northwest Airlines since 1986. Mr. Linmark, 39, is an artist and currently is pursuing a degree in art history at the University of Hawaii. We own our condominium at the Waipuna in the house district of our neighbor, Rep. Tom Brower, a co-sponsor of HB 444, and our great new Senator, Brickwood Galuteria.

Northwest Airlines, Mr. Boorsma's employer of over 22 years (soon to become Delta Airlines), has improved its recognition of domestic partners over the years. Some of the benefits we receive have come through managements' understanding of the right thing to do. Others have come through contract negotiations. But all of our domestic partner benefits come with a cost because our relationship is not recognized by the government. Mr. Boorsma must pay income taxes on medical, dental and flight benefits while his married co-workers do not. His pension ceases to exist upon his death. It is not inherited as with married co-workers. While Northwest Airlines has done almost everything it can within the law, the economic loss continues because our relationship is not legal and has no force of law.

These same economic injustices apply to the filing of Federal and State income taxes, future social security benefits, inheritance taxes and estate transference. In this time of economic turmoil, it is tremendously frustrating knowing that we are paying more than our fair share because we can't get married or apply for a recognized Civil Union.

We believe that the Constitution requires that all people be treated equally under the law. It's time to end discrimination, both real and economic, in the State of Hawaii and in the United States. Civil Unions are supported by our President, by the majority of the public, and by a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. 2009 is shaping up to be an historic year. We ask you to help Hawaii join many other states in the march to end all forms of

discrimination. We ask that you support HB 444 HD1 and help us realize our dream of becoming a recognized family here in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Greg Boorsma
William Linmark
469 Ena Road #1705
Honolulu, HI 96815

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Paul Cambeilh [phcphd@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:14 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

I respectfully urge you to pass HB 444 HD 1 in a spirit of fairness and equality for all American citizens. It is imperative that separation of church and government be maintained. There is not a shred of evidence to suggest that passage of this bill would endanger heterosexual marriage in any way. Do not aid and abet discrimination of any kind in Hawaii. Sincerely,

Paul H. Cambeilh, Ph.D.,
Retired Professor of Psychology, & Mrs. Carol A. Cambeilh (registered Democrats)

From: Val [yamakawav@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:21 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: OPPOSITION to HB444 HD1

Measure Number: HB444 HD1

Testimony for State Judiciary Committee Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear State Judiciary Committee,

I am writing in opposition to HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions. This bill redefines marriage to include same sex couples, essentially going against what was already voted for by the people of Hawaii in 1998—that marriage should be reserved for one man and one woman.

I hold no ill will against homosexuals and the equal rights they now have under the law. However, I do feel that in order to keep our state, country and society strong and thrive we must have strong families. Strong families include marriage between one man and one woman only. There will be so many ramifications in our society should this bill pass. Think of our children. Think of the big picture. Think of what this will lead to.

I respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,
Valerie Yamakawa

From: jrafa808@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:26 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Joy N Rafael

Bill Number & Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 Hearing Time: 9:00am Hearing Location: Auditorium

To the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

My name is Joy Rafael and I reside in Mililani, Hawaii. I oppose all bills related to Civil Unions including, but not limited to HB 444, SB 458, and HB 878. Hawaii is known as and recognized as the State of Aloha. In the Bible it is stated that marriage is between a man and a woman. Morally and spiritually same sex marriage is not right. I don't have anything against any individual who is gay or a lesbian, they are human beings just like me. But, should this Civil Union bill pass and same sex marriage be allowed in our beautiful State of Hawaii? What kind of message are we sending out there? Already our world is full of negativity and the State of Hawaii will be adding to that? What kind of messages are we sending to our keiki's, our children, our future grand children of Hawaii who are our futures? Do we want them to have these kind of morals that it's ok for a man to marry another man or a lady to marry another lady? For a man sleeping in a room full of teenage girls would be looked at or thought of differently and the parents of the teenage girls would definitely not approve of the situation. Now, if a gay man is sleeping in a room full of teenage boys, wouldn't those parents disapprove of the situation as well? I definitely would be that he is interested in other males! Please listen to the people who oppose strongly against this Civil Union bill. Think about what your children and grand children and the message we are giving to them should this bill pass.

I thank you for taking the time to hear me.

Sincerely,

Joy

From: Tobi Hoff [superdog111@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:41 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

NAME: Tobi Hoff
ADDRESS: 48-5453 Kukuihaele Road, Kukuihaele, HI 96727
PHONE: 808-775-9393

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee,

Imagine a Hawaii where we can all work TOGETHER, both Gay and Straight, to make Hawaii better. A place where ALL children will have the "hopes and dreams" as their brothers and sisters. You have the opportunity to CREATE THIS. You can pave the way to this future, of a UNITED HAWAII rather than a DIVIDED HAWAII. Finding solutions to poverty, homelessness, starvation, the slumping economy, seems far more important than taking away the rights from a group of people who were born different from yourself.

Religious opposition to same sex marriage was obvious in 1998. They won their "marriage". Gays are not asking for "marriage", but a means to recognize OUR COMMITTED relationships, and get equal benefits. Hopefully the citizens of Hawaii have become more educated on "Gays being born Gay". Hopefully they realize their children as well as their children's children may be Gay. How can they take away the rights of their own children?

I am 57 years old. I was born in Kahuku hospital in 1952. I grew up in Hauula during the early part of my life. The sweet fragrance of lantana would blend with the morning dew, as I would walk down the road to the beach in the morning. I would wave to the Niimi's who owned Kaya store, where my mother worked, as I passed their house. I loved swimming, and immersing myself beneath the water, opening my eyes, and imagining all sorts of fish around me. My father worked at Hickam, and drove the long route every day. Once a month we would drive to town to go to Kress Department Store. Now 52 years later, these are the memories that sweeten my soul. I still enjoy diving and fishing, li hing mui, and saimin. I feel grounded when I hear Hawaiian music. My heart lightens, when I hear an ukulele during a mainland trip and I yearn for a teri-beef plate lunch after 5 days away from the islands. I love to see people smiling and doing things for others, as this reminds me that "Aloha" will never disappear, and if nurtured, will revive.

I am Gay. I am Christian. I am Hawaiian, Chinese and Japanese. I am a retired businessman. Until 1988, I fought being Gay... thinking "Why did God have to make me this way. Why was I being punished?" Escaping into alcohol and drugs, I lived on the edge of suicide. In 1988 I chose to accept myself for the Gay man God created me to be. My life changed. Everything got better. It was like turning on a light of blessings and miracles. I was lucky! Now I am in a wonderfully blessed relationship (going on 11 years ...we just celebrated our first anniversary) with a wonderful guy who I am committed to spend the rest of my life with!

Gays were created for a reason. Curbing overpopulation, bringing loving parents to children abandoned by straights...there is always a reason. NO ONE is exempt from having gay children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, brothers or sisters. Should we banish them to a life in the painful "closet" that I lived in most of my life? Why not pave the way for them to work together with all others to "make this world better for the generation ahead."? It starts with giving them rights, equal to their

brothers and sisters, so they will feel as, part of the “whole”, and not apart. It’s time to change the “thinking” that divides us, and create “thinking” that unites us. No one “chooses” to be Gay! I was “born” Gay ... which is a “TRUTH” that can ONLY come from a Gay person. Isn’t it right to teach our children the “TRUTH” rather than “JUDGEMENTS”?! Children are very “akamai” and still use their hearts rather than ego. Sooner or later they will, learn the truth, and realize, that the judgments they were taught; only created fear, discrimination and hatred toward others born different!

I am writing you to please consider my story, as well as those of other Gays who call Hawaii our home. Consider the story that you or your Gay children will have. They have no idea, when they are born, that they will have fewer rights than their brothers and sisters. Bill 444 HD1, will be coming up for your consideration. It will give Gay citizens the same rights as other citizens when they commit themselves to each other as partners to spend their lives together. You hold the future to equality for ALL Hawaii’s Gay citizens in your hands. “Marriage” is for religion, and should be kept there. “Equal Rights” is for all!

I have no right to advise you on how to vote on this bill. What I would like, is for those of you who haven’t met any Gays, to please get to meet some before you make your decision. For too long, the majority of us have been living in a “closet of lies”. Fearful of losing or jobs, or love from our friends and families, if they found out the truth of whom we were. The only Gays that were evident in everyday life, were the flamboyant, speedo clad, sarcastic queens, who twitched their butts as they walked. The majority of Gays are like everyone else. We worry about the economy, grumble when we are in traffic, and cringe when we hear bad news. Please use your “heart” to make this decision, as the head can sometimes spin into the direction of “judgments” rather than reality. This is an opportunity to vote, “WIN-WIN” rather than win-loose.

Sincerely,

Steven T. W. Leong – Aiea, Hawaii

From: Robert Haag [exagarazo@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:48 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Oppose HB 444 HD 1

Robert & Cheryl Haag

1291 Puu Aloha St

Kailua, HI 96734

808-255-6626

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii . In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

Bob & Cheryl Haag

Bob & Cheryl Haag

1291 PuuAloha St

Kailua, HI 96734

808-255-6626

808-255-7115

From: Laurie Cicotello [laurie@2bherbest.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony for Hawai'i House Bill 444 HD1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Aloha. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify before you this morning. My name is Laurie Cicotello and I live in Moili'ili. I come before you today in support of House Bill 444 HD1 on Civil Unions. I represent COLAGE, Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere. Founded more than 20 years ago, COLAGE envisions a world in which all families are valued, protected, reflected, and embraced by society and all of its institutions.

I strongly believe all unions between two consenting adults should be treated equally under the law and as protected by the United States Constitution. House Bill 444 HD1 would provide the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities to partners in civil unions as to those people in traditional marriages. In addition, children of same-sex couples are currently without the same family protections and benefits provided to children of opposite-sex couples. All families and their children will benefit from the passage of House Bill 444 HD1.

On February 1, 2009, my parents proudly celebrated their 40th anniversary – in a legal, now same-sex marriage. Back in 1969, at Sacred Hearts Catholic Church in Milwaukee, my folks committed in front of God, their family and friends to “Let No One Rend Asunder” their wedding vows. More than 25 years ago, my parent, Dainna, completed the transition from male to female. She and my mom, Mary, decided to stay together and remain married during this intensely personal and emotional change. They are the first couple in the United States to remain legally married following Dainna’s transition.

Over the years, people from all walks of life have had no problem trying to rend asunder my parent's vows by telling me their marriage is null and void. I constantly hear, “children are better off raised in traditional families,” whatever that means. I have a highly successful writing career and even served as a communications specialist in Governor Linda Lingle’s executive office. After being raised in my nontraditional family, I am a moral, healthy and respectful adult. I also have a great deal of compassion for all people and their family structures.

To that end, I join my parents and countless other ‘ohana across the country in fighting for equality and justice within the law. As my parents travel the country, we are never sure which states will still recognize their same-sex marriage. In 1996, Colorado overturned State Amendment 2 after the United States Supreme Court ruled 6-3 in *Romer v. Evans* that “an identifiable group of people could not be walled off from the legal system.” Because marriage—and now civil unions—are first and foremost legal contracts and agreements, the proof of which is that while many, but not all, weddings take place in churches, ALL divorces must take place in a courtroom. Thus, not allowing a certain identifiable group of people to enter into a legal contract effectively walls them off from the legal system.

There is also no way to define the terms, “male,” “female,” “man,” or “woman,” legally or otherwise and no criteria to write those definitions. We are more alike than we are different on every consideration. For example, the International Olympic Committee stopped chromosomal testing in 1994 after finding too many athletes were not exclusively XX or XY.

In addition to supporting the legalization of civil unions, I also kindly ask that Hawai‘i honor the “Full Faith and Credit” afforded under the United States Constitution regarding marriages, civil unions, domestic partnerships or similar legal recognitions between two consenting adults.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration and support of House Bill 444 HD1 recognizing Same-Sex Civil Unions. Thank you for our consideration and support of my family and all families like mine.

Laurie Cicotello
2648 Kuilei St.
#C-95
Honolulu HI 96826

From: Lois Pollock [lapollock@Hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:04 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

Lois Pollock, Individual 99-7808 Kolokea Pl., Volcano, HI 96785

- The measure number (HB 444 HD1)
- Date and time of the hearing (Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.)
- The committee name: Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee.

I support HB 444 HD1.

Civil Unions is the only civil behavior a state can support. Anything less is degrading to individuals denied equal rights and protections.
Join other liberal states in voting yes for this bill.

From: Makanawahi@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:05 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

TESTIFIER: Landan L Malaki
89-155 Nanaikala Place
Waianane, HI 96792

Bill Number & Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

I am a resident of Oahu, Hawai'i, and have been since birth. So this bill is very personal for me. I know you've probably heard and read it all. But I hope my words do resound in your hearts.

I speak as a mother, resident, believer of traditional values and morals, and traditional marriage.

Yes, in 1998 the people of Hawai'i spoke out against Same-Sex marriages and this HB 444 (Civil Unions) is gearing up toward the same thing. To me this bill seems like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

I have family who have chosen to live in a nontraditional lifestyle. And that is their choice. I love them all the same. And I can understand and empathize with any person wanting to have their lifestyle condoned and approved, traditional couples do this as well. But the repercussions of HB 444 not only impacts Same-sex couples, it impacts our entire society. Many people will have to live with the repercussions of someone else's choice.

While Same-sex couples fight to have their rights upheld, HB 444 will indeed strip others of their rights as has happened in Massachusetts. It will be a vehicle for intimidation with the lawful backing of a bill.

I humbly ask you to please OPPOSE HB 444, for the good of ALL Hawai'i, not just one portion of it. So please vote against HB 444.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,
Landan L. Malaki

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Minnie Souza [minsouza@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:53 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong opposition to HB444 HD 1

NAME Minerva M. Souza
ADDRESS 92-308 Kewai Pl. Kapolei, HI 96707
PHONE 447-9033

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Minerva M. Souza

From: M. Jane Stanicki [janestanicki@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: House Bill HD 1: Civil Unions

Please pass the above noted bill to extend rights to civil unions -
it is time to make all rights available.

HB 444 HD 1
Judiciary Committee and Government Operations
February 24, 2009. 9am. Capitol Auditorium
Dr. Patricia A. Gozemba

Aloha and thank you for allowing me to give testimony.

My name is Dr. Patricia A. Gozemba and I am currently living in Kailua. I have been coming to Hawaii since 1980 staying each year from one month to 12 months. I have worked here as a professor and a writer. I deeply appreciate Hawaii's tradition of aloha and justice.

My home state is Massachusetts which like Hawaii has a tradition of looking out for all of its people. In 2004 Massachusetts extended the arc of justice to same-sex couples by granting them all of the same rights, responsibilities, and benefits that heterosexual couples have. Since 2004, over 11,000 same-sex couples have enjoyed a sense of security knowing that our families are protected and supported by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

My partner Karen Kahn and I are one of those 11,000 couples who have been married in Massachusetts in the last 4.5 years and I am here today to tell you that the sky has not fallen in Massachusetts. The Red Sox, Patriots, and the Boston Celtics continue to thrive, and 11,000 more families in MA feel secure and can look with respect and gratitude toward their state government.

Equality, whether it comes via civil marriage or civil unions, is about extending economic and social justice to all families.

The arguments against equality that I continue to hear in Hawaii are the same arguments that the Massachusetts courts and legislature heard and rejected. The arguments for *inequality* are all based on religion. How ironic is that? People of faith are misguided when they quote the Bible to support a hierarchy of God's children and to kindle homophobia. We are all part of God's creation: heterosexuals and LGBT people.

President Barack Obama understands this and he rejects religious arguments against civil unions. On Feb. 12th, the Hawaii House of Representatives also rejected religious arguments and extended the arc of justice to LGBT people.

The most powerful arguments for family equality in Hawaii are the faces and the lives of the brave same-sex headed families of Hawaii. I see in Hawaii the same kinds of same-sex headed families that we have in Massachusetts, families I met while authoring *Courting Equality: A Documentary History of America's First Legal Same-Sex Marriages*: Couples in their 80s who have been together for over 50 years but are denied the dignity of state recognition, families where two moms or two dads are working hard

to provide for their children but lack the same tax and pension benefits that other families receive; families who carry health proxies wherever they go for fear that in a crisis they will not be able to make decisions for their life partner. Civil unions will strengthen these families, and the communities that make Hawaii such a wonderful place to live.

In Massachusetts, we have participated in a remarkable experiment in American liberty and justice for the last 4.5 years. I am here to tell you it is an unmitigated success.

From: Jiro Arase [jiro.arase@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:45 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: February 24, 2009 9:00 am
Re: HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi and members of Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I support HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions and urge you to pass this measure.

I trust that Hawaii legislators are committed to carefully considering each bill, especially when it is an divisive issue such as this. I ask you to be mindful of a basic principle - equal protection for all people - in considering this measure. Equal protection for a minority should be guaranteed even with the majority's opposition, because if we allow injustice to some, civil liberties for people as a whole are threatened.

Sincerely,
Jiro Arase, LSW

From: Mante & Calee [mgcl@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:31 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Amante Galario and Calee Leong Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

We are strongly opposed to HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions because.

1. The people have spoken. In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman.

2. Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law. In 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS §572C (RBA) became law. This law allows two persons who are legally prohibited from marrying one another under state law to register their reciprocal beneficiary relationship by filing a notarized declaration with the state director of health. The RBA affords reciprocal beneficiaries certain rights that previously were reserved to spouses, for example, standing to sue for wrongful death and other tort claims, rights to an elective share upon death, authority to make health care decisions, rights to workers' compensation benefits, rights to receive payments of wages on the death of an employee, and rights to family leave under state law. [Shiela A. Albin, Associate General Counsel 12/9/97]

3. Traditional marriage and family should not be undermined. The data are clear and irrefutable - children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and dad. Hawaii's children must have healthy examples. Today, with 25 million children fatherless, it is callous to the extreme to be rewriting our most basic marriage laws to suit the desires of adults.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amante Galario and Calee Leong
Voters in the Ewa District

From: Glenn Oshiro [gtdw.oshiro@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444-HD1

Bill Number & Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24th
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium
Testifier: Glenn and Debra Oshiro

Dear State Judiciary Committee,

We strongly oppose enacting a law establishing civil unions between same sex partners. We believe that it is dangerous and will only add more confusion and instability to the minds of our children today and the future. Marriage (one man / one woman) and family are the foundation of our society and the integrity of this institution must be maintained if we are to leave a lasting legacy of strength for our children.

HB444 HD1 states that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil union." This statement by itself defines "marriage" and "civil union" virtually identical and indistinguishable from each other.

The people of Hawaii clearly stated their position in the Constitutional Amendment in 1998 that marriage should be reserved for one man and one woman. HB444 HD1 by its own definition is marriage under the name of "civil union"; therefore, attempting to redefine marriage to include same sex couples under the disguise of Civil Union which is against the majority will of the people of Hawaii.

We respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,
Glenn and Debra Oshiro

February 22, 2009

Dear Committee,

My name is Aaron. I was born and raised here in Hawai'i, and I happen to be one of the 'opihi – a local boy who loves and does not want to leave the islands. I was a Catholic school student from K-8, and then attended and graduated in 2003 from the Kamehameha Schools. I recently attained my baccalaureate degree, and I am currently working as a college-level tutor at UH and a part-time temporary teacher at a local high school. I enjoy contributing to the community by helping others learn, and I am planning to further my skills as I prepare to attend graduate school. Overall, I'm just a pretty average local boy who loves his community and wants to do his best in life.

I am also gay. And apparently, society feels that trait overshadows all my positive qualities.

Growing up as a gay teen was quite difficult. I was given all kinds of negative messages that damaged my self-perceptions – that homosexuals were “dirty,” “hedonistic,” and “unChristian,” which volunteered them for prejudice and discrimination. As an adult now, I am more socially aware, and I now understand that the problem is with society as a whole, not myself and those like me.

The issue at hand now is that of equal rights through civil unions. For some reason, many people do not seem to realize that gays and lesbians are normal people – normal people who want and deserve to be treated equally. Refusing to provide these kinds of rights sends the message that homosexuals are “less” than heterosexuals – that they are second class citizens because of their sexual orientation. This kind of social and legal subjugation has very real effects on the lives of many homosexual Americans, from the gay teenager who is struggling with his sexual identity and the teasing of classmates to the unwed lesbian who cannot see her partner in the hospital because she does not have the right.

I beg you – please pass House Bill 444. I and other proponents are not seeking to unravel the moral fiber of America, nor are we trying to redefine alleged “traditional” institutions for malicious reasons. We just want to see equality come to light in this time of great change.

And as an everyday local boy who contributes to this community just as much as anyone else, I feel that I and those like me deserve to be treated fairly.

Mahalo for your time,
Aaron Gorospe
95-1062 Puulu Street
Mililani, HI 96789

From: Idea Canevascini [ideacanevascini@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:38 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my strong support for civil unions. I am writing you because I would like that my friends are given this choice and freedom.

Why not allow people (with any sexual orientation and who love each other) to choose their own way to live their love?

Why deny them this fundamental freedom?

I hope HB444 hd1 will pass and this will be a big step toward equal rights for all Hawai'i's people.

Best regards,

Idea Canevascini

Windows Live™ Hotmail@...more than just e-mail. [See how it works.](#)

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:52 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: dkk@toast.net
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Deborah Kimball
Organization: Individual
Address: 808 Husten St., #63 Honolulu, HI
Phone: 942-4327
E-mail: dkk@toast.net
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:
Re HB444 HD1

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support this bill.

I believe it is not government's business to determine who marries unless there is a question of protection due to age and/or mutual consent.

My church approved same-sex marriage several years ago. I strongly supported and do support that approval.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this testimony.

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

Please accept my testimony in full support of HB 444 HD1 concerning civil unions. There is little that I can add to the discourse about this measure that has not already been submitted other than to say that I am proud of the members of our legislature who have recognized that equality is the birth right of all of Hawaii's citizens. I therefore respectfully request that you to pass this landmark legislation out of committee for a full Senate vote.

Sincerely,

Kahikino Noa Dettweiler

From: Randall Min [minohana94@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:13 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Senate hearing onHB444 Feb.24, 2009 9:00AM

Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Randall Min. I am a board of director for a non-profit organization called "Let's Build The Family." I am writing to you to urge you not to vote for the Bill HB444 Civil Union Bill. It is not in the Hawaii State's interest to pass Bill HB444 because: 1) It is not the will of the majority of the people. The people of Hawaii already voted to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. 2) If you represent the majority of the people of Hawaii, then vote what 70% of the people want, marriage is between one man and one woman. 3) One of the reasons for gay couples desire to be recognized as a legal union, is the legality of receiving insurance benefits as a family. You will find that this will tax the insurance system when many of couples this persuasion with AIDS will claim the high cost of care to a family medical insurance. 4) You will impinge upon the right of any pastor of a church who believes the Word of God that says homosexuality is wrong, to refuse to marry any gay couple. If this becomes law it will legitimize the union of gays and establish a legal precedence for Hawaii. 5) It will attract many gays to this state, and if 70% of the American people do not want to legitimize gay marriages, how do you think it will impact tourism in Hawaii as a family vacation destination. 6) I don't believe lawmakers has the jurisdiction to define an institution that was designed by God. God was the one who first created man and woman and brought the two together to become one. Only He determines what that union should be. 7) Its just not right. I consider it an affront to the traditional family. It is an attack on good solid foundations that formed and built this State and great Nation. You break down the family you break down the Nation. Please I urge you not to let this bill pass. Please maintain the values and morals that has made us a great Country.

Sincerely,
Randall Min

From: Leilani Nasau [leilaninasau@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Bill HB 444

To: Senate Judiciry Committee

Date: Tuesday, Febuary 24,2009
9:00 a.m.
State Capitol Auditorium

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Subject Line: Strongly Opposition to HB 444 HD1

I belive in traditional marriage. I do have friends and families who are gay, I love them, but disagree with this bill HB 444.

Mahalo for hearing my testmony, please do not pass HB 444

June Nasau
89-814 Haleakala Ave.
Waianae,Hi 96792

PS

I send a testimony this morning around 7:07 when I got home from work at 11:50 a.m. check my e-mail I realize I misspell E-mail address sorry. Please e-mail if my testimony didn't get in. Thankyou

From: Joan Yanazaki [joan.yanazaki@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Joan Yanazaki
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

In 1998, I voted, along with about 70% of all the voters in Hawaii, to keep marriage defined as the union between a man and a woman.
It is very upsetting to hear that our lawmakers are not paying any attention to the voice of the people that they "supposedly" represent.
By introducing HB 444, you are simply bringing this whole issue up again, disguised under another title (civil union). If you allow same-sex civil unions, then why not allow civil unions between brothers and sisters who live together, or roommates, or anyone else who has a relationship of some kind? Why only same-sex relationships? Why is our country and state being sucked into this deception to destroy the sacredness of marriage as God intended it?
PLEASE, open your eyes, and begin to see the truth for what it is.
PRAY and ask God for the courage to do what is right.
You know what is right.
You know how you should vote.
You know what the majority of the people of Hawaii want.
You know they voted for traditional marriage.
Have the courage to stand up for what is right and represent your constituents.
You can play a part in preserving, rebuilding, and strengthening the moral fiber of our state and country.
Will you?
I pray that you will oppose HB 444.
May God bless Hawaii and America, including homosexuals.



Kathy Reed
1819 Ala Noe Place, Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Phone: 808.834.1872 Fax: 808.836.3776
e-mail: Kathryn_reed@hawaiiantel.net



February 22, 2009

Senator Robert Bunda
22nd Senatorial District
Fax 586-6091

Dear Senator Bunda,

Testifier: Kathryn Reed

Re: Vote NO on HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

It is very clear that Hawaii is against this Civil Union bill and it is miss worded to make us believe it is about equal rights. Marriage is ONLY between a man and a woman AND MUST REMAIN THIS WAY. It has never been made to be modified in anyway with genders of the same sex. This bill cannot pass the legislature. There will be grave consequences to our state and our future generations.

I urge you to act as the majority voice in the community to **vote against bill 444.**

It is not right to pass a bill against the peoples wishes.

Thank you,

Kathryn Reed

From: FranWieb@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:34 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

To the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Robert Bunda, Chairperson

RE: HB 444 HD1 CIVIL UNIONS

Testimony for the hearing to take place Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00am

FROM: Rev. Dr. Fran Wiebenga, Sr. Pastor
Wahiawa United Methodist Church
1445 California Ave., Wahiawa, HI 96786

To the members of the Committee:

I am writing this testimony in favor of HB 444 HD1.

First, I strongly believe that the bill is a matter of justice, righting wrongs long denied a minority population by instating civil liberties provided by our constitution. Passing the bill would right this injustice.

Second, my understanding of genetics is that everyone's sexual orientation is the result of our genetic makeup. For a small minority, their genetic code programs them to be attracted to the same sex. There may be a few persons who are attracted to same sex partners for a psychological reason, but the majority are genetically programmed and cannot change. They should not be discriminated against.

Third, as a Christian minister for the past 22 years, I do not believe the Christian Bible in any way keeps me from supporting this bill.

The old testament references to men being with men refer to temple prostitution and therefore to idolatry, not to those in a committed relationship. Women weren't even thought worthy of being mentioned.

Fourth, from my study of scripture, I understand the teachings of Jesus to be primarily those of inclusion and compassion. Time and time again he includes those excluded and/or feared by the majority population.

One example is the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Here, Jesus teaches us that the one who is merciful is our true neighbor, and we are to go and be merciful. The Samaritan was the object of hatred and misunderstanding just as those in same sex unions are misunderstood and even hated by many well-meaning but misguided Christians today. In every case, Jesus teaches us that we are to break down those barriers and to live with compassion and mercy.

For a reference from the Old Testament, in Micah 6:8 we read: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" HB 444 is one of justice and kindness. Those who oppose it are not humble but arrogant in their rejection of the rights of this minority.

Fifth, same sex unions in no way threatens marriage between a man and a woman. Research has shown that the most important thing for children to thrive is a loving home environment, and that the sexual orientation of children is not affected by having parents of the same gender. In fact, it is far more detrimental to children to have heterosexual parents who are not loving or supportive for any number of reasons (lack of education, ignorance of parenting skills, abuse, drugs, etc) than to be in a stable home environment. Each situation should be evaluated for it's own stability and nurturing environment.

I hope and pray that you who are members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee, and then the full Senate, will vote in favor of HB 444 HD1 to bring justice and equality to this minority population and, in doing do, to all citizens of this great state of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Fran Wiebenga

From: Lino Laure [linolaure@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:35 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** HB 444 HD 1, Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Testifier's Name: Lino Laure
Measure Number: HB 444 HD 1
Date: Feb. 24, 2009/ 9 a.m.
Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Lino Laure and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444.

I am a grade school teacher and am currently on sabbatical to take care of my father who will be 89 years old in March. I also teach yoga and conduct a public yoga class as community service.

Education is the great equalizer; education and direct experience is consciousness-raising.

While visiting my sister and brother-in-law last summer, my nieces and nephew one afternoon asked me (their gay uncle who they've loved since they were born) why it is that there's so much hate and confusion towards gay people. I mentioned the usual...lack of understanding, fear mostly...fear of what they don't know, control...trying to control others, with religious beliefs and ideology, and so on. From our conversation, what stood out most was how strongly people felt about homosexuality based on their religious beliefs.

My nephew and nieces are high school age students and each one in the top ten of their class. At that time of my visit, there was so much talk about the gay marriage issue in California, so they were curious about the Bible and its implications on the issue of homosexuality.

As we continued to discuss the topic, being students of the technological age, my nephew pulled out his laptop and started typing away. For the next several hours, they read through online information of different references to homosexuality in the Bible and we discussed them and wrote them down so they would have a better understanding, and especially in reference to marriage. Here's what these young minds found out (and as a teacher, I was happy to see their self-guided interest to learn; they were motivated by curiosity and the desire to know more about a topic):

Marriage:

The Bible says that marriage shall consist of a union between one man and woman and one or more women (Gen: 29). Adding to it, that marriage shall not impede a man's right to take concubines in addition to wife or wives (Samuel). Furthermore, marriage shall be considered

valid only if the wife is a virgin; if not, she shall be executed (Deut: 22, 13-31). Marriage is said to be for life and divorce is not permitted (Deut: 22). Moreover, if a married man dies without children, his brother shall marry the widow and if he refuses to marry his brother's widow or intentionally does not give her children, he shall pay a fine of one shoe and be punished in a matter dictated by the law.

My nephew said, "That's the word of God regarding marriage? Who follows that today?"

Then we looked at Leviticus, the neon light of homosexual no-no in the Bible. Here's what they found out:

Leviticus does refer to sex between men as "an abomination". In Leviticus, it is also an abomination to eat shellfish (Lev. 11:10). Leviticus also gives a lengthy advice on the best price to pay for a slave. In fact, in another part of the Bible, in Exodus 21:7, it sanctions that a father can sell his daughter into slavery. Other topics in Leviticus includes instructions devoted to treatment for leprosy, cleanliness rituals for menstruating women and the proper way to sacrifice a goat, lamb or dove. It is expressly forbidden by Leviticus (19:27) for men to get their hair trimmed around their temples; and if a person has a defective eyesight, Leviticus states that such a person cannot approach the altar of God. More violations in Leviticus include planting two different types of crops in the same field, women wearing two different kinds of threads in their clothing; and, lastly, should anyone be caught cursing and swearing, the whole town shall get together to stone him or her to death (Lev. 24:10-16).

Is this what is meant to follow the word of God?

My nieces and nephew were baffled. Clearly people have long ago abandoned these old rules of marriage...take the topic of marrying a virgin? If a bride isn't a virgin, she can be killed? Who does that today? A man would be put in a mental institution or jail if he killed his wife because he discovered she's not a virgin? My nieces commented that certainly these were rules that applied to a time that is no longer our reality in this age of space and technology. Christians today would not even begin to live up to or even consider these absurd standards.

What is more of an abomination in Leviticus...eating shellfish or being a homosexual? It seems both, apparently. "There goes my love for oysters", my nephew said. "What about shrimp...is that a shellfish"?

One of my nieces suggested that perhaps at that time, because community laws were not written down in some other institution (like a court house, for example), then for some reason it was put in the Bible...maybe that's all they had. "Perhaps", she said, "This is probably what happened in reference to homosexuality". "Maybe", she went on to say, "They probably had ongoing wars and fighting between tribes, which were common, and many of the men died as a result, so in order to preserve the population, they made a law so that every man (including homosexual men) focused on procreation. They outlawed homosexuality as a result. Why else would they create this law next to the other laws in Leviticus that today is considered absurd?"

And slavery...where is slavery practiced today? It no longer exists, yet it clearly says in the Bible in Leviticus that it is a right thing to do; and to do it well, a person should know how to buy a slave at a good price?

This was how we spent one afternoon, discussing this issue of homosexuality, marriage and the Bible. In conclusion, they said...we're just happy you love us uncle; it doesn't matter what other people think of you because they don't know how lucky we are to have you in our life. And with that, I said...thank you, I love you as well because you are dear to my heart.

Being gay is not a choice or a life-style; it is part of an individual's consciousness; much like a straight person is aware that he or she is attracted to the opposite sex. No one should dictate another person's sexuality because it is an experience between two consenting adults. Procreation is not a necessity; it is a desire. And raising children is everyone's duty and not just for those who can bring them into this world. It is for anyone who can raise children with a loving heart.

Thank you.

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From: Paul Perretta [g3sea@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:43 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: *****SPAM***** HB 444 Testimony for Public hearing

Paul Perretta

Senate Judiciary Committee : Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9 am (HB 444) Public Hearing.

Our Family opposes HB 444 for the following 7 reasons (I have included point 4 for the Religious among us) :

1. Homosexuals are seeking a special right. They already have the same right to marry the rest of us have-the right to marry a person of the opposite sex. Limiting marriage to one man and one woman doesn't discriminate on the basis of sex or sexual orientation.
2. It denies the self-evident truth of nature that male and female bodies are designed for and complement each other. Opposite-sex marriage is the natural means by which the human race reproduces.
3. Granting same-sex couples a license to marry will not create true marriage. Neither two men nor two women can become one flesh. Licensing the unnatural does not make it natural. It would be a state-sanctioned counterfeit, a sham and a fraud. A licensed electrician cannot produce power by taping two same-sex plugs together. Homosexual sex is dangerous and destructive to the human body and powerless for human reproduction.
4. Homosexual marriage will always be an abomination to God regardless of whether a clergyman performs the ceremony. When God calls something unholy, man cannot make it holy or bless it.
5. Homosexual marriage is as wrong as giving a man a license to marry his mother or daughter or sister or a group.
6. Homosexual marriage will harm children by denying them the love and nurture of a mom and dad. The only "procreation" homosexuals can engage in requires that a third party must be brought into the relationship.
7. Granting a marriage license to homosexuals because they engage in sex is as illogical as granting a medical license to a barber because he wears a white coat or a law license to a salesman because he carries a briefcase. Real doctors, lawyers and the public would suffer as a result of licensing the unqualified and granting them rights, benefits and responsibilities as if they were qualified.

Mahalo

Paul Perretta

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From: David Shimana [dshimana@rr.firstallied.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 444

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Regarding HB 444: Public Hearing, Tuesday February 24, 2009 at 9am

Please do not override the will of the people who overwhelming voted to define marriage as between one man and one woman in 1998. The people of Hawaii and our district will know that Civil Unions are just another term for same sex union/marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again. The Senators and Representatives are supposed to represent what the people in their district and throughout the state believe and stand for. This was made clear that the majority of people are against civil unions. Please do not override the will of the people and vote for this bill without our consent.

Respectfully,

David Shimana

David M. Shimana
3532 Sierra Drive
Honolulu, HI 96816

dshimana@rr.firstallied

To: **Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair**
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government
Operations

From: **Bill Musick**

RE: Hearing: **9am, Tuesday, February 24, 2009**

Subject: **Strong Support of HB 444 hd1, Civil Unions**

My name is Bill Musick. I am a resident of Honolulu. I would like to register my strong support for HB 444 hd1, **Civil Unions**, which would provide fair and equitable treatment for all families.

Your support of this bill will help demonstrate Hawai'i's support of all of its citizens to lead happy and productive lives. In times such as these, family and equity are resounding themes that keep the faith and hope of all of our citizens alive...and serve as a beacon to those in other countries who are not fortunate enough to live in a land with a strong history of tolerance of differences.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to present my own testimony and for your consideration of this bill and the testimony of others.

Sincerely,

Bill Musick

Bill Musick
2130 Hā'ena Drive
Honolulu, HI 96822

Susan K. Hippensteele, Ph.D., J.D.
1226 Mamalu St.
Honolulu HI 96817

February 21, 2009

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium
via email to: JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

RE: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My support of HB444 stems from my roles as an educator, a parent and a concerned community member with friends and family who seek formal recognition and respect under law for committed partnerships.

I have been blessed with the privilege of educating the young adults of this community for more than twenty (20) years, teaching courses at the University of Hawai`i that address civil rights, gender, sexuality, and family. My students, most of whom are locally born and raised, consistently challenge the logic behind state denial of rights and responsibilities to any committed couples. And despite the oft stated perception that members of sexual minority groups will be more likely to support civil unions, I have found that my students' sexual orientation bears no relationship to their positions on this issue. In fact, it is often married students who make the most compelling arguments that the legal protections they enjoy in their relationships should be available to all.

Times have clearly changed. Hawai`i has a long history at the cutting edge of legislation that resists bigotry and supports the rights of minority groups, workers, and families. We can continue to build on that legacy now.

I urge the Senate to move forward in enabling this wonderful state to join others in recognizing civil union protections for all those in committed relationships.

From: EDWARD AYAU JR [eblessing02@hawaiiintel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:25 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONGLY OPPOSE HB444

Testifier: Emi Ayau
Bill number & title: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Feb 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00am
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am not able to be at the hearing, but am submitting this testimony to STRONGLY OPPOSE HB444.

I have heard the argument that civil unions are not synonymous with marriage. That this bill would not change the sanctity of Marriage between a man and a woman. But HB444 states, "Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "Marriage", or any aspect thereof, shall apply EQUALLY to "civil unions.""

Synonymous, according to Dictionary.com, means equivalent in meaning; expressing or implying the same idea. Therefore, HB444 is indeed a matter of same-sex marriage. A matter that Hawaii's people already voted strongly against.

The other supporting argument for HB444 is that it would give equal rights to homosexual couples. This sounds so nice. Everyone gets equal rights and we all live happily ever after. Bah hum bug! We have equal rights now. We all have the right to vote, and 70% of Hawaii's people voted no to same-sex marriage. Therefore if this bill is passed, the rights of 70% of Hawaii's people will have been stripped from them.

When I really sat down to discern my feelings on the matter, I could only describe it as VIOLATED. HB444, and it's overwhelming support by our representatives, feels like a violation against Hawaii's people. I call it Political Rape.

Rape, when a man forces his way on a woman who has said no. Political Rape, when politicians force their way on a people who have already said no.

Please do not allow this violent act to be done to Hawaii's people. I strongly oppose HB444, and all related bills.

Sincerely,

Emi Ayau
Makaha Resident

From: AalarahL@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:26 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: kakoniua@netzero.net
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Lanan Raposa
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

To whom it make concern,

I write this letter concerning my opposition to Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. This is a very touchy subject for me and my family. I have a lot of family members of whom I love very deeply who are either homosexual or are for this bill.

Although I love my family and friends, I really feel strongly about voting against this bill due not only to my religious beliefs but my belief that if this bill is passed it will open the door for many other immoral things to occur.

I can't believe that our wonderful nation would allow for such things as legalized gay and homosexual marriages stating that it is in the best interest of our state so that all peoples individual rights are or could be observed but yet refuse to allow faculty, staff, parents, and the children of our state to learn about our Lord God in our schools.

Looking at other states who have had this bill passed, is there anything good besides the fact that all couples unions are considered legal that have come out of this bill. I for one would not like to find out that my child was learning about homosexuality in school.

Please consider our children as you look at this bill and make decisions as you would for your own children.

Sincerely Yours,

Lanan N. Raposa

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

From: Tani Iida [aukai7@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:58 PM
To: JGO Testimony; All Senators
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 passing senate

Aloha dear Senators!

My name is Tani Iida and I write today in strong opposition of civil unions, H.B. 444, HD1. I would like to respectfully submit my request to you to vote against HB 444 passing in the senate. I believe it is but one of a growing number of areas wherein the people vote, but because a special interest group of some sort or another, doesn't like the vote but somehow has garnered political support...the majority vote suddenly doesn't "count". Hawaii has already voted on this issue loud and clear; dressing up the situation in fancy legalese and calling a gay marriage a "civil union" but with all the rights of marriage is going against the wishes of the majority of the people. That's going against democratic rule, and is not fair. Please do your job toward supporting the will of the people and the majority of your constituency and not denigrating it. Please vote no on this bill and ask your colleagues to do the same.

At the same time, I am for equal treatment under the law for gay and any other people in all other regards. What I really wish is that we would address what their real issues are - is it over being able to make health decisions for their partner? We can write a law for that. Is it over property rights? We can craft laws for that. Obtaining healthcare coverage for partners? We are about to experience large changes in healthcare, and can craft regulations for that too. Please address the issues outright, and not by trying to recraft and repackage what we all know marriage means. Just quit trying to tear down what marriage is, please. This is tampering with the sacred, and the majority of your people have said how we feel about that already.

Thank you for your time,
Tani Iida
545 Queen St., #437
Honolulu, HI 96813

From: Leona Kaapuni [kaapunil002@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:05 AM
To: JGO Testimony

Testifier: Aaron D. Kaapuni Sr.

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions !

I believe that "Civil Unions" already has a law in place for benefits.(The Reciprocal Benefits)

I believe that they want to use this for their own purpose to further marriage of same sex. In 1998, The people voted against same-sex marriage. It doesn't matter if you change the name to "civil unions" or change the package, because the contents is the same.

I am a father and I don't want my child exposed to unions other than what God intended.

Please don't pass this Bill.

Please put me on the list to testify at the hearing.

Thank you,

Aaron D. Kaapuni Sr.

From: Nancy Moser [mosernancy@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 4:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony Supporting HB 444 HD1

Testimony

Testifying: Nancy Moser

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009 at 9 am Capitol Auditorium

Bill: Supporting HB 444 HD1

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Committee:

I am Nancy Moser, a straight woman, and I fully support House Bill 444 to establish civil unions.

Respect for the dignity of every person calls upon us as a state to support equal rights among those who establish loving relationships, and to abolish discrimination based on the gender of loving partners.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 444 HD1.

From: Charles Lehmann [celehmn0136@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:46 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Hawaii Family Forum; Carol White; Charlotte Ahlf; Thomas Herndon; Ruth Prinzivalli; Puna Shorba; Maybelle Helfrich; Mary Smart; Madeline Smith; Lisa Barayuga; Joseph Shorba; Chuck Furr; Bonnie Moore; B Moore; Nevis deLaveaga
Subject: HB444 - CIVIL UNIONS
Attachments: faint_grain.jpg

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 AM

Auditorium, State Capital, 415 South Beretania Street

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to express my opposition to HB444, passed February 12, 2009 by the State House of Representatives. As a members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I urge you to put a stop to this travesty to our democ

In 1998, the PEOPLE of Hawaii voted their clear intention that marriage is between one man and one woman. The civil though it is not called a marriage bill, in effect ignores the will of the people and simply gives a different name to what construed as a marriage between persons of the same sex.

A push for "equality" seems to be the driving force behind this civil unions bill. But the word equality is being misused being is equal to every other human being, no matter what a person's gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or citizenship between one man and one woman is NOT equal same sex civil unions / marriage or whatever term we may choose to c why: (1) Society has a stake in marriage only between one man and one woman. It is not a private affair, or else there v need to license it and recognize it recognize it civilly; (2) Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the r stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and any community: (3) One of the obvious purposes of the beginning of human kind, is the procreation and education of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same se marriage and therefore should NOT be given the same dignity or protection as traditional marriage; (3) Children grow l environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the idea that are best for children; and (5) accepting civil unions as an indication of equality may lead others to seek the same "e polygamists be next to demand "equality"? Others whose values will continue to erode the social fabric of our commun

If we play out the "logic" behind same sex unions, many such things could be required under the idea of a false notion

I urge you to stop this movement to permit civil unions in the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for all you do and for your attention to this matter.

Charles E. :Lehmann

47-361 Hui Koloa Place

Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744-4654

Phone: 239-8504 / 258-8335

Date: 23 FEB 2009

To: The Senate judiciary Committee

From: Mrs. Kenvee J. Daniel-Parker

Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB-444_HD1

Dear Representatives & Senators,

I am a resident currently in Hawaii, island of Oahu and I would like to give my formal written testimony to why "CIVIL UNION SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED" i.e., "SAME SEX MARRIAGES".

Some one asked why same sex marriages should be stopped, in the last hearing on 5 Feb 2009. I would like to reply with several reasons;

1. HOMOSEXUAL ADVOCATES won't stop with just legalizing civil unions their agenda is;
 - a. Legalize Same-Sex Marriages
 - b. Teach homosexuality to our children in the Public Schools, as young as Kindergarten, whether, us as parents want them to or not. Take away our Parental Rights.
 - c. Convince the world that homosexuals were born homosexual.
2. I beg to differ, if they (homosexuals) were born as such, then why is there a need to teach the lifestyle to the children so young? Please explain?

LET'S STOP THIS ABOMINATION NOW!!

Sir, I would like to remind you of history in our country. This country, the USA, was built on the foundations of the BIBLE and in the BIBLE, it clearly states, "**Homosexuality is a SIN!**" Leviticus 18:6 & 22, Leviticus 20:13, Ezekiel 16:35-38, Sexual Immorality is a SIN!

I would also like to quote to you out of a book titled "60 THINGS GOD said about SEX" by Lester Sumrall.

Page 92 of this book says, "Worst thing about homosexuality –the spiritual result. It degrades the individual and distorts his moral values. The Bible says that homosexuality *ranks beside* drunkenness, extortion, and idolatry as a despicable form of ungodliness. "

Drunkenness in this country is looked down on, and considered to be a problem. Extortion is a crime, but the state wants to legalize homosexuality and same sex marriages? This is confusing to me. The Bible says, 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10, "**Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortion will inherit the kingdom of God.**"

Sir if you recall that the sinful ways of mankind is what destroyed the world the first time. Remember Noah's Arch and the **GREAT FLOOD!**? X-rated marriages, sexual immorality caused the greatest catastrophe the world has ever known and the Lord destroyed all that where sinners.

Also, in the book on page 89 the author agrees that ***"NO PERSON HAS EVER BEEN BORN A HOMOSEXUAL."*** A homosexual becomes so through lust, which leads to experimentation, or through the pressure of homosexual or bisexual friends or relatives. It is taught and learned. It is not what GOD intended. GOD gave ***man and woman a duty with the gift of marriage and sex.*** He commanded us to ***"be fruitful and replenish the earth"***. How can you multiply with man and man or woman and woman?

If everyone agrees that homosexuality is a model for the new marriages, humanity would die out in one generation.

Homosexuals have comprised their souls, the three components, the mind, the emotions, and the will all makes up the soul. Sex can destroy the soul, and anything that destroys the soul should be taken seriously. We are also spirits, GOD created our body and soul; GOD-breathed, eternal essence within you is your spirit. The spirit is the divine element that reminds our soul of GOD's will for our lives. The BIBLE says, ***Ezekiel 18:4, "the soul who sins, shall die"***. If you know that GOD is the final authority on sex you won't get upset with His instructions. If you will believe and know He is telling you the truth about sex. Therefore allowing "same sex marriages" ***is wrong in GOD's eyes and is a SIN!*** GOD overrules your reasoning about marriage and matters of sex. The BIBLE says, in ***Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death,"*** this is the price you can expect to pay for immoral sex (homosexuality).

SOCIETIES RESTRICTIONS

Even societies that never heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ impose some limitation on sexual conduct and marriages. In fact, all known societies have regulated sex in some way, either with written laws or unwritten customs and taboos. Muslim countries a woman's charms (hidden by a veil) is a privilege reserved for *her husband* alone. In China, the parents of *the boy* chose *the bride* (a girl) and the bride and groom do not meet until their wedding day. This shows that we as human beings *know, deep down inside*, that sex is a very important and serious matter. This, I believe is the reason why so many homosexuals have trouble accepting that the lifestyle they have chosen, not born into, but chosen to live. They know in their minds that it is wrong so they hide it. It is not something they are born as, scientist have proven that fact.

Today's society, the states:

1. Connecticut has ***legalized*** same sex marriages
2. Massachusetts has ***legalized*** same sex marriages
3. New York, same sex marriages is ***undefined***
4. Rhode Island, same sex marriages has a bill pending before the General Assembly
5. New Hampshire, civil unions ***enacted***
6. Vermont, civil unions ***enacted***
7. New Jersey, civil unions ***enacted***
8. Oregon, California, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Washington, ***Domestic partnerships enacted***
9. Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, West Virginia, Wyoming, ***Prohibited by statute***

10. Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada (**prostitutions is legal but not same sex marriages**), North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, **Prohibited by state**

Over half of the United States has **PROHIBITED** this bill in their states, why can't Hawaii? That's over half the population that ***doesn't want*** this act of sexual immorality, blaspheming the truth of GOD's love in our country. *Ungodly marriages undermine the entire nation.* These marriages warp the values that a decent home should uphold, because they are not founded to the word of GOD's truth.

In agreement with the author of the book, **"Until Americans repent and accept the LORD, they will struggle with, famine caused by inflation, crime, disease and spiritual bankruptcy."**

Look at the world today, there has been a war going on in IRAQ, IRAN, AFGANASTAIN, AFRICA, N. KOREA for awhile now. The new recession, the country's famine caused by inflation, no more jobs or job layoffs cause crime to increase, homosexuality causing the spread of HIV/AIDS (disease) and the none believers has the spiritual bankruptcy. **WAKE UP CONGRESSMAN** the world is coming to an end and you're allowing it! **REVELATIONS 18:2-10**

From: noe none [lil_localgal_55@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 11:27 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

FROM: Kanoe Amano

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00a.m.

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,
Kanoe Amano

From: Daryl Yamada [dcyamada@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Measure Number: HB444 HD1

Testimony for Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

I strongly oppose HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions. HB444 HD1 states that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil union." This statement by itself makes "marriage" and "civil union" virtually identical and indistinguishable from each other.

The people of Hawaii clearly stated their position in the Constitutional Amendment in 1998 that marriage should be reserved for one man and one woman. HB444 HD1 by its own definition is marriage under the name of "civil union", and is therefore attempting to redefine marriage to include same sex couples under the disguise of Civil Union which is against the majority will of the people of Hawaii.

Proponents of HB444 HD1 have clearly stated that this bill is not the end, but their goal is to see same-sex marriage become legal. I am greatly concerned that this bill would be just a stepping stone to seeing same-sex marriage become a reality since there is virtually no difference between civil union and marriage. At this point, the definition and character of marriage would definitely be redefined and marriage as we know it today would no longer exist.

Many comments have been made publicly that this bill is not about gay rights, but about civil rights and equality. The way our current laws stand, we are not violating or discriminating against the civil rights of anyone, "gay" or "straight." Every individual, "gay" or "straight", has equal access to getting married as long as they do not violate the restrictions set forth by our government on what constitutes a legal marriage. By allowing civil union to take place we are essentially saying that the restrictions that our government has established no longer apply. If this is true, then where does it end? If we allow the restriction of same-sex unions to be eliminated how can we then discriminate against a brother/sister, cousins, persons under age, or a person already married (polygamy) from getting married? Wouldn't their basic social and legal rights be violated as well? Civil rights are foundational to our country and I am truly grateful for our civil rights, however, civil rights without any type of restriction or boundaries would only lead to total chaos because at this point everyone should be able to do whatever they wish in the name of civil rights. Restrictions, boundaries and laws in the truest sense were wisely put into place to "protect us" and not discriminate against us. Just because I don't agree with a particular restriction or law doesn't mean that it is bad and it should be eliminated.

I believe we open a dangerous door to a slippery slide that there would be not turning back if we allowed same-sex civil unions to take place. The long term ramifications of HB444 HD1 would greatly effect our Hawaii in a way that none of us could imagine. Marriage (one man/ one woman) and family are the foundation of our society and the integrity of this institution must be maintained if we are to leave a lasting legacy of strength for our children.

I respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
From: Jerold Ogami-Van Camp
2101 Nuuanu Ave. #2304
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
Date & Time of Hearing: 2/24/09, 9:00 A.M.
Place: State Capitol Auditorium

Re: H.B. 444 HD1 Civil Unions

I am writing to voice my support for H.B. 444 HD1. Now is the time to pass the Civil Unions bill into law and stop discriminating against same sex couples in the state of Hawaii. Acceptance and tolerance are the foundations of civil rights. Respect, human dignity and individual freedoms contribute to a strong and healthy cultural interdependence where active participation in all levels of society can take place.

I am married and I believe that all couples who are in committed, same sex relationships should not be denied the rights, benefits, and privileges afforded to married couples. My wife and I have friends who are in long term, same sex relationships. All of these relationships can be characterized as loving, caring, nurturing, and responsible.

I am a long time resident of Hawaii and a registered voter, and I vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of Civil Unions in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Jerold Ogami-Van Camp

From: Victor Groves [vcgroves@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:15 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 Civil Unions Bill Hearing Tuesday 02/24/09 @ 9AM in Capitol Auditorium.

My name is Victor C. Groves
I live in Kuilioloa Pl. in Ewa Beach.

I am writing to ask you to please vote AGAINST the Same Sex Union Bill HB 444.
Same-sex unions should not be allowed for the following reasons:

1. 70% of the residents of Hawaii in 1998 opposed it and that could not have changed much since. Thirty of the thirty states which put the issue to vote currently ban Gay marriages. (Only one small state has legalized civil unions.) Therefore, if homosexuals are truly fewer in number, then the lesser does not determine the will of the greater.
2. The point that the homosexuals use that they are a minority and discriminated against is not a valid reason. If they are discriminated against by anyone, it is not because of their social status, it is because their actions are viewed as immoral, and always have been from the beginning of time. A known sexual predator will always feel discriminated against and feel like a minority. Time does not change the status of morality, a persons actions will -every time. Homosexuals are treated as human beings, but their sexual activiies are offensive to most. That will not change with legitimizing it.
3. Same-sex unions will only raise many major issues in society and in governments. There will be protests from the public, which for the most part, have religious influences, and legalizing homosexuality goes against all religious beliefs. Legitimizing same-sex unions will automatically ban Christians from teaching or preaching God's Word which teaches against homosexuality. Christians as well as other religions outnumber homosexuals by a vast number, and why should homosexuality outlaw Christianiy as well as other religions? It has been said that in Canada, already preaching from the Bible against homosexuality is a criminal offence. USA was founded on Christianity.
4. As has been witnessed in the past, school children will be forced to participate in classes exhibiting this type of action to brainwash them at a young age.
5. Studies by sound psychologysts have shown that children need the influence of both a male and female parents in their lives -given the diversities in their makeup. Studies show that children thrive under the traditional family. Homosexuality brings confusion to children's minds.
6. Sexually transmitted diseases will increase in Hawaii including HIV and AIDS, which are prevalent in homosexuals.
7. Same-sex unions will only be the beginning of a launching pad of many other unwanted unions. Once this door is opened, any other unwanted "MINORITY" can seek "EQUALITY" using this precedent, namely, incest unions, adult-minor unions if they truly love each other, polygamous unions and the list is open.
Due to the overwhelming negative after-effects of civil unions, HB 444 should be voted against.
Please stand with the majority and vote AGAINST HB 444. Thank you very much,

From: karen nakasone [karentnakasone@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:07 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Support of HB444, HD1, Civil Unions

VIA EMAIL: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Karen Tooko Nakasone in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

"Equal Justice Under Law" is a phrase engraved on the front of the United States Supreme Court. Passage of this bill would be substantial progress toward this mandate.

In the midst of the hateful vitriolic debates of the 1998 battle on this issue, I was profoundly moved by the courageous stance of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) Honolulu Chapter. JACL, in its attempt to Protect Our Constitution from the horrific amendment to our Bill of Rights to take away rights guaranteed under the Hawai'i Constitution, lost much of its membership due to the controversial stand taken by the organization. JACLs' stand inspired me to join their cause, and I later headed the organization from 2004 to 2006.

It is that same spirit of unwavering courage and commitment to Equal Justice Under Law -- which I hope the Legislature will display. I hope you will all do the right thing, and not merely what is politically expedient.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Tooko Nakasone, Esq.
Honolulu, HI 96822
(cell) 227-7264.

Karen T. Nakasone

From: cliftononaga@sprint.blackberry.net
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:16 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong opposition to HB 444 HD1

Please let us keep our tradition marriage between man and women for our kids.

Name: clifton onaga
Bill# HB 444 HD1 civil union
Committee: senate judiciary / government operation committee

Hearing date: february 24,2009
Hearing time; 9:00 am
Hearing location: state capitol auditorium

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone with Nextel Direct Connect

From: Claude Kanemori [klawindav@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:32 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

Winifred Kanemori
1991 Ala Mahamoe Place
Honolulu, HI
96819

Senate Judiciary Committee Public Hearing on HB444
February 24, 2009

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate,

I oppose HB444 and respectfully ask you to heed the will of 70% of Hawaii's people expressed in 1998 to keep the institution of marriage to be between one man and one woman. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Winifred Kanemori

From: Sarah Taliaferro [sarah.taliaferro@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 1:33 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Sarah Taliaferro in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for their loved onse. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawai'i law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawai'i law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawai'i are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Taliaferro
Mechanical Engineer
2279 Makaanani Drive
Honolulu, HI 96817

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:47 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: kuhina@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michael Walker
Organization: Individual
Address: 68-055 Akule St #114 Waialua, HI 96791
Phone: 808-385-4468
E-mail: kuhina@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate,

I write to you today supporting the passage of HB 444 HD1. I believe that as citizens of the United States we are entitled to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness". There should be no distinction made between those that choose to share that happiness with a member of the opposite sex or a partner of their own gender. HB 444 HD1 is an opportunity to take an important step in the movement toward fairness, allowing all couples (including same-sex couples) to enjoy the legal protections and responsibilities of marriage. The bill provides these protections without offending those who express deep concern about changing the institution of marriage to help gay and lesbian couples and their families. Without arguments about the religious tradition of marriage in a church, synagogue or mosque, the issue before the legislature is simply about fairness.

Providing legal protections for same-sex couples recognizes that all persons in long-term, committed relationships face crises as a family - including decisions about emergency health care, the need to make decisions about disposition of a loved one's remains and the desire to share a room in a nursing home or long-term care facility. When married couples face these crises, they confront no questions about the ability to make decisions or care for their partner. When same-sex couples face the same challenges, they are often treated as "strangers" in the eyes of the law.

Recognizing civil unions serves one of the primary functions of government - to ensure equal access to basic rights for all citizens. The leaders of our state must act immediately to ensure that all families in Hawaii have the basic legal protections that allow partners, parents and their children to deal with moments of crisis.
ALOHA.

From: SHAWN COLOTARIO [colotario@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:46 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444 Tuesday 2/24, 9AM, Auditorium

Public Hearing of HB444, Tuesday 2-24-09, 9 AM, Capitol Auditorium

Honorable Senators,

My name is Shawn Colotario and I am testifying as a private citizen. I strongly oppose HB444 Civil Unions. I ask you to remember that the majority of the people of the State of Hawaii are in OPPOSITION of HB444, this was proven when it was put to the ballot. You are in office to do the will of the people, and the people have already spoken. The intent of this bill is to circumvent the will of the people of the State of Hawaii. Supporters of this bill are misleading our lawmakers into believing that Hawaii is ready for same sex unions. Truth be told is Hawaii is not and never will be ready to embrace same sex unions, it is unGodly and sinful. Some law makers have said that although they are Christian they have to stand up for equality. I say that becoming a law maker did not relieve them from being Christian. The fact of the matter is, there is no hiding from God, He is watching us all. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Access your email online and on the go with Windows Live Hotmail. [Sign up today.](#)

From: chrisbhi [chrisbhi@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 12:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Chris Baron
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

FROM: Christopher A. Baron

Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

To: COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. (Capitol Auditorium)

Testimony on HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha, Chairman Taniguchi, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to file testimony in strong opposition to HB444, on this top priority issue affecting Hawaii's families.

WHY 'CIVIL UNIONS' ARE COUNTERFEIT MARRIAGE AND BAD FOR HAWAII

The people have spoken. In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits – without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sex-partner status test. The people of Hawaii have put these issues behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already been settled by the people.

Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law. In 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS §572C (RBA) became law. This law allows two persons who are legally prohibited from marrying one another under state law to register their reciprocal beneficiary relationship by filing a notarized declaration with the state director of health. The RBA affords reciprocal beneficiaries certain rights that previously were reserved to spouses, for example, standing to sue for wrongful

death and other tort claims, rights to an elective share upon death, authority to make health care decisions, rights to workers' compensation benefits, rights to receive payments of wages on the death of an employee, and rights to family leave under state law. *[Shiela A. Albin, Associate General Counsel 12/9/97]*

Do we want to save the "name" of marriage, or do we want to save "marriage?" Civil unions, same-sex marriages, and domestic partnerships have the same effect of destroying marriage as we know it. When governments offer sex-partner benefits, they are essentially endorsing "gay marriage." These sex-partner benefits send the message of government sanction of such relationships and take us one short step away from legalizing "marriage" between two people of the same sex. Marriage by any other name is still marriage.

Those who would redefine marriage often insist that the only necessary qualification for marriage is "love." Yet if one accepts that rationale, then there can logically be no boundaries as to what constitutes marriage; any combination or number of consenting individuals must ultimately gain the same legal and societal sanction as traditional marriage. While love is vital, it is not the definitional element of marriage.. We love many people we do not marry.

Marriage is not an American invention. It has existed as an institution since the beginning of civilization, and thus transcends our modern laws. Every long-standing society has viewed marriage as a union of male and female. Studies of previous civilizations reveal that when societies deviate from the standard of marriage as the foundation of its society, they inevitably deteriorate and eventually disintegrate. *[See J. D. Unwin, Sexual Regulations and Human Behavior (London: Williams & Norgate, 1933)]*

Traditional marriage and family should not be undermined. The data are clear and irrefutable - children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and dad. Hawaii's children must have healthy examples. Today, with 25 million children fatherless, it is callous to the extreme to be rewriting our most basic marriage laws to suit the desires of adults.

People should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors.

Please vote NO on HB 444.

Mahalo for the opportunity to file testimony with your Committee.

From: Diane Kaneshiro [dianekane@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:37 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

This is Diane Kaneshiro. I live on 2026 Aoao Place in Honolulu Please let Representative John Mizuno know that I oppose House Bill HB444.

I would like to encourage him to protect traditional marriage and say NO to civil unions.

Just a reminder that the people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage.

Thank you very much.

From: Linell Mathre [linell@kaimukichristian.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 2:03 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB 444 HD1

RE: HB 444 HD 1 Civil Union Bill
Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9 am

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I would like to ask you to vote in opposition to HB 444 HD 1. The people of Hawaii have already voiced their belief that marriage should refer to a union between one man and one woman. There already is legislation in place protecting benefits for same-sex couples.

Thank you,
Linell Mathre

From: Gary Bradley [gary@islandindoor.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:17 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444 Civil Unions - please support
Attachments: IMG_3887.JPG

Aloha, we'd like to ask for your support on HB444 Draft 1.

You see, my partner and I have a Reciprocal Beneficiary Relationship from the State of Hawaii. We are in a long term COMMITTED relationship, in fact we plan on being together the rest of our lives. What we are asking for is to be treated as an equal.

We live in the Aloha State, we don't single out people that we say aloha to, please don't single out us.

Please show the world ALOHA, show the world. Please.

Civil Unions is a matter of justice and equality for the gay and lesbian community. Please vote yes on the House Bill 444 House Draft 1.



Paul & Gary at the NEX

Mahalo~
Gary Bradley and Paul Perry
435 Walina St. 1004
Honolulu, HI 96815
write: gary@islandindoor.com
ring: 808.753.1002



Before printing this e-mail think if it is necessary. Think Green!

From: stephen sussman [sussbusiness2@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:33 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: please support HB 444

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I am writing to express my support for HB 444, and I hope you will do the same.

This bill is about equal rights for everyone.

My name is Stephen Sussman. I live on Maui and work as a physician for the Maui Medical Group. In addition to my work as a clinician, I am currently the Vice President of the Group. However, I am writing as an individual and not as a representative of the Group.

I have been in a committed same sex relationship for almost 20 years. My partner has a small organic farm. During our years, I have paid many thousands of dollars in additional taxes because I cannot file my taxes jointly. I paid thousands of dollars to an attorney to draft an estate plan in order to provide protection for my partner. I lost thousands of dollars when I sold my house to move to Hawaii because of the tax laws. I had to fight to get health benefits for my partner. I was able to do so, but many have not. Obviously the proposed civil union bill will not fix every issue, but it will go a long way towards helping out.

Here on Maui I know numerous other same sex couples in similar situations. These individuals are respected and contributing members of the community. It is important that we provide the same level of rights, protections, and benefits to all members of our community. I am a specialist in Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose, Throat). As you likely know, the neighbor islands are short in medical specialists, so I am an important part of the local community. And I am just one of many members of same sex couples that contribute to the Hawaiian community in a positive way. Don't we deserve the same rights as everyone else?

This should not be seen as a religious issue, but as a civil rights issue. I hope each one of you will be able to say to all of your constituents and to your ohana that you stood up for equality for everyone.

Yours truly,

Stephen Sussman
Haiku, HI.

Testimony in Support of HB444HD1
Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee: Senator Bunda, Senator Nishihara, Senator Gabbard,
Senator Slom

From: OLIVIA HESLINGA (Name)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am in strong support of HB444HD1, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of marriage to partners in a civil union.

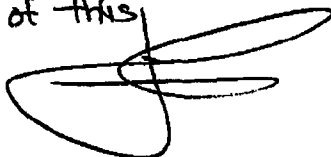
Date: 2/20/09

Olivia Heslinga
(Signature)

2585 Dole St. Honolulu HI 96822
(Address)

TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 444

*Thank you for your
consideration of this*



**JOHN A. MILLS
54-119 IMUA PLACE
HAUULA, HI 96717
808-225-7958**

ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM -AUDITORIUM

I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. The people of Hawaii are accepting as a society because we celebrate our cultural differences, but we all share a common belief and are held together by the bonds of traditional families. Don't make the mistake of thinking that our family values equal those found elsewhere. In Hawaii, family is the cornerstone of our society.

Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Please do not risk our society's future by allowing this "compromise" to take place. Do you believe that this small special interest group will stop with this bill?

Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. This law achieved the goal of providing the exact benefits that proponents of HB 444 are arguing for. This issue has been settled. Please respect the will of the people.

Please vote against HB 444.

FROM: Gerald Takeuchi (print name)

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

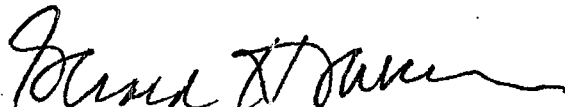
HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!



Dave Asato
99-649 Hoio St.
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
Ph. 839-5025 ext. 203
Fax 839-5035

facsimile transmittal

To: **SENATOR BRIAN
TANIGUCHI** Fax: 586-6461

From: Dave Asato Date: 2/23/2009

Attn: Pages: 1

RE: **HB 444**

Urgent For Review Please Comment Please Reply Please Recycle

Dear Senator Taniguchi, my name is Dave Asato and I live at 99-649 Hoio Street in Aiea. I would like to let you know that I strongly **OPPOSE** HB 444. Please help us protect our traditional marriage and say **NO** to civil unions. The people of Hawaii have spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage. Could you imagine your children, son, daughter, being brought up in a family with two women or two men being husband and wife. I have four children and ten grandchildren. I do not want to even think of a future with the unit of society like that if a compromise is made today. I thank you for your time and being such a diligent public servant. Have a good day.
Sincerely,

Dave Asato

February 23, 2009

Submitted Testimony for HB 444 HD 1 Hearing on February 24, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I am in support of House Bill 444 because I believe it will not only extend civil rights to all couples but it will also benefit the children of such couples who did not previously have equal civil rights extended to them.

A week ago today, after a lengthy process, my brother and his partner accepted a baby through the public foster care program that they hope to adopt. As you know, the foster and adoptive care program's mission is to look after the well being of the children they place. I would like to see my new nephew grow up in a home that is afforded the same legal rights that other children are given where all families are treated equally with equal civil rights. That home is the one shared by my brother and his partner. We have an opportunity to make that happen right now.

I support HB 444 HD1 because I believe civil rights will strengthen families and will benefit the children who are adopted by families that will be granted equal civil rights.

Mahalo,

Jeffrey Esmond
47-501A Nenehiwa Pl
Kaneohe, HI 96744



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Chair: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi

Vice Chair: Senator Dwight Y. Takamine

In opposition to HB 444, HD1

Testimony from: Christopher N. Street

Contact Number 942-0485

I would like to state my strong opposition to bill number HB 444, HD1.

I have lived the same sex "life-style" for many years. It is a selfish form of existence. It is not "gay", but depressing and deviant. Only salvation thru Christ will bring about change in a person.

This is not an alternate form of living any more than rape, theft, or murder are accepted by society. Homosexuality was not ordained by God but by the devil. Read Romans Chapter 1, focusing on verse 32. Even if you are "straight" and think they should be left alone, "live and let live", you will be judged by God the same as them.

We are in danger of our country going down the drain. Read your history. How many countries fell with this subject in their culture , full-blown, at the end? The Roman and Greek Empires are both classic examples.

Do you want God to judge you as a homosexual because you think they should be allowed to live this way, even if you haven't been one. That is what will happen.

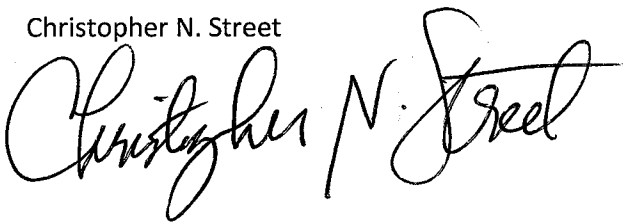
If God does not judge America for this and other sins, He will owe Sodom and Gomorra an apology.

We are not , were not and never will be born this way. God does not make junk or mistakes. Using Him as an excuse to selfishly live as you want is blasphemy.

Again, I am in opposition to HB444, HD1.

Respectfully,

Christopher N. Street

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher N. Street". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

February 22, 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Kelly Dugger and as a member of the gay and lesbian community in Oahu, I am writing to express my support for bill HB 444, Civil Unions. Passage of this bill *will not* change many aspects of life for either the gay community or the straight community. Presently, gay couples can and do have weddings and many children are being raised in gay households, despite public opposition and lack of state-recognized relationship status.

Passage of this bill *will* however change a few aspects of life. For example, children already living in gay households will benefit from insurance policies held in either partner's name. Spouses taking off time to raise or have their children will be able to use benefits of the working partner. In hospitals, spouses won't be refused visitation rights to their sick loved ones. And finally, upon death, the surviving partner won't have to suffer through legality issues surrounding the joint ownership of property.

Most importantly, passage of this bill will end discrimination against homosexuals, and ensure equality for all by allowing all citizens to enter into a permanent relationship without regard to sexual orientation.

Thank you,
Kelly Dugger

From: william enslow [bringwoodin@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:17 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Strong Opposition to HB 444

Testifier: William L. Enslow D.O.
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations
Hearing Date: 24 February 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM
Hearing Location: Capitol Auditorium

To the members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I would like to express my strong opposition to HB 444 relating to Civil Unions for same-sex couples. This bill is an attempt to force the People of Hawaii to accept a same-sex union on equal status as a marriage relationship between a man and a woman. This issue has already been debated and decided against in Hawaii in 1998. The government of Hawaii has already been progressive in extending rights to same-sex couples through the Recipricol Beneficiary Act passed in 1997. This bill being passed would accomplish only one thing in Hawaii: the stripping of the right of the citizen's of Hawaii to define marriage as they believe it to be defined. It would waste valuable time and effort on the part of our legislature that is needed on many other issues. The further marginalization of marriage by this legislation would be destructive for the families of Hawaii. Observations of states that have passed similiar legislation have shown no increase in the stability of people's relationships but rather a significant rise in divorce rates among both heterosexual and homosexual couples. There have also been alarming violations of the rights of dissenting citizen's to profess there beliefs and act on their conscience in society. This bill is not good for the people of Hawaii, it is not good for families, and it is not good for democracy. Please stop it.

Respectfully submitted,
William L. Enslow DO
Registered voter and practicing physician in the State of Hawaii.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:08 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: smp@lava.net
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Holly Huber
Organization: Individual
Address: 1519 Nuuanu Ave #90 Honolulu, HI
Phone: 808-522-8561
E-mail: smp@lava.net
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

I support Civil Unions and so should the lawmakers of the State of Hawaii. This is not a religious issue, it is a legal one. As senators you pledged to uphold the constitution of the State of Hawaii. Section 5 states: "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor be denied the equal protection of the laws, nor be denied the enjoyment of the person's civil rights or be discriminated against in the exercise thereof because of race, religion, sex or ancestry." HB444 ensures that equal protection is applied to ALL residents of Hawaii -- equal rights, not special rights. Rise above the religious rhetoric and misinformation and vote YES on HB444.

From: Willie Finley Jr. [wfinley22kona@earthlink.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:03 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: House Bill 444

From: Willie Finley Jr.
To: Representative Michelle Kidani
Subject: House Bill 444
February 22, 2009

Dear Rep. Kidani:

Though I was unable to attend today's rally, I wanted to express my opposition for House Bill 444--not because I dislike homosexuals but because I have seen what some of the long-term damage can do. I was appalled when I had a college classmate share her testimony in a psychology course: her husband had left her and her two boys for another man and even exhibited his sexual behavior in front of the children. One of the boys was eventually suspended from school when he mirrored some of his father's behavior with another student. At such a young age, children should not be bombarded with adults' controversial choices but should, instead, be focused on their academics. The idea of forcing churches to accept decisions that contradict their beliefs is disturbing; while there is strong support of separation of church and state, the government, at the same time, should take measures to keep itself out of church issues. The bill would take away the rights of churches-- and force them to condone acts they do not believe; consequently, this could set the stage for government interference in other acts. Equally disturbing is the underhanded way in which this bill was passed; the time allowed for the opposing party to react was far too short. Because of the potentially longstanding consequences of this decision, every move should be made to ensure everyone has the chance to participate and address their views. If democracy is to be effective, it should be willing to hear 'all' the people's voices-- and in an honest, straightforward fashion. As hard as many may try, history cannot be rewritten: this country was founded under the Bible's principles, and separation of church and state actually works in both ways: while the country has worked hard to keep the church out of government, simultaneously, by definition, the term also means that the government has no right to encroach on the church. The country has gone back on its word far too many times to accommodate others' views. House Bill 444 is yet another way to appease an elite few at the cost of others. If the majority of the islands says 'no' to the bill, then that should settle it; it makes no sense to force people to accept a measure after they have strongly expressed their disapproval. Please help in ensuring the opposition has the chance it truly deserves to be heard. There are both sides to every story, and, judging from the media, I have primarily heard from those who want the bill in place. Though the majority may be silent, their opinions 'should' matter.

Mahalo for your time, and GOD Bless You,
Willie Finley Jr.

From: Jamie Santos [JSantos@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:23 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: JAMIE ROMAN
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I, Jamie Roman, strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

If this bill is passed, we will see a wrath like never before in the State of Hawaii. Generations will suffer because of the failed choices of a few voices. The majority or 70% of the people of the State of Hawaii voted against same sex marriage. Doesn't this speak volumes over the few that will make a choice that most residents of this State oppose?

I hope that the Senator's who support or on the fence about the bill, will think it through with much depth before casting their final vote, and choose to vote "NO" for civil unions.

I'm a Mother of 3 boys, and see their future being jeopardized because of the very people we trusted and elected into office make an immoral decision on our behalf. As it is written, "you shall reap what you sow". Sow immorality, so shall you reap immorality, and raise generations with immorality causing this nation to fall.

Please take this seriously and not just some claim to worldly fame, because you will not be remembered as heroes, but rather the other advocate if this bill is passed. Ask yourselves if you will be able to explain later...

Thank you,

Jamie Roman

From: connie florez [hulagirlprod@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:14 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee...

I am in strong support of House Bill 444 hd1 for Civil Unions. Equality for all people includes every human being on earth. That includes all the Harvey Milks and Matthew Shepards that died for a true belief in hope for dignity and equality for all people. That includes my gay brother and his gay partner of 25 years with four children. The essence of the saying, "To thine own self be true" is our soul reaching for truth, dignity and integrity without doubt or fear.

I strongly support House Bill 444 for civil unions by asking for civil rights for all couples within our Aloha State. I hope that members of the committee truly look into their hearts with unwavering decision without fear and make the right choice for equality for all citizens of Hawaii.

Me ke aloha,

*Connie M. Florez
Hula Girl Productions
P.O. Box 11884
Honolulu, HI 96828
808.561.5749*

www.thewillingmovie.com
www.redlovemovie.com
www.thegladesproject.com
www.allformelissa.com
www.hulagirlproductions.com

From: Ellen Matsumoto [ellenym@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:20 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444

February 22, 2009

Senate Judiciary Committee

RE: HB 444

I oppose the passing of HB 444.

The argument for the bill is based on freedom. I question the validity of that stand. The question is freedom for who? There is a select population that will benefit from this "freedom" at the expense of many others who do not agree with the lifestyle that is represented by this bill.

Passing the Civil Union bill will be opening the door to restraints and requirements for private schools, organizations and churches that believe in the freedom of selecting qualified teachers and personal without the fear of accusations of discrimination.

Please understand this, there is no hate for the gay or lesbian person. I personally gave a self proclaimed gay some money when I was approached on the street. His story was he needed the money to help retrieve his car which was towed away, with the promise to repay me. I did not expect any return and I was not disappointed. We may not agree to their lifestyle choices but that is not be a personal attack. They are free to practice their beliefs, hopefully without infringing on the rights of others.

The argument of income generating opportunities for the state has an ugly sound. "Whatever works, just do it". As a population, I would think the gay community would feel devalued, cheapened and disrespected by such a comment.

As legislators, with the responsibility of listening to and acting on the behalf of the majority, I ask you to please reconsider your decisions to support this bill.

Respectively yours,

Ellen Matsumoto

Testimony for HB 444; Relating to Civil Unions
Senate Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations
February 24, 2009-9:00am

Hello Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair and
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair,

My name is Dina Brooks and I am a graduate student at the school of Social Work at UH Manoa. I am here today to **strongly** support House Bill 444, relating to civil unions. I decided to attend graduate school for Social Work because I have a deep passion within me to extend and fight for equal rights for everyone. As a member of the human race, that is the only way that I can relate daily through the essential notion of equality and justice. I feel that gay rights are something that we as a society overlooked during the Civil Rights Movement in the sixties. Now, over forty years later, we are still tackling the same basic human rights issues as back then. Many members of society take it upon themselves to impose their personal judgments and values on others through law, condemning the judged to a second-class citizen lifestyle, not quite living up to par with those whom are living the accepted lifestyle.

Granting civil union status in Hawaii to same-sex partners will not take away anyone else's freedoms and choices. At the very least, it will represent progress, empathy, and human decency to our contributing community members. Put Hawaii on the map as a forward thinking state that genuinely cares for **ALL** of their citizens' rights. Who are we as a society, as a government, as a community to withhold basic rights from others? Certain equality is the ultimate goal that Hawaii, and all of the United States, should strive to consistently maintain. These are the values that everyone should be concerned with. Thank you very much for letting me testify in support of House bill 444 on civil unions. I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Dina Brooks

UH Manoa MSW student

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:06 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: kehaulani.watson@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Trisha Kehaulani Watson, JD, PhD
Organization: Individual
Address: PO Box 61395 Honolulu, HI 96839
Phone: (808) 392-1617
E-mail: kehaulani.watson@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Vice Chair Takemine,

I spent many cold months in Pullman, Washington studying political theory in a frosty conservative town. We were surrounded by people who thumped on their bibles and drove into the middle of our mall with 30 foot banners linking abortion to breast cancer. There were anti-Semitic movements in the towns around us. My first semester there, a gay student disappeared outside a nightclub after drag night in a neighboring town. Many were horrified and afraid, but there were also those that boldly stated that "the faggot deserved it." This was 1999 - only ten years ago.

There are reasons I hate the mainland.

There are reasons I love Hawai'i. I am shamed of the protest that took place Sunday at the capitol against civil unions. Such poison has no place in our Hawai'i.

If there is anything my education has taught me is that history is cyclical. For anyone thinking the battle over civil unions is somehow new needs to read up on their history.

The stories of Henry VIII or Loving v Virginia remind us that the struggle over love and marriage that been repeating itself over continents and centuries. The struggle to love among the constructed ideologies of religion is a very old tale.

Nor, sadly, is discrimination new. Discrimination stopped women from voting until the 20th century. It denied Blacks freedom or the right to an education. It led to the massacre of over six million Jews.

Religion also motivated Third Reich and the KKK. Those masses, too, once rallied against minorities. Hitler used religion to justify the Holocaust. The KKK used religion to justify the lynching of Blacks in the South. Religion was also the justification for the Children's Crusades.

In my opinion, anyone who uses religion to justify hate doesn't quite understand Deus Caritas Est.

God is Love.

We are a country established by people who sought freedom from tyranny. We are a country of minorities: Racial minorities and political minorities. Funny how quick the descendants of minorities are to embrace the tyranny of the majority when it suits them.

Jefferson once declared that we each have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. What more noble pursuit of happiness is there than the pursuit of love?

Love is no easy feat. There are so many variables already against us in the pursuit of love. There is money, health, politics, timing, distance... by God, yes God, if you are lucky enough to find someone that you truly love and truly loves you in return never should any government stand in your way.

It is not I who am being discriminated against. Yet, I passionately stand by those who fight for their own equality, because I firmly believe that there is not enough love in this world. We should celebrate and encourage love, not oppose it. We should be thankful for families that love and nurture children, regardless of the gender composition of that family.

For love I would take on heaven itself, so God help any mere man in all his ignorance who would dare stand in my way.

I have no doubt that any army armed only with hate is no match for a lone man who carries with him love.

I may not believe in much in this world, but I believe in love and that love will always prevail.

Allow love to prevail today: Pass HB444.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Leilani Thourson
Senate Judiciary Committee
9:00A.M.
Tuesday February 24, 2009
H.B. 444

My name is Leilani Thourson. I am sixteen years old and oppose House Bill 444. I oppose this bill because a child needs both a father and a mother. Studies have shown that both a female and a male are essential for children. Being raised by two fathers or two mothers can have a detrimental effect on the lives of children. Students shouldn't be forced to learn about the gay lifestyle in school either. In addition, pastors should not be forced to perform these "wedding". I strongly oppose H.B. 444 for these reason and many more. Thank you for your consideration.

Leilani Thourson

From: scott gossett [scott.gossett@mac.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:08 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

To: JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium of the State Capitol

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

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

I am writing to submit testimony in favor of HB444, in support of civil unions for same-sex couples in Hawaii. I am a resident of Hawaii and an active Christian churchgoer, and HB444 is consistent with my moral values. Current laws DO NOT provide committed same-sex couples with the same rights as married heterosexual couples. This is discriminatory, and now is the time for change.

In November, a young leader from Hawaii inspired America with hope and shattered barriers of discrimination. But many barriers still exist, and for gay Americans, many more went up on that same November day.

It was sad to see victories for fear and oppression on the same day we made such a breakthrough for hope and equality. I think actor Sean Penn got it right tonight when, during his Academy Award acceptance speech, he said: "I think it's a good time for those who voted for the ban against gay marriage to sit and reflect on their great shame and their shame in their grandchildren's eyes if they continue that support. We've got to have equal rights for everyone."

I urge you and the entire Senate to follow the example of Hawaii's native son. Stand up for hope rather than give in to fear. Shatter barriers rather than stifle dreams. Make change happen. Join me and the majority of Hawaii residents in supporting equal rights and supporting HB444.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Gossett
60 N. Beretania Street #1608
Honolulu, HI 96817

From: KonaBryan@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony regarding HB 444 HD1

- **FROM: BRYAN LORD; KONA, HI**
- Measure number:HB 444 HD1
- Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.
- **TO: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations**

Abraham Lincoln, the man considered by most today to be the most famous and well respected man in American history said, prior to the Civil War:

"As a nation we began by declaring that all men are created equal. We now practically read it as all men are created equal except Negroes. Soon, it will read all men are created equal except negroes, and foreigners, and Catholics. When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty. To Russia for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy."

While Lincoln made no mention of homosexuals, his support of the oppressed people of his time, "negroes, foreigners and Catholics" should leave little doubt about how he would vote on Civil Unions for gays IF he were here in this chamber today.

The current inequality of gays in the U.S. and Hawaii is the last major bastion of an unprotected class of citizens in this land. Think about it: gays are the last group of people in this country that in some circles it is still socially acceptable to discriminate against, to withhold equal rights, and to outright promote as a target of hate and violence!

The vocal opponents of gay equality so often use religion to justify their bigotry against us. I have read that the Bible contains 6 admonishments against homosexuality. But do our opponents ever mention that the Bible also contains 362 admonishments against heterosexuals? Do the opponents of Civil Unions that are so quick to use religious dogma against us adhere to the literal translation of the Bible that they insist applies to us?

All women are forbidden to teach men (I Timothy 2:12),

Forbidden to wear gold or pearls (I Timothy 2:9)

Shellfish and pork are forbidden (Leviticus 11:7, 10)

Shaving is forbidden (Leviticus 19:27)

Clothes of more than one fabric are forbidden (Leviticus 19:19).

The Bible rarely recognizes divorce, which carries the rather harsh penalty of death by stoning (Deuteronomy 22:22).

BUT LET'S BE CLEAR: a vote today for gay civil unions is not a vote against religion, but a vote for equal treatment under CIVIL law. If civil unions are approved in Hawaii today, Christianity and other religions will still flourish in Hawaii tomorrow. Heterosexuals and their marriages will still remain intact tomorrow, next week, and next year. If our opponents so desperately want to "safeguard the sanctity of marriage", perhaps they should outlaw divorce, not gay Civil Unions. This is a vote for equality and fairness. Not "special rights" as our opponents so often like to call them. Churches in Hawaii can relax, for I am confident when Civil Unions passes in this chamber, gays across the state will not be bursting through the doors of their neighborhood Baptist church demanding recognition or approval from the congregants inside those churches. Make no mistake, many homosexuals identify as Christians, but as a whole, we won't be storming into your place of worship if we are not welcome there. And let's face it, many of our Christian opponents that are here today profess to love us, but hate our "sin", but their love for us is rarely so genuine as to welcome us into the folds of their church.

Our opponents argue that being gay is a choice. Well, the science is in: the earth is round, dinosaurs used to roam the earth, and homosexuality is a function of biology and genetics. I did not choose to be gay. When I was in 5th grade and attracted to a male classmate, I did not know why, but I knew then I was somehow different. Being gay is a part of who I am, my God made me this way and I do not believe he makes mistakes.

Sometimes opponents of gay rights stoop to the lowest possible level and accuse us of promoting homosexuality and trying to recruit straight people to our sexual orientation. Rest easy folks, sexual orientation cannot be changed, no more than someone can decide to change their ethnicity or their race. It pains me to even mention this, but sometimes we are even portrayed by our opponents as being pre-disposed to pedophilia. Any one in this chamber who has a gay relative or friend knows just how preposterous such claims are. According to the U.S. Department of Justice's latest statistics that are available (2006), victims of

sexual crimes are 733% more likely to be female than male. I think this government statistic goes a long way to render as propaganda our opponents claim that gays are somehow more pre-disposed to pedophilia than heterosexuals.

The passage of Civil Unions in this state would change lives for the better. In fact, it undoubtedly would save lives. While teenage suicide is near record levels in America, it is an epidemic among gay teenagers. I have little doubt that the hope that equal rights in Hawaii would give teenagers from Hanalei to Hilo, that are coming to terms with their homosexuality, will save the lives of some youths in this state and save their families from suffering the tragedy of a senseless suicide. Fail to pass this bill and you withhold that hope of a life of respect and equality from the gay teenagers in Hawaii, as well as adults.

The failure of government to recognize gays as full citizens sometimes manifests itself in the worst possible way. Right now, in Central Florida, a man is on trial for murdering a gay man in 2007, Ryan Skipper. Ryan was stabbed 19 times and then the murderer drove Ryan's bloody car around and bragged that "**he was doing the world a favor by getting rid of one more faggot**".

The eyes of the country, and indeed the world are upon Hawaii today. Even most of the opponents of gay rights begrudgingly admit that they expect gay equality to eventually be the law of the land across America. Why not today? **WHY NOT TODAY??** When the time comes when equality for gays is the norm, and the history of the gay rights struggle is written, your vote in support of Civil Unions today could cause Hawaii to be remembered as bravely joining the handful of early states that had the courage to stand up for fairness for all it's citizens. The alternative will be to wait for a future generation to re-write your historic vote today and right a wrong in the years to come? **WHY NOT TODAY?**

Today you can join the ranks of the men who voted to give women the right to vote. Today you can follow in the footsteps of the pioneers in the U.S. Congress that passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you do not pass this bill today, our opponents will undoubtedly be back during the next election cycle to try to push an anti-Civil Union amendment on to the public, thereby pushing the quest for human rights in Hawaii back by decades.

We have a new President today, who everyone here knows is a native son of Hawaii. President Obama is President today, in part, because of the courage of Abraham Lincoln to stand up for the minorities of his day. President Obama, having been raised in multi-cultural Hawaii is a man of tolerance and a supporter of equality for gays and lesbians. America voted for change with our new President, the age of fear-mongering and discrimination should be behind us.

When voting for this bill, **remember** the key phrase our nation's founding was based upon: "**ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL**", and ask yourself, what would Lincoln do?

Bryan Lord
Kona, HI

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From: Jim Doyle [playwrtr@msn.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:18 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Support Civil Unions

I wish to add my voice to those calling for support of civil unions in Hawaii. While I understand the reasons and opposition of many people, and churches, to this idea, I believe it is important to recognize the separation of church and state as one of the founding principles of our country.

Furthermore, I believe the issue is blurred when we speak of same-sex "marriage." We are speaking of civil marriage. No church will be forced to perform or recognize these "marriages" and no heterosexual marriages are threatened. Meanwhile, thousands of families, many with children, will be offered equality in the eyes of the state.

As a Christian, and in the spirit of Christ, who commands us to "love one another", I respectfully ask your support for Civil Unions in the State of Hawaii.

Jim Doyle
2140 Kuhio Ave. #1212
Honolulu, HI 96815
Tel: 808-230-8384
Cellular: 646-221-8585

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From: Ron Tubbs [rtmb@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:35 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony Opposed to HB 444, HD1

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m.
Auditorium

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

HB 444, HD1

Please vote no to HB
444 HD 1

Dear Representatives,

I am opposed to civil unions for scientific reasons. Biologically reproduction and mating are for procreation. Psychologically it is also abnormal. Medically it is very unclean and leads to diseases being spread. HAVE WE ALL FORGOTTEN AIDS? This is not the path we should take.

Thanks RJ

From: durrell douthit [ddouthit@mac.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:36 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Durrell Douthit, HB No. 444, HD1, Feb 24 at 9 am Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present written testimony to the Committee; health prevents my appearance in person.

Please report out HB 444 HD1, the Civil Union Bill, with a favorable recommendation. I would like to see the Bill become Law.

My name is Durrell Douthit. I am retired from the army and my law practice; I am getting up in years; and soon enough the time may come, as it comes to all of us, when I am unable to make important decisions for myself.

I know from my law practice that living wills are not always available, effective, or sufficient. Living wills, like the Laws you enact, are always subject to interpretation. You do not always like the way courts interpret your enactments; and I cannot know who will do the interpreting of my living will when my last days come, nor what their biases and prejudices may be.

That is why I need the reassurance that Abraham Kanamu, my long-time companion, will be able to make decisions that I cannot make. Passage of the Civil Union Bill will give me that assurance.

This is an equal protection matter, not a religious one. Abe and I have been together long enough, we have been close enough, and we have been good enough citizens of Hawaii, that we deserve to have the assurance this Bill will give us, just as long-married couples have.

I note that giving Abe and me this assurance will harm no one.

Please do not let our civil rights be confused with religious matters which we in no way threaten. In fact, most of my professional life has been devoted to encouraging marriage, and to mitigating the tremendous harm that divorce causes children.

The breakup of marriages and the harm it does to children deserves attention by the religious community more than this equal protection Bill does. Especially the unintended harm that vigorous litigation does to children is worthy of attention and it is not getting it. I would happily join any legislator who is concerned to protect marriage in efforts to reform certain litigation practices. However, I feel an entitlement to the peace of mind that a civil union would bring to my last years, and I urge all of you to support the Bill.

There are other equal protection matters that don't directly affect me but that deserve the Committee's attention: the person who sacrifices his career to put his partner through school if the partnership breaks up deserves the protection of the law that a married partner has. Problems with property acquisition and distribution during the partnership; the inability to get temporary relief that married partners can get; the powers and rights that Family Court gives to married partners that are denied to partners who cannot, by law, get married. This is unequal treatment of persons similarly situated, and the Civil Union Bill would remedy the inequality.

But my plea to you remains personal: I want your help, and believe Abe and I have worked together long enough and hard enough to protect Hawaii's children of divorce to deserve it.

Thank you for your consideration of this Bill. I appreciate the Committee's efforts. Please support HB 444 HD1.

Durrell Douthit
3423 Francis Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
Sgt., U.S. Army (Ret.)
Lawyer Emeritus

From: Tyler and Christen Imig [tandchawaii@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:56 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Christen Imig
Testimony for: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium) Measure Number: HB 444 HD1

PLEASE DO NOT PASS HB 444...I am not a politician, but I am an educator, mother, and concerned citizen with a strong conviction for right and wrong. HB 444 is morally wrong and slowly, but powerfully, undermines the sanctity of traditional marriage. Marriage and unions are designed by God and intended for one man and one woman. Period!

Please put your valuable time and energy into initiatives that support traditional marriages. As an elementary school teacher, I know that families, communities, and society, as a whole, prosper when there is a stable mother and father figure in the home. The institution of traditional marriage is an example to our children and future generations as to what is right, acceptable, and honorable.

As a representative, please honor the voice of the people. In 1998 the people of Hawaii spoke and upheld the notion of marriage between one woman and one man. Civil Unions are yet one more step in the direction of the acceptance of homosexual marriage. Homosexual civil unions are not beneficial or honorable to our state.

The Reciprocal Beneficiary Law sounds like it has some wonderful compromises that protect and give basic benefits to those of all sexual orientation or preference. I am in support of that. However marriage/unions are a sacred commitment in the eyes of God. If we change Hawaii's laws in favor of HB 444, it will erode the basics of family stability and consistency.

The people of Hawaii have spoken, please listen to them!

Sincerely,

Christen Imig

From: shimodoi@juno.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:48 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Senate State Judiciary Committee members:

Please note that my family and I are in opposition to HB 444 HD1 as it relates to Civil Unions. We believe that marriage between a man and a woman is the bedrock of our society and should not be changed to include same sex, or any other types of unions.

I am not able to be present at the hearing Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. So I am presenting my testimony in this way. Please consider voting in opposition to this bill!

Thank you for your time.

Alton & Lynda Shimodoi

From: twalker003@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:49 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

To: House Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations:
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Re: Opposition to HB444 HDI Relations

Dear Sir:

My family and I have lived in Hawaii, born and raised, 4 generations back since my Great Grandparents came to work in the Sugar cane fields. I have traveled to other places but always with a longing to come home. There is no place like our Hawaii. One of our greatest legacies is Ohana - The family unit of mom and dad, grandama and grandpa and the strength we provide each other with in good times and bad times. It is almost an unspoken unity that Hawaii has and we all live knowing this to be ours alone.

Yes we all have family and friends that we love very much that are gay and live the gay lifestyle. They matter to us just as all of our Ohana. But even they know and understand the value of traditional marriage, a man and woman, husband and wife. Many of them promote civil union, but from my experience in counseling (as a pastor) I have found that they hold the same traditional values that most of our Hawaii citizens have always taken pride in. Many who are pushing to change this are not Kamaaina.

We are all working hard with you that represent us to keep Hawaii - HAWAII. Please don't let outside influences affect your decision making. They do not understand Ohana and the values that our Kupuna have fought long and hard for.

Some of our Hawaii family are in favor of same sex civil union, but we all know that the majority of us, some 70+ per cent are not. Our voices are being raised, we will not accept change for the worse. Hawaii is set apart uniquely and we will fight hard to maintain our strong traditional family morals and values.

Please stand firm and strong for our people. We put all of our trust in you when we voted for you. You are our voices united as one. We are depending on you to keep traditional what we have loved and held dear for as long as any of us can remember, marriage between one man and one woman. Let Hawaii be the one state that shows all others that we will not lower our standards even when the winds of change threaten the very fabric of our precious Ohana.

I thank God for the time you have taken to hear me and I pray that the convictions of your own family raising will stir in you as you remember the values that your elders have instilled in you and you still hold dear.

Terry Walker
The Lord's House Ministries
Wahiawa, Hawaii
621-5989
twalker003@hawaii.rr.com

Aloha no,

I want to stongly encourage our legislators to pass HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions). Equality and fairness for all people, both majorities and minorities, must be considered as a basic tenet of our laws, as a foundation that supports the whole range of institutions in our communities and families. Religious or personal beliefs should be granted all due respect, but as individual rather than legal guides.

Respectfully,

M. Puakea Nogelmeier

2667 Anuu Place

Honolulu, HI 96819

From: amy kimura [kimura968@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Sen. Carol Fukunaga
Subject: HB 444 HD1

I support civil unions for same-sex couples.

I am a long-married heterosexual female voter living in Carol Fukunaga's district.

Aloha,
amy y. kimura of Makiki

From: Bill Byers [bill.byers@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:05 AM
To: Sen. Robert Bunda
Cc: Sen. Clarence Nishihara; JGO Testimony; info@dwighttakamine.com
Subject: Opposition of HB 444

Sens. Robert Bunda, Clarence Nishihara, Dwight Takamine :

I apologize for sending this email so "late in the game". I have been on the mainland giving my daughter away in marriage to a wonderful young man. They were married on the 31st of January. With all of the plans and ceremony I have just returned late last night and I have been in my office this morning catching up on the current events here on Oahu and in the State, as well as, a large pile of mail on my desk!

I must confess to you that I am appalled by the push for HB 444 passed by the House and sent to the Senate sub-committee. I am disappointed that our "Representatives" have chosen to not represent the voices of their constituents, but rather impose their own unpopular views over the popular votes in the past referendum.

Thank you for being open to hear all sides of the argument concerning HB444, and giving democracy on which our great nation stands a chance to work. As you no doubt know, our legislators have a sworn duty to represent the voices and positions of the people of Hawaii. I believe, in this case, that duty is clearly to OPPOSE HB444.

If there were any doubts, the proper direction is to hold a new referendum, to determine if the cultural mood of protecting the family core has shifted over the past 10 years.

I am afraid that we have entered the realm of special interest groups in the vast minority dictating legislation to the vast majority of the members of society in this great state. On this issue in particular, it seems that whoever yells the loudest and longest is considered by our government, both local and national, the majority voice of the people. I am urging the legislature to not ignore the Civil Liberties of 70% of the people for the 30%. I am urging the legislature to protect the rights and family values that define marriage as between one man and one woman. I urge you to understand that this agenda and HB 444 are simply endeavoring to ultimately redefine marriage and undermine the voice of the majority in the State of Hawaii.

I am also appalled to learn of a current blog sent out by the gay lesbian groups that are the proponents of HB444 calling for gays and lesbians from all over the nation to move to Hawaii to overturn the majority voice of the people of the State of Hawaii. This agenda seems to have concentrated its voice in the State of California and the State of Hawaii in the last year or so. It is clearly a push to try to establish this minority agenda in the legislatures and the courts. In the State of California these groups have refused the voice of the majority in the democratic process of voting and have now chosen to extend their battle to the court systems of the State of California. My guess is that this will be their tactic here in the State of Hawaii as well, if HB444 is denied.

The family is the largest part of the foundation of our successful democratic society. If the foundations be destroyed, the land will not be perpetuated in righteousness. I urge you to please remember our state motto, as well as, remember the fate of other societies and cultures that made a calculated choice to journey down this path, including the Roman Empire. It has been an utter failure in every single nation and culture when the family institution was compromised for the homosexual agenda being considered and yielded to in the legislature today. I want to encourage you to see through the agenda and make the right decision based on the vast majority of the voice of the people of the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time to consider these arguments as you consider and vote on HB444. I believe that you will find with very little effort that these arguments are arguments made by the genuine majority voice in this State. It was so in the vote in 1998, it is, I believe, the same majority voice in 2009.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Senior Pastor Bill S. Byers
United Gospel Fellowship
95-061 Mililani, Hawaii 96789

From: Joy Chinen [joychinen@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:08 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

Joy M Chinen
45-322 Kahowaa Place
Kaneohe, HI 96744

Bill: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9 am

Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am opposed to HB 444 because this will only bring further breakdown of the family unit.

Our families in Hawaii already have so many challenges with our economy, where both parents have to work, with job losses, with individuals struggling with alcohol and drugs, divorces.

Statistics show that children are most successful in school when they have a stable home environment; where mother and father love each other and their children.

Let's not further the stresses on family units with Civil Unions.

As it has been stated by the word "civil", this is NOT an issue of civics. It cannot be an issue of civics. What will we say when the polygamist wants their civil rights? What will we say when a man wants to marry a boy? Will we say that is their civil right?

Keep marriage as it was intended all along, between a man and a woman.

Keep marriage as the people of Hawaii wanted it.

Please oppose HB444.

Mahalo,
Joy Chinen

From: Scrawford2@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:53 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444 HD1

To: The Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Sarah Crawford, Attorney, Entrepreneur, Coffee Farmer

Date of Hearing: Feb. 24, 9 a.m.

Please vote for granting civil union status in Hawaii. It is right, fair, and constitutional to do so.

I am a 57-year-old woman with three children and a domestic partner of more than 19 years. We cannot get the same rights to or price of health insurance as heterosexual families, and to get close to a few rights granted to non-same-sex families, we must go through multiple, often expensive hoops. Others are completely close to us.

My domestic partnership has never threatened anyone else's marriage. We feed the kids, dogs, and cats and take out the garbage just like any other couple. My kids are all heterosexual, as my parents were. Because they were all wanted, my kids are well-adjusted.

Being gay was the way I was made, not my choice. No one would choose to be gay unless they enjoy being ostracized and discriminated against. In my 20's, I was assaulted by strangers for being gay -- even the first month that I realized it and looked no different than I had the month before.

Hate and fear of the majority towards a minority should be avoided and discouraged. Acceptance and tolerance should be encouraged. As legislators, it is your job to help societies peaceful progress. Many countries support gay unions and have suffered no adverse consequences. Please vote for gay unions.

Aloha,
Sarah Crawford

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To: Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine
From: Co-founder DaMoms Susan Roth

Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Tuesday, Feb 24, 2009

9:00 a.m.

Auditorium

IN SUPPORT: HB 444 hd1: relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

It was about 7 years ago when one of our four children came out to me, "Hey mom, I'm gay". I first considered not telling a soul. That lasted for about 5 minutes. It was difficult to listen, during the house's committee hearing, to the many bad things said about gay people that are just not true. My hope is that as I share my personal experience a few stereotypes may be changed.

As an educator, I began to read books about sexual orientation. As a mom, I shared with other family members and found comfort in my very devoted, Catholic father's words, "Don't worry, honey, God doesn't make junk." And as an individual, I began to look at how society would treat this child of ours. I have to admit, I had a lot to learn.

There was no question in our minds of unconditional love for all of our children. I always worried about their personal safety and this concern was intensified for our gay son. I looked and found comfort in my church in supporting the family values of acceptance and hope. My prayers have been answered for all of our grown children, as they are happy, responsible and contributing members of our society. However, even though they each pay taxes, go to work every day and help others in different ways, one of them, our son, who happens to be gay, is not afforded all the benefits that the others enjoy. My heart says society may not be ready for the total acceptance that a parent has for their child, but my head says that now is the time to start giving back the dignity that we must have in order to live the best life we can.

In my research and experience, I have found that sexual orientation is not a choice. We all come programmed in our unique special ways. We are all challenged to treat others, as we would like to be treated.

Society's laws help establish what each of us must do to keep order and help the community on good. I see the civil union bill as a vehicle for a group of people to find a socially acceptable avenue to build their lives in a happy and fulfilling manner. Civil unions would promote bonded relationships, not promiscuity. Civil unions afford a couple the legal responsibilities to care for one another. The status of the GLBT community would be recognized in a way to lessen discrimination. And we all would take a step forward in respecting all of God's creation.

I ask you for your support of House Bill 444 hd1. Let us create a Hawaii that truly welcomes all of its citizens equally. Mahalo for your kokua.

From: CHRIS.PRENDERGAST [CHRIS.PRENDERGAST@pruhawaii.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:12 AM
To: Sen. Robert Bunda
Cc: Sen. Clarence Nishihara; JGO Testimony; info@dwighttakamine.com
Subject: Thank you

Sens. Robert Bunda, Clarence Nishihara, Dwight Takamine :

Thank you for being open to hear all sides of the argument concerning HB444, and giving democracy on which our great nation stands a chance to work.

I am disappointed that our "Representatives" have chosen to NOT REPRESENT the voices of their constituents, but rather impose their own unpopular views over the popular votes in the past referendum.

Our legislators may hide behind the clause that leaves the ultimate passage of bills on the Civil Union and Same Sex Marriage issues to them, but that does not relieve them of their DUTY to REPRESENT the voices and positions of the people of Hawaii. In this case, that DUTY is clearly to OPPOSE HB444.

If there is any doubt, the proper direction is to hold a new referendum, to determine if the cultural mood of protecting the family core has shifted over the past 10 years.

I understand Civil Liberties is core argument of the supporters of HB444. It would be ideal if the Civil Liberties of 100% of the populace was achievable, however, I am urging the legislature to not ignore the Civil Liberties of 70% for the 30%. In the end, those so-called "liberties" of the few will become a bondage to our culture and society as a whole. The family is part of the foundation of our successful democratic society. But if the foundations be destroyed, the land will not be perpetuated. Remember our state motto. Remember the fate of other societies and cultures that chose to go down this path, including the Roman Empire.

Thank you for your time to consider these MAJORITY arguments as you vote on HB444.

Christopher A. Prendergast (R)
Prudential Locations LLC
Phone: (808) 388-5555
FAX: (808) 443-0885
chris.prendergast@pruhawaii.com

98-161 Kaonohi St
Aiea, Hawaii 96701

This email message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipients(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply and destroy all copies of the original message.

To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, **“extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.”**

In 1998 the voters of the State of Hawaii chose to amend our Constitution by a large margin of victory to specifically define marriage as a union between couples of the opposite sex. HB444 only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. Our constitution does not allow for this even if you simply change the name. Does the legislature seek to override the popular vote and the State Constitution? Is that even legal? I thought the Constitution and its Amendments were the highest authority in our state. Overriding the Constitution will set a dangerous precedent. I urge you all to vote NO on HB444.

Sincerely,
Jacquelyn Skaf
Waiialua Resident

FROM: ESTER LAJUNGA (print name)

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM
FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Ester Lajunga

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Women's Center

TO: Rep. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

FROM: Christine Quemuel, Director
Women's Center
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m., Auditorium

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 hd1 relating to Civil Unions**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 444 my name is Christine Quemuel and I serve as a Director of the Women's Center at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. While my statement does not represent the official opinion of the university, it reflects my personal and professional opinion as university faculty who works with students who hope for equality.

I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and I ask you to make a courageous stand against discrimination and intolerance, and vote in support of HB 444 for families, equality, civil rights, and civil unions.

Thank you,



Christine Quemuel

TO: Rep. Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

FROM: Roderick Labrador
3029 Lowrey Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96822

DATE: February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m., Auditorium

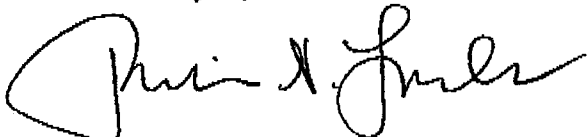
RE: **STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 hd1 relating to Civil Unions**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 444. My name is Roderick Labrador and I am a faculty member in the Ethnic Studies Department at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I teach about the history of the struggles for social justice and civil rights, and the impact on communities here in Hawai'i.

Now is our chance to make history and demonstrate to future generations our commitment to equal rights. I ask each of you to support HB 444 and appreciate your consideration.

Thank you,



Roderick Labrador

Honorable Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Honorable Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair
Honorable Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

HB444, Relating to Civil Unions

Testimony for Public Hearing
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 am
State Capitol Auditorium

IN SUPPORT

Herewith, I respectfully present testimony in support of *House Bill 444, Relating to Civil Unions - Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.*

Members of the Legislature will no doubt hear vigorous and emotional testimony from both proponents and opponents of civil union. I offer personal testimony to give voice to those who support this measure but will not come forward because they justly fear disclosure may put them in harm's way. Despite our nation's best effort to protect and preserve justice and liberty for all, racism, class bias, sex discrimination, and ridicule directed at same-gender orientation are still prevalent in these United States.

The National Archives and Records Administration (<http://www.archives.gov>) and the Government Printing Office/Judicial Branch Resources on GPO Access (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/judicial.html>) contain historical documents related to our country's remarkable struggle to enact civil rights laws that many take for granted today. As records show, when we as a free people are able to overcome our individual differences to enact laws that protect *every person's equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*, we strengthen belief in our nation's founding principles and belief in democracy.

The struggle for women's right to vote spanned years of protests, civil disobedience, and unrest. In the fight for justice some supporters challenged gender discrimination in the courts and state legislatures, while others staged parades, vigils, and hunger strikes, and picketed, and petitioned, for equal rights. Advocates were heckled, jailed and abused by opponents. Fierce resistance was not uncommon until women were granted the right to vote in 1920 when the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was finally ratified. Many who helped introduce the amendment in Congress, in 1878, did not live to see or enjoy their right to vote.

In similar fashion, the fight against anti-miscegenation state laws faced decades of prejudice and discrimination banning interracial marriage. In the landmark case of *Loving v. Virginia*, a lower court trial judge had stated in an opinion that: *"Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."*

The case was appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court where in 1967 the Court ruled that laws banning interracial marriage were unconstitutional: *"... The fourteenth amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discriminations. Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State. These convictions must be reversed. It is so ordered."* At the time of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling some fifteen states still had anti-miscegenation laws in place.

Hawaii's native culture and language was nearly lost due to well intentioned but presumptuous ethnocentric beliefs of another culture. In each case, human prejudice discredited a group and diminished their equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We build institutions of higher education and confer degrees of learning in all fields of human endeavor for the betterment of society and community. On the matter before you today, I respectfully ask that you consider the opinions of broadly respected professional organizations in medicine, mental health, education and social work.

In February 2008, the American Psychological Association (APA) announced release of a publication on youth and sexual orientation: *"Just the Facts About Sexual Orientation and Youth: A Primer for Principals, Educators, and School Personnel."* This publication was endorsed by a coalition of thirteen education, health, mental health and religious organizations, among them the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association of School Administrators, The American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the National Association of Social Workers and the APA.

As stated in this primer for administrators and school personnel, *"... the idea that homosexuality is a mental disorder or that the emergence of same-sex attraction and orientation among some adolescents is in any way abnormal or mentally unhealthy has no support among any mainstream health and mental health professional organizations... the nation's leading professional medical, health, and mental health organizations do not support efforts to change young people's sexual orientation through therapy and have raised serious concerns about the potential harm from such efforts... schools should be careful to avoid curriculum choices that may single out and stigmatize lesbian, gay, or bisexual students and foster a disapproving attitude toward them."* The entire text is available online at the National Association of Social Workers website. (<http://www.socialworkers.org>)

The American Psychological Association has long-established policy dating back to 1975 that, *"deplores all public and private discrimination against gay men and lesbians and urges enactment of civil rights legislation at the local and state and federal level that would offer [gay men and lesbian] citizens the same protections now guaranteed to others... Psychologists do not consider sexual orientation to be a conscious choice that can be voluntarily changed. Human beings cannot choose to be either gay or straight. Sexual orientation emerges for most people in early adolescence prior to any sexual experience... Psychological research (which forms the basis of APA policy) provides no evidence to justify discrimination against same-sex couples and families."* (APA Briefing Sheet: June 2006)

Additionally, the APA policy statement on Sexual Orientation & Marriage (adopted by the APA Council of Representatives July 28 & 30, 2004) states: *"Psychological and psychiatric experts have agreed since 1975 that homosexuality is neither a form of mental illness nor a symptom of mental illness."* The APA is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. *APA's membership includes more than 148,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students.*

The American Psychiatric Association is explicit in their support of "civil" marriage. As written in the Association's position statement on this matter: *"... Civil marriage is associated with a unique set of benefits that provide legal and economic protections to adults in committed relationships and to their children. Equal access to the institution of civil marriage is consistent with the American Psychiatric Association's opposition to discrimination based on sexual orientation. Therefore, be it resolved that: In the interest of maintaining and promoting mental health, the American Psychiatric Association supports the legal recognition of same-sex civil marriage with all rights, benefits, and responsibilities conferred by civil marriage, and opposes restrictions to those same rights, benefits, and responsibilities."* (Support of Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Civil Marriage, position statement approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2005)

The American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) is comprised of over 7,500 child and adolescent psychiatrists and other interested physicians. *Its members actively research, evaluate, diagnose, and treat psychiatric disorders and pride themselves on giving direction to and responding quickly to new developments in addressing the health care needs of children and their families.* The AACAP states: *"Parents need to clearly understand that sexual orientation is not a mental disorder. The cause(s) of homosexuality or bisexuality are not fully understood. However, a person's sexual orientation is not a matter of choice. In other words, individuals have no more choice about being homosexual or bisexual than heterosexual. All teenagers do have a choice about their expression of sexual behaviors and lifestyle regardless of their sexual orientation... Gay, lesbian and bisexual teens can become socially isolated, withdraw from activities and friends, have trouble concentrating, and develop low self-esteem. Some may develop depression and think about suicide or attempt it. Parents and others need to be alert to these signs of distress because recent studies show that gay, lesbian and bisexual youth account for a significant number of deaths by suicide during*

adolescence... It is important for parents to understand their teen's sexual orientation and to provide emotional support. Parents may have difficulty accepting their teen's sexuality for some of the same reasons that the youngster wants to keep it a secret... Therapy directed specifically at changing sexual orientation is not recommended and may be harmful for an unwilling teen." (Facts for Families, No. 63, Updated January 2006)

The AACAP further states: *"There is no evidence to suggest or support that parents with gay, lesbian, or bisexual orientation are per se different from or deficient in parenting skills, child-centered concerns and parent-child attachments, when compared to parents with a heterosexual orientation. It has long been established that a homosexual orientation is not related to psychopathology, and there is no basis on which to assume that parental homosexual orientation will increase likelihood of or induce a homosexual orientation in the child."* (Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Parents Policy Statement, June 1999, Policy Statement of the AACAP)

In closing, while I would prefer enactment of same-sex civil marriage which would give same-sex couples all the rights and privileges, and the more than 1,049 Federal benefits and responsibilities, enjoyed by heterosexual married couples, passage of HB444 will help to curb the social stigma associated with same-gender sexual orientation and this, for many, is as important an issue as access to all benefits and privileges.

I respectfully ask for your support in passing HB444.

Sincerely,

L.P.
Hilo, Hawaii

FAX COVER SHEET

FAX NUMBER 18085866659

FROM Phil Kinnicutt

DATE 2009-02-22 17:57:02 GMT

RE HB444 HD1 Re: Civil Unions - Strong Support

COVER MESSAGE

From Phil Kinnicutt, Retired
For the Senate Judiciary & Gov't Operations Committee
hearing, 2/24 at 9:00 AM

"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness." ~ President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 2009

Bigots have no place in Hawaii.

Phil Kinnicutt
341 Iliaina Street
Kailua, HI 96734-1807
808-254-4534
LEAFISHING@AOL.COM

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Gloria Kawakami

General Delwin

Mt. View, HI 96771

House Bill 444, A Bill For An Act Relating to Civil Unions
Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committees Hearing
on Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.
From Tracey Bennett, Hawaii Kai

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary
& Government Operations Committee:

My name is Tracey Bennett, and I am in support of House Bill 444 - Civil
Unions.

My question is this: Why has this bill taken so long? These rights should have
been given to same-sex couples years ago. In 1996, Hawaii had a two-week trial
about whether the state had the right to deny marriage to couples. Based on the
state's feeble evidence, Judge Kevin Chang had to rule that gays are entitled to the
rights and benefits—yes, and obligations, too—of marriage.

You know what happened then. Our civil rights were put up for a vote. Some call
it a constitutional amendment. I call it by its real name: discrimination. It was a
tyranny of the majority.

Seven countries have same-sex marriage. And they have not been smited. Spain
did not fall into the ocean. When Massachusetts became the first state to legalize
same-sex marriage, it did not suffer plague and pestilence. These are healthy
societies that do not discriminate against their gay brothers and sisters.

Don't let anybody tell you that civil union is marriage by another name. If they're
married, I invite them to swap their marriage license for a civil union and see how
it fits.

Please give us the rights and benefits that Judge Chang said we're entitled to. This
bill is way overdue. Passing it will take courage because a few of your constituents
will complain. Loudly. But here's the important part: most of your constituents
quietly support civil unions for gay people.

Even president Barack Obama supports civil unions. I hope you do too.

With aloha for all,
Tracey Bennett
Hawaii Kai

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Patricia J. Carmichael

*Patricia J. Carmichael
P.O. Box 1717
Keaau HI 96749*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Alana M Kerr

*Alana Kerr
HCR 1 Box 4695 Keolu, HI
808-982-7618 96749*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,



HCR 1 Box 5003
Keaau Hi 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Shakoleyn Takabayashi

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Dean H. Takabayashi

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Emeraldine X. Johnson
P.O. Box 1142
Kula, HI 96760

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

James B. Lucas
HCR 2 #9536
Keaau HI
96949

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Shirley Gomez

SHIRLEY GOMEZ

Martin Gomez

MARTIN GOMEZ

Address:

PO BOX 117

Ocean, OH. 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

DR Kawakami

Ben Kawakami

P.O. Box 24

Kurtistown, HI 96760

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

~~Kuhamama~~ Kuhamama Gonzalez
P.O. Box 298 Pahoa HI, 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Patricia Jean Linn

PO BOX 655

PALOHA HI 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Elizabeth Katoilua
966-7683

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Russell V. Irie

*200 Kanaelehua Ave
Hilo, HI 96720*


February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



John A. McCollum III

1167 The Waike Pt.

Kaunoi HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill. *PLEASE!!*

With Appreciation,

Mei-ling Gorman

Mei-ling Gorman

15-2762 Makimaki St

Pahoa HI 96778

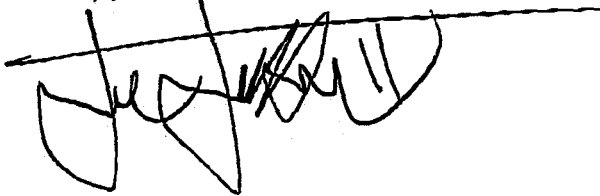
February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Jackson", written over a horizontal line.

Joseph Jackson

P.O. Box 5529
Hilo, HI 96720

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maika Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

HCR 1 Bx 5402
Keaau, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Clifford Kelli Ah Chong (MOSES)
P.O. Box 466
Kauai Town HI 96760

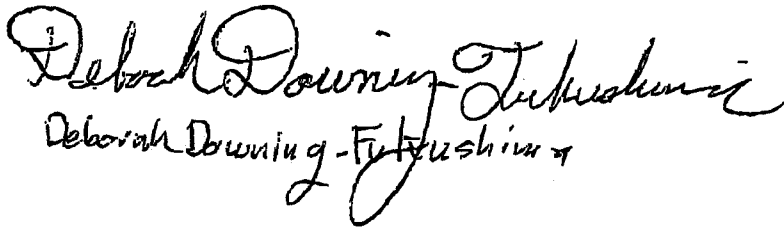
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With Appreciation,


Deborah Downing-Fukushima

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Kasey Medeiros

[Signature]

HCR 3 Box 13002

Keaau Hi' 96749


February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

 Jon Stiles

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation, *Angelina Rios*
ANGELINA RIOS ROOSEVELT 2A115
RR 3 BOX 1097
PAHOA HI 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Elaine Thomas

Elaine Thomas

HC 2 Box 6845

Keaau, HI 96749

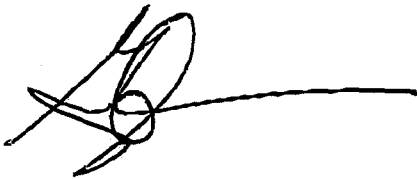
February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



Gary Thomas

15-1575 11th Ave

Kaew, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



Lorin Carmichael

P.O. BOX 1717

Keauhou HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



Christina V. Taylor

P.O. Box 127

Mountain View, HI 96771

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

Savannah Manani
Savannah Manani
400 Hualani St. apt 3103
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

NICOLAS LOPEZ
Nicolas Lopez

YAKENO T. LOPEZ
Yakeno T. Lopez

15-2727 AKU ST.

PAHOA, HAWAII, 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Carla Spidell

Carla Spidell

HCR 1 Box 5057

Keaau, HI 96749

(808) 982-7896

February 22, 2009

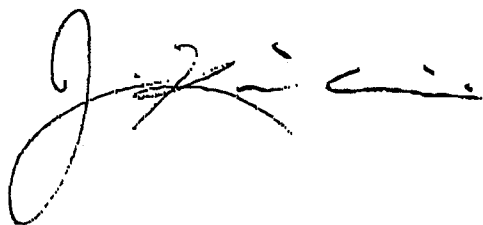
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With Appreciation,

Joshua Kailiuli



2/22/09

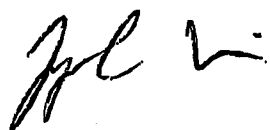
February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



Joseph Villeta

P.O. Box 2085

Keaau, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Russlyn Ar Russlyn Gonsalves
P.O. Box 291 - Perhele HI
96771

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Chardan K. Miday
Chardan Kamealani Miday

P.O. Box 1798
Keolu Hi, 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Deborah Shilton

(Deborah Shilton)

HCR 2 Box 6249

Keaau, HI

96749

princesswaawaa@hawaii.ostel.net
dshilton@hawaii.edu


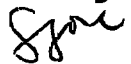
February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

FREDERICK JOSE + Surette Jose
 

HCR-2 BOX 6024
KEMAH HI 96749


February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Kawena K. Bagano


P.O. Box 7009
Hilo, HI 96720

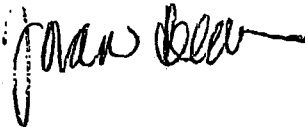
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With Appreciation,



Jovan Beavers
15-2087 Awa St.
Pahoa, HI 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawai'i. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawai'i and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Ruth Ellis *Ruth Ellis*

MC BOX 6709
Keolu, HI

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Mitch + Jay Vincent



200 Kanoelehua Ave

PMB 455

Hilo, HI 96720

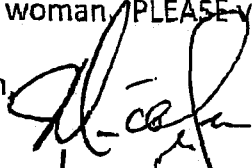
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With Appreciation,


MICAH GROVER


Rina Grover

HER3 Box 11071
Keeau, HI 96749

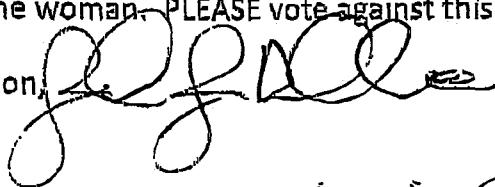
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With Appreciation,



Joseph J. Andrade 

PO Box 624
Paahoa Hawaii 96778


February 22, 2009

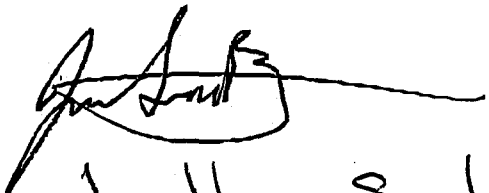
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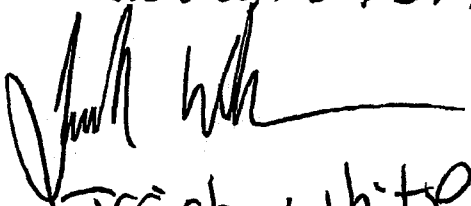
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With Appreciation,


Debra Santiago-Braga
P.O. Box 1454
Hawaii, HI 96749


Jonathan Santiago Braga
PO Box 1454
Hawaii, HI 96749


Josiah White
PO Box 1454
Hawaii, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Nathan Totman

RR3 BOX 1255

Pahoa, HI 96778

Nathan Totman

#769-4875

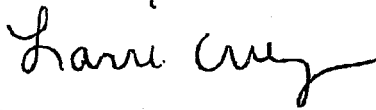
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With Appreciation,



Lorri Cruz

P.O. BOX 720

Pahoa, HI, 96778

(808) 966-6428

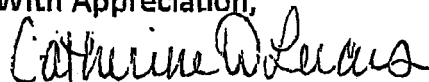
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With Appreciation,



Catherine D. Lucas

HR 2 Box 9536

Kealahou, HI 96749

PH: 966-4467

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Brian Brown

Brian Brown

21 Pohai Str. Hilo, Hawaii 96720

557-9276

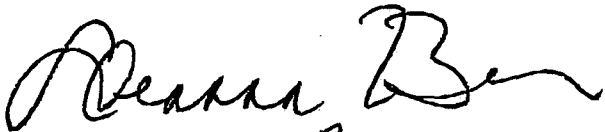
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With Appreciation,



Deanna Brown
21 Pohai St Hilo 96720
957-9276

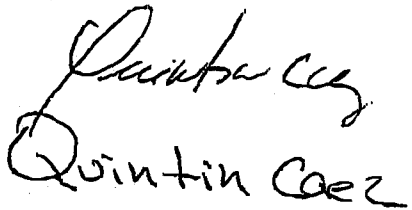
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With Appreciation,


Quintin Coez

P.O BOX 7734
Hilo, HI 96720

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Choi Lin Heaster
Choi Lin Heaster
PO Box 10816
Hilo, HI 96721

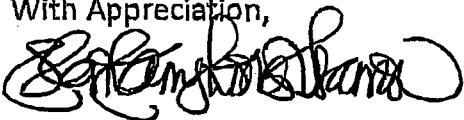
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With Appreciation,



Keone Iranon
P.O. Box 166
Keaau, HI 96749



Keone Iranon
PO Box 166
Keaau HI 96749

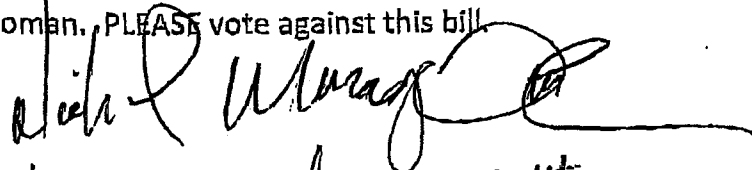
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With Appreciation,



NICHOLAS MUPAEU III

MALINE:

PO BOX 422

KES'AU, HI 96749

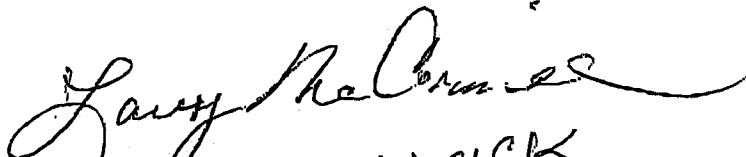
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With Appreciation,


LARRY MCCORMICK
P.O. BOX 6157
Hilo, HI
96720-8920

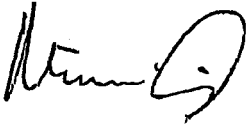
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With Appreciation,



MILLIE CAUCA

P.O. BOX 6157

Hilo, Hi

96720-8923

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Christopher Mark Bartelice

CHRISTOPHER MARK BARTELUCE

13-764 MALAMA ST.

PALOHA, HI 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Arlene B Lindamood
1911 Kalanianaʻoolaha Ave # 402
Hilo, HI, 96720

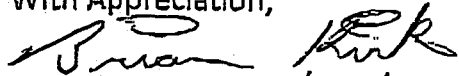
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With Appreciation,



BRIAN KIRK

13-3377 KAUPILI ST.
PAHOA, HI 96778

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Barbara Rick

Barbara Rick
13-3377 Kaupili St.
Pahoa, HI 96778

Subject: **HB444(Senate Judiciary Committee,2/24/2009 at 9:00 AM**
 From: **jdani028@aol.com**
 Date **Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:51 PM**
 To: **jgottestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov**

My name is Janice Dankel and I am opposed to HB 44. STOP CIVIL UNION. The human RACE is 1 man and 1 woman NOT MALE/MALE or FEMALE/FEMALE. You need to end this non-sense by voting NO to HB 444. I urge you to think what the human race will be like if there is no more man or woman if you consider what a yes vote will be. This nation will be no more because of this action. Please VOTE NO.

This Email did not send ^{or transmit.} to the address as I am following this to you Janice Dankel

Subject: **HB444(Senate Judiciary Committee,2/24/2009 at 9:00 AM**
 From: **jdanc1028@aol.com**
 Date **Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:51 PM**
 To: **jpgottestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov**

My name is Janice Dankel and I am opposed to HB 444/STOP CIVIL UNION. The human RACE is 1 man and 1 woman NOT MALE/MALE or FEMALE/FEMALE. You need to end this non-sense by voting NO to HB 444. I urge you to think what the human race will be like if there is no more man or woman if you consider what a yes vote will be. This nation will be no more because of this action. Please VOTE NO.

This Email did not send ^{or transmit.} to the address as I am following this to you
Janice Dankel

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

JUSTIN KAUAHAIA

P.O. BOX 933

KEAUA HI 96749



February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Christine Silva

*Christine Silva
535 Awela St.
Hilo, HI 96720*

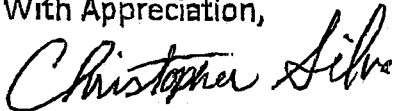
February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



CHRISTOPHER SILVA
535 ANELA ST.
HILO, HI 96720

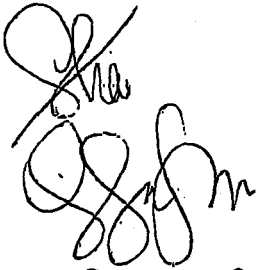
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With Appreciation,



Sharvia Satomba

27-2594 Mamalahou Hwy.

Papaikou, HI 96781

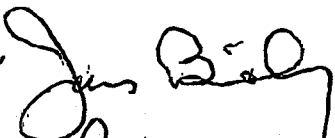
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With Appreciation,


JAMES BRACEY
HCR 2 Box 6626
15-1669 OHE (2000)
KOAHI, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,



Lorraine Auro-Medeiros

HCR 234 6969

Keaunui, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Christine Briceley

6626

Kaanu HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,



Nicole Branco-Santos
25-212 Malumalu St.
Hilo, HI 96720

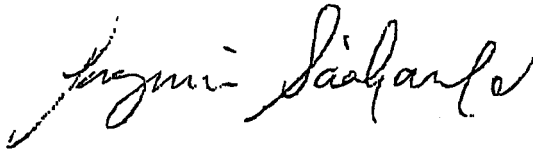
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With Appreciation,



Jazmin Paikaula

P.O. Box 1972

Keaanu, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

PATRICK & CELESTE MENDES
P. Mendes, A. Mendes
P.O. Box 7138
Hilo, Hi. 96720

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Taurean Paakaula
Taurean Paakaula
PO Box 1972
Keaau, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

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SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

LEWIS GAINOR JR III

[Handwritten signature]

15-2618 Keaau Paha Hwy

Paha HI 96778

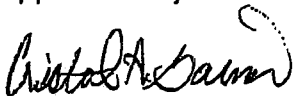
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With Appreciation,



Cristal A. Gainer

15-2618 Keenan Palhoa Rd

Palhoa, HI 96778

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Cheyenne Mabi
Cheyenne Mabi

21 pohakalani #170, #127120
557-9276 HI 96720

To: Sargeant -At- Arms

TESTIMONY of HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB444

February 21, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members:

My name is Carmelita Resuello, and I am in opposition to HB444.

If this bill is enacted will ruin the value of traditional marriage, which is created by God between a man and a woman.

Please let us value and keep the traditional marriage alive, which I believe is for a man and a woman

CARMELITA RESUELLO
2338 Amoomoo Street
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
Phone # 455-8119

To: Sargeant _At- Arms

TESTIMONY of HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol

RE: HB444

February 21, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members:

My name is Marcelina Castro, and I am in opposition to HB444.

This bill if enacted will ruin the value of traditional marriage which I believe is only for a man and a woman .

The passing of HB444 will weaken the morals of our generation and those of the next generation .

Marcelina Castro
98-016 Kaluamoi Place
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
Phone # 488-8594

To: Sargeant -At- Arms

TESTIMONY of HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol,
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB444

February 22, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members:

My name is Prisca Ben, and I am in opposition to HB444.

Please let us value and keep the traditional marriage alive, which I believe is for a man and a woman.

The passing of HB444 will weaken the morals of our generation and those of the next generation as well.

Prisca Ben
339 Hoomalu
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782
Phone # 456-9176

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Paul C Lakin

PO. BOX 2107

VOLCANO, HI 96785

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,



P.O. Box 2107
VOLCANO, HI 96785

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Name: SHARON MARIE KUNTZ
Signature: *Sharon Marie Kuntz*
Address: 60213 KAMEHAMEHA HWY, HALEIWA HI 96791

Name: D. Gronau
Signature: *D. Gronau*
Address: 59-126 PAAUMAKU HALEIWA HI 96712

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Address: _____

Name: _____
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Name: _____
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Name: _____
Signature: _____
Address: _____

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Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

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Mahalo,

Name:
Signature:
Address:

SARAH HERRINGTON
PO BOX 381 Haleiwa HI 96712

Name:
Signature:
Address:

Name:
Signature:
Address:

Name:
Signature:
Address:

Name:
Signature:
Address:

Name:
Signature:
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Name:
Signature:
Address:

Testimony of Andrew J. Gerakas
Senate Judiciary Committee
HB444 H.D.1
Capitol Auditorium
February 24, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee my name is Andrew J. Gerakas. I am a deacon of the Catholic Church but I am here representing the Respect Life Educational Institute (RLEI) a 501 (c) (3) organization as its Secretary Treasurer and its sister RLEI organization, a budding political action committee, as its President.

We request that that this legislation which makes such a radical change in the definition of marriage rights and legal status not be reported out of your committee. This legislation which will have such a profound impact on the social and economic fabric of our community is being rushed through and has not been given adequate study nor have the various segments of our state been given the opportunity to analyze and bring forth their studied views.

The legislature should not use devious means to circumvent the Constitution and the law of the land. One can envision law suits being brought forth challenging this legislation, should it be passed, as it nullifies the Constitution and the law which defines marriage as between a man and a woman in the state of Hawaii.

The argument that if we don't give homosexual couples the same benefits and legal rights as traditionally married couples we are violating their civil rights, are homophobic, prejudiced and without aloha is a specious argument at best. Homosexually inclined persons are creatures of God and are to be loved and respected like any one else. We welcome them in our churches, pray with them and for them. We cannot, however, condone sexual acts between persons of the same sex. One does not have to quote the Bible to realize that such acts are not natural by the very physical make up of man and woman. We certainly cannot condone legalizing such acts as normal and with the same legal status as sexual acts between a married man and a woman.

Our age seems to think it has discovered a new freedom in sexual relations. We can go back to the Golden Age of Greece under Pericles, the Egyptian and Roman civilizations which, at a particular stage, there was a freedom and a novelty to engage in what were abnormal sexual acts. These included not only homosexuality but pedophilia and sexual orgies of various kinds. When these civilizations lacked chastity and idolized sex it became a symptom of their decay. We can look to our Islands for an example. Before Fr. Damien came to Molokai their were sexual orgies and sexual exploitation. Fr. Damien brought order to a chaotic situation. Fr. Damien will be declared a saint in October. He is revered not only by Catholics but by all the people of Hawaii. What would he say about HB444 H.D.1?

Have we thought through the practical consequences of legally establishing another sexual entity

other than male and female? The obvious one is that gay and lesbian sexual unions will be taught in our schools as equal and attract more young people to these life styles. The result being a drop in population. Most countries in Europe already are not able to replace their dying and have to import hordes of Muslims and others. The saving grace for the U.S. has been illegal immigration. What will happen if there is a significant increase in gay and lesbian relationships?

What about less obvious consequences? What, for example, will happen to hospitals and nursing homes where persons are segregated into rooms with those of the same sex? Will we eventually have to separate males, females and civil unions into separate rooms? What about the prison population? Will we have to room gays and lesbians together or with whom will we bunk them? Remember they will be a legal entity and can demand their rights. What about straight males and females? Will they demand to be placed in rooms with people of their own sex? What will be the cost, not to say the confusion, this will cause? What about the many forms people have to fill out which ask a person to indicate one's sex. Will we have to reprint forms to indicate a third legal sexual preference?

Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee HB444 H.D.1 creates divisions and social and economic consequences that have not been adequately considered. This bill should not be reported out of your committee.

Dcn. Andrew J. Gerakas
4524 Waikui Street
Honolulu, HI 96821
Phone: (808) 373-4538

cc. Senator Colleen Hanabusa

STRONGLY OPPOSED TO HB444 HD1

Testifier: Yolanda M. Habal

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

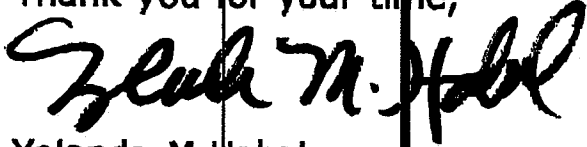
Hearing Location: Auditorium

ATTENTION: State Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

I am strongly oppose to HB 444 HD1. The consequences of this bill will affect my grandchildren in the future.

The traditional marriage between a man and woman MUST remain!

Thank you for your time,



Yolanda M Habal
Aiea Constituent

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I fully support the civil Union bill.
Please help extend civil union rights
to all of us in the USA.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Name: Bernardo Vargas-Angel

Signature: BVayM.

Address: 1515 Word Ave, 96822

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

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Mahalo,

Name: Bernardo Vargas-Angel

Signature: BVayM.

Address: 1515 Word Ave, 96822

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Len Fuchs

16-2041 Anshurium Dr.

Pahoa HI 96728

808-854-0248

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Samantha Oyama

21 Honi Pl.

Hilo, HI 96720

808-937-5192

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Dennis R. Vargo

RR-3 BOX 1075 PAHOA HI. 96778

769-3807

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Kanu Alexander
16-2130 Kuleana Ct
Pahoa, HI 96778

221-7239

February 22, 2009

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SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Carolene M. Simmons
251 Kuleana Loop
Hulu, HI 96720

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

Paul Wayne Richardel
HC R 3, Box 11105
Kaun, Hawaii 96749
966-6739

February 22, 2009

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With Appreciation,

CARL OKUYAMA

1346 KILIRINA

HICO, HI 96720

808 935-9680



February 22, 2009

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I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Pauline Brault
HCR 2 Box 6447
Keaau, Hi 96749
808 966-4123

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

AGAINST THIS bill

PASTOR Jimmy NISHIMOTO

16-216 WILIANA PL

KEAHOE, HI 96749

PH# (808) 966-5422


February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



Bradley B Gaston

750 Manono St
Hilo HI 96720

557 2225

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Johanny GARCIA
HC-2, Box 6310
KAAHAU, HI, 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Lynn O'Neil
HC2 Box 9623
Keeau, HI 96749
808 - 966 - 7229

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

Rosemary Hollenell
P.O. Box 6280
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 966-8347

ll

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Rep. Ollmann

15-1594 7th Ave

Kenau, HI 96749

808-966-8727

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I have traveled, through my job as an airline crew member, to many parts of the world, I have seen first hand what the denial of equal rights can do to a society. All people should be allowed to share the same rights and benefits when getting joining two people in unity. I plan to move to Hawaii this year and would hope I can count on my political body to allow me to enjoy my rights as a gay male to share my life with my partner equally as all the citizens of Hawaii.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Name: MARK HOWELL

Signature: Mark Howell

Address: 3030 PAKI'i CIRCLE #313, HONOLULU

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

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Pass the Civil Union bill!

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Name: *DOMINADOR LAPEZ*

Signature: *[Handwritten Signature]*

Address:

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

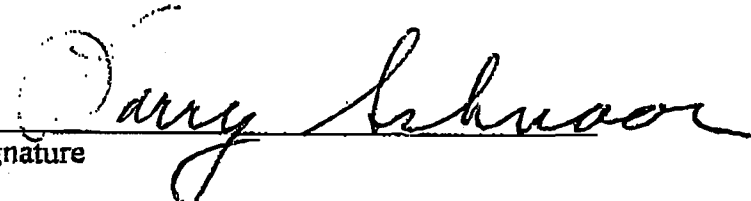
Date: February 22, 2009

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signature

Larry Schuur
printed name

Minnetonka
address

(optional) phone and/or email address

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

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signature

Ralph Nava
printed name

address

(optional) phone and/or email address

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium


Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

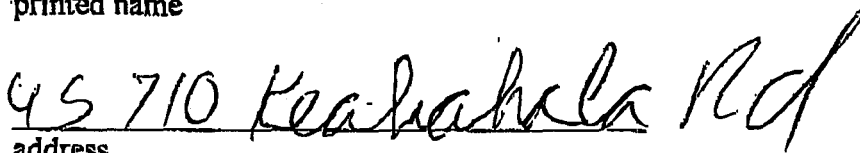
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The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.


signature


printed name


address

(optional) phone and/or email address

February 23, 2009

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Sheryl L. Nicholson in Strong Support of
H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl L. Nicholson, Esq,
1001 Bishop Street, Suite 1300
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813
Tel.: (808) 524-1212

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:38 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: nhong@group70int.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Norman Hong
Organization: Individual
Address: 639 Kaulana Place Honolulu, Hawaii
Phone: 373-4360
E-mail: nhong@group70int.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Chairman Taniguchi and Members of the Committee,

I humbly request that you oppose HB 444 regarding civil unions and vote to TABLE it. The people of Hawaii have already spoken on this issue and 70% favor traditional marriage and would not support HB 444. This bill was introduced and advanced with very little input or knowledge of the people of Hawaii. The proper process for this significant issue would be to put it again before the people of Hawaii, not through the "back door" as is currently being done.

Thank you for your kind consideration on this.

From: mauidivemaster@gmail.com on behalf of Jeff [jeff.brown@master-mason.US]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:36 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Written Testimony for your support on HB 444

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff R Brown
Kihei, Hawaii

From: Chris Kobayashi [waioli2@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:35 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: testimony in support for hb 444

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee.

Please pass this bill so that all people may have equal rights. I don't believe this is talking about marriage.
Mahalo for your support.

Aloha,
Chris Kobayashi
Hanalei

From: Laurie Temple [laurietemple@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:33 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Laurie Temple in Support of HB 444, HD1 relating to civil unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government
Operations

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the
Auditorium

Subject line: Testimony of Laurie Temple in Strong Support of
H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Temple
Kailua, HI

Access your email online and on the go with Windows Live Hotmail. [Sign up today.](#)

From: denbevkawa@cs.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: testimony on HB 444 - Senate Judiciary Comm

Testimony on HB444 - Senate Judiciary Committee meeting on February 24, 2009

□

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I was born and raised in Hawaii, served proudly in the Air Force for 22 years, retired in 1990, and returned to settle back home. As I have lived in various places away from Hawaii, I knew my roots and was proud to grow up in a place where family was valued and there was so much aloha and respect of each other. Hawaii was the place where these values were shaped and my understanding of relationships in family, friends, and community were developed. I returned hoping to see Hawaii remain that place where I can part of reinforcing these values in future generations. A key value is the understanding that a family is composed of mother, father and children. The father being a man and the mother a woman bonded together into the institution of marriage.

Back in 1998, when there was the vote to affirm traditional marriage in the constitution, that voted was needed because of the rulings of the courts changing the definition of marriage. This redefinition would have created a major social disorder as my child will her children will have to have a redefined understanding of marriage and family and there would be situations where to maintain traditional views of marriage would be discriminated against. I feared that grandchildren would be told in schools that the traditional views which I would teach them is discriminatory, and that they must consider alternatives for others as well as for themselves. I feared that to teach traditional views that are based on religious beliefs and faith in God, would be seen as discrimination and affect my freedom to express and teach those views. I was very relieved that the vote of the people was so resoundingly in favor of keeping marriage reserved between a man and a woman in our constitution.

This new civil unions bill I believe has come is another attempt now coming through our legislature rather than our courts to redefine marriage under the guise of civil liberties.. This bill has come forth through the House and the house floor so rapidly that most of us that have voted and shared the view of traditional marriage back in 1998 have had very little time to understand what the impact of such a law would have. I believe that the same fears of marriage and family being redefined which I had in 1998 is associated with this bill. This is too important to fast track through the senate without careful review and understanding by the people of Hawaii who voted 70% in favor of maintaining marriage as between a man and a woman.

I also believe the political process through which this bill has been pushed through committee and the house was not very fair because of the suddenness of the appearance of the bill and way the organizers and proponents of the bill gave little time for the opposition to organize and respond; especially when they knew what happened after people understood what was going on in courts in 1998. Please allow for careful reconsideration to table or stop this bill so there would time for people to understand the full implications of this bill in relations to what they voted for in 1998.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis K Kawamura,

From: Daniel Grantham [dannygr@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:32 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Daniel Grantham in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

Fair is fair. Please continue Hawaii's proud tradition of tolerance and respect for different people, no matter if they are different from us, as long as they respect the rights of others.

Remember the dark times not so long ago, when it was illegal to marry another race. People have been persecuted for religion, race or culture. There were times when knowing too much about healing plants, studying science, or even being left-handed could get you in trouble with the law. Surely it is time to lighten up.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Grantham

Small Business owner

POB 610

Haiku, HI 96708

From: SJMacGowan@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:39 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in favor of HB444

February 21, 2009

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

From: Scott MacGowan
Realtor Associate
Coldwell Banker Pacific Properties

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

VIA: Email to JGOtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to come before you to testify in support of HB 444.

My name is Scott MacGowan. I was born in California and spent many happy childhood memories of my family's multiple visits to this wonderful state. 12 years ago, I chose to make O'ahu my home. I made this decision because of the immense beauty of the aina as well as the beautiful spirit of the people of this paradise we all call home.

In 1998, I watched in disbelief as the wonderful people of Hawaii were stirred into a frenzy by special interest groups who were fearful that allowing same sex couples would somehow undermine the institution of marriage. I witnessed some of the most hateful and divisive campaigning I've ever seen in my life. This truly disheartened me and made me see that there is an underlying ugly spirit of discrimination here in this land of Aloha. This spirit is by definition, discrimination against a minority and is generally opposed by a majority. This is one reason why messages to continue a discrimination may outnumber those to end it.

I have voted in every election since I was of legal age. I have voted for many of you and have never considered myself particularly political. In the past two years, I have met a wonderful partner who lives in Vancouver, Canada. He was here on a surfing trip and we have spent many good times here in Hawaii over the past two years. He would like to move here and become part of this island community, however because he is a man, we are not able to marry and enjoy the benefit of citizenship that a couple of opposite sex can. We are however, legally allowed to marry in Canada and have seriously looked at this option. I never thought I could consider leaving my beautiful island home, however this is an option that we may have to exercise.

Personally, I'm not in favor of legislation of marriage of ANY kind. I believe that marriage is a religious ceremony which should NOT be legislated by the government. The constitution calls for the separation of church and state, and in this arena the constitution has been ignored for centuries. I realize that passage of HB444 will not benefit my partner and I, however I do believe that it is a step in the right direction towards equal rights for all citizens of the state of Hawaii. My partner and I have NO interest in getting married in the traditional sense of the word, however I do believe that we deserve the same rights, responsibilities and benefits afforded couples of the opposite sex.

I'm truly amazed that most of the European Union, Canada and many other countries around the globe have embraced same sex couples by recognizing their relationships, and that the Aloha State, a state that has always led the nation in civil rights is not leading the nation on this issue. It is by government action or ruling by the courts, that minorities are protected from tyranny of the majority. This is a basic tenet of the United States.

President Obama, supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges EQUAL to those of married couples. That's exactly what HB 444 does. He has also said, "Too often, the issue of LGBT rights is exploited by those seeking to divide us. But at its core, this issue is about who we are as Americans. It's about whether this nation is going to live up to its founding promise of equality by treating all its citizens with dignity and respect."¹

I humbly ask that you follow President Obama's lead and pass HB 444 so that all of our same-sex families in Hawaii can begin to achieve the dignity and respect that we deserve.

Mahalo nui loa for your kokua,

Scott J. MacGowan
2772 A Laniloa Road
Honolulu, HI 96813

Email: SJMacGowan@aol.com

¹ http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/civil_rights/. Support for the LGBT Community, Barack Obama, June 1, 2007

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

Re: (Senate Judiciary committee) Hearing Scheduled 9:00am Tuesday February 24, 09 State Capitol
HOUSE BILL 444 "CIVIL UNION": IS IT ABOUT EQUALITY OR IS IT A CRIME?

Let me understand something. I hear that word "equal" or "equality" used by the gay/lesbian community, and now, by the legislators about this Bill HB444. Your own newspaper stated that "In 1998, Hawaii's people overwhelmingly voted 70% to affirm marriage as being between a man and a woman. Today, the State's Legislature is poised to ignore the will of Hawaii's people by passing a law establishing CIVIL UNIONS between SAME SEX PARTNERS."

It was an abundantly clear message that the people of Hawaii said no to same sex marriage. If the people are going to vote, and it will be equalized, what is the use of voting? If the legislators want everything to be "equal", even when the people vote for something, they should apply that to the balance of the parties in the House of Representatives and Senators and make that equal as well. Specifically, Hawaii voted for 58 democrats in the House and only 4 republicans. In the Senate, they voted for 23 democrats and 2 republicans. Should we make that equal (50% democrats 50% republicans) even if the people voted them in that way?

Another example might be the longstanding tradition of Hawaii's Aloha Spirit. How about the "gay pride spirit", "Chinese New Year spirit," or "Japanese Obake spirit," etc.? Should these be equivalent to the Aloha Spirit as well? Hawaii would no longer have a unique tradition or identity. Last week when the House of Representatives tried to deceptively sneak and expedite this bill through, the gay/lesbian community dominated the hearing (with over 250 people) and testimonies. They were notified ahead of time and were able to mobilize in numbers. While only eight Christians showed up to voice their Constitutional rights to oppose bill HB444. The bill still passed the House with a vote of 34 to 17 in favor of same sex civil unions. If you read this bill (now called "Civil Unions"), the language is the exactly the same as the bill the people of Hawaii strongly voted against in 1998.

On Saturday, February 14th of this year, over 120 pastors, church members and concerned citizens met in a public meeting led by several legislators from Hawaii State Representatives offices. They stated that the Christian community was not notified properly to have an opportunity to voice their opposition. Hawaii State Representative, John Mizuno, stated that the community was not heard. In addition, he stated at this meeting with his head bowed down, that he was ashamed and embarrassed of his fellow democrats for saying that "we should have a party for all the Christians [in

reference to the 8 that spoke] racists and bigots.” Isn’t this a hate crime? They made this comment in the public building in the State Capitol against the Christians for voicing their opinions and using their Constitutional rights. Has it come to this? Our elected officials slander and reject views that are opposed to their own personal views and not their constituents? Is that their job they were elected to perform? Is this equal? Is this equality?

The gay and lesbian community has the financial resources to force their agenda on the government and people of Hawaii just as they have in California and Connecticut. Educational curriculums, hate crime laws, and exhibitionism are forced onto families and young children regardless of their Constitutional rights. This is not equal. The gay lobbyist constant barrage of bills is their strategy to “wear down” our defenses, beliefs and taxpayers money. The legislators are enticed by the economic affluence of this community without thinking of the ultimate demise of our island-state. Why are we revisiting this issue, that has already been decided, and wasting our tax dollars on it? Do they have preferred status? Are they more important than the homeless, the poverty-stricken, victims of domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse in Hawaii?

They say they don’t have equal rights, to the contrary, they have more rights than the average citizen. For example, if a homosexual is assaulted it is not only a crime, it is also a hate crime. They have twice the legal leverage and prosecution power than any other citizen. Aren’t all crimes hateful? As far as equal rights, protection and awareness of their cause: If a gay person is assaulted in a small town anywhere and is called a derogatory gay name, it immediately gains national media attention in minutes. In Hawaii, if a gang member killed a young eight year old child, it would most likely not be as publicized beyond local media. Is that equal coverage or equal rights? If this HB444 CIVIL UNIONS bill passes the Senate next week, it becomes equal as SAME SEX MARRIAGE. Then there will be a new victim in this “equality” crime: The people of Hawaii who voted in 1998 against the SAME SEX MARRIAGE bill are now being robbed of their Constitutional rights.

P.S. All you believers in God might want to check your US Currency, and see if IN ***GOD WE TRUST*** is still on it.

Dane Senser; Pro Bono Victim’s Rights Activist for hereignschristiannetwork.com
Public Relations Director
91-1501 Kaaimalu Place
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706 (808) 292-9857 dane.hereigns@gmail.com

I am writing to you today to express my, and many others, steadfast opposition to HB 444 pertaining to the proposition of the institution of civil unions in our great state. To pass this legislation would be in direct opposition to the will of Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians of *all* kinds of colors, creeds, and beliefs. This issue was already put to the people and they voted overwhelmingly to define marriage as between one man and one woman. To quote the Honolulu Advertiser issue of 2/13/09:

"In 1998, nearly 70 percent of Hawaii voters backed a constitutional amendment that authorized the Legislature to define marriage in state law as between one man and one woman". <<http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/20090213/NEWS01/902130379/1001>>

To go against their wishes is to dismiss the very people whom you were elected to represent. Under current state law, the people of Hawaii are already afforded all legal protections required to live successful, productive lives. Moreover, the people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits – without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sex-partner status test. The people of Hawaii have put these issues behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already been settled by the people.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Steve Loiurio
(808) 426-3820
Proud Resident of Hawaii

From: Clint Marantz [clint.marantz@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony for HB444 HD1, Civil Union bill

Testifier's Name: Irwin Clint Marantz
Measure Number: HB444 HD1
Date: February 24, 2009/ 9 a.m.
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Governmental Operations

To: State Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Irwin Clint Marantz, CEO of ADDEC (Accepting Diversity to Develop and Enhance Community) Foundation

I write this testimony in strong support of HB 444, the Civil Union bill. Please pass this legislation; it will mean equal rights under the law for gay men and women in the state of Hawaii.

Thank you.

Respectfully,
Clint Marantz

From: Jeff [mauidivemaster@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Written testimony on HB 444 - please support this bill

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Chun Brown
[Capt USN (ret)]
Kihei, Hawaii

From: Mary Elizabeth [nugayou@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:58 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony for HB444, HD1
Attachments: stat3747.jpg

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m.
Capitol Auditorium

HB 444, HD1. Relating to Civil Unions
STRONG OPPOSITION

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Committee:

I am Karen Yoza writing in strong opposition to HB444, HD1.

It saddened me when the House passed this bill because I believed that the people of Hawai'i spoke loud and clear when they voted for traditional marriage being between a man and a woman. Why do we keep rehashing this issue? Is it not time that the legislators respected the voice of the people and put this issue to rest. Let us work toward the betterment of our community.

The state of Hawai'i by no means deny the rights of the minorities. Hawai'i already has a reciprocal beneficiary law in place.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Aloha,

Karen Yoza

From: Walter Santiago [wsantiago@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:51 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRON OPPOSTION TO HB 444 HDI

Name: Walter Santiago
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HDI 1 Relation To Civil Unions
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am in strong opposition to HB 444 HDI. Our political officers have said over and over in this matter that they want to do the will of the people. The will of the people in 1998 was NO to same sex marriage. This bill is just another way or a smoke screen to legalize same sex marriage in our islands. 70% of our islanders have spoken, now we ask our representatives and senators to put a stop to this bill and do what the will of people of these beautiful islands. We ask you vote NO against this damaging bill to traditional marriage and families.

Mahalo,
Walter Santiago

From: Rose luecke [roseluecke@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:16 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444/ I oppose

Come on Senators...

help the heterosexuals out here... We've raised our children on the foundation of this countries laws and now when the world is going to shreds you leaders want to change the foundation of the things this country is built on? Is it all politics? I think not!! It's about the lives of our children and grand children. Why is the govenment condemning the Church for tradional marriages? Remember how you came abouts into this world. Think about the people of this Aina that want to preserve our heritage as Hawaiians.

I oppose of this bill HB444

Mahalo,

Rose

From: Margaret Scow [jonlovesmargaret@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:57 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fw: Strongly OPPOSE HB-444 HD1

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Matthew Schaetzle
Re: HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions
Date of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24
Time of Hearing: 9 am
Location of Hearing: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am living proof that same sex attraction is a lie. Abuse plus an emotional connection deficit with my father provided fertile ground for confusion which then played out in my actions as a man. **I was not born with this lie in my head!!!** I am writing to you about the Civil Unions Bill HB-444 because I am **STRONGLY** and let me say again **STRONGLY against passing this bill.** As seen in other states that have passed similar bills the ramifications for Hawaii will be overwhelmingly BAD. I will never vote for a Senator or any other government official that supports the destruction of the fabric of our society. That fabric is the institution of marriage between a man and a woman. There is so much evidence to support this fact that anyone deceived into thinking the opposite would in my opinion, not be worthy of holding public office our great state of Hawaii or in the great nation of The United States of America.

My motive for this letter to this Committee is not to hate anyone, as it has been portrayed by supporters of the homosexual lifestyle. I promote love to those who are hurting inside from pain they either refuse to face, or are so wounded that they are not able to face it yet. Sirs, I know that pain, it took me years to come to terms with the wounding that brought me to a sexual and gender identity crisis in my life. How can you support a bill that will pave the way for more of this **confusion to be drilled into our nation's children** simply because there are so many that are taking the easy way out and embracing the lie that comes from their incredible pain and suffering. If you vote for this bill you will be directly held responsible for supporting the lie and promoting perversion to our children and their children. Is that really what you want to be known for? I believe this group of men, the Senate Judiciary Committee are better than that.

Please do some simple research about men and women who have done the hard work of understanding why they are attracted to the same sex and have walked away from the gay lifestyle after finally finding out what happened to them. Sexual abuse and abuse of all kinds, painful and terrible experiences in early years of life, this is what i am talking about. If you really look you will see that promoting and **supporting civil unions between same sex couples will only increase the social and economic brokenness of our society.**

If you would like to talk to me directly I would be more than happy to help you understand what happened to me and how I was loved through the process of change. I am married now since 2005 with 2 incredible daughters, I wouldn't change any of it for anything in the world. You see Senators, I did the hard work and it took me years to do it, I am still doing it, and I am living proof that this bill

is a lie. **Please do not vote for HB-444 HD1, please. For my children's sake, and for yours.**

Sincerely,

Matthew Schaezle

Choices Ministry

Men's Coordinator

73-4184 Kahi Place

Kailua Kona, HI 96740

From: momi durand [momikoka@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:37 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 444 related to Civil Unions. I am for strong and healthy families in Hawaii and I feel this would be in jeopardy if this bill were passes. I strongly urge you to oppose this bill and vote no.

Mahalo,

Momi Akana

From: Roger Breton [smoge@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:26 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444, Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m., Senate Judiciary Committee

February 23, 2009

Dear Senators,

This testimony is a request for you to vote NO on HB 444 introduced by the house. I ask this request not on religious grounds but on the basis that as it stands now the bill is in conflict with the current Hawaii Constitution, Article 1, Section 23. If you take the time to read Section 23 it clearly states that marriage defined in the State of Hawaii is between opposite sexes.

HB 444 is illegal because it would force the Health department to issue a marriage certificate to same sex couples under the guise of civil union. This would put officials at the Health department in a quandary because ultimately they would be responsible of which law to support or ignore. As it is today the people of Hawaii have clearly stated that Section 23 of the Constitution is the one we wish to support. Vote NO

Taking this further, if HB 444 passes the Senate, then where does that leave the Hawaii Department of Taxation? Can civil unions file as married filing jointly? I don't think so as this is in conflict with Section 23 again and thus these individuals who file as married would be committing fraud and subject to prosecution. Now it is up to another State agency to make a decision on which law to support. Do you think this efficient government? Vote NO.

I am amazed this same sex marriage initiative continues to be brought up when Section 23 clearly defines marriage in the State. As it stands the bill is illegal and if passed, no doubt be challenged at the Hawaii Supreme court as unconstitutional. For HB 444 to become law Section 23 must first be repealed and as everyone is aware of this is not the will of the people. Anyone who viewed the rally in support of Article 1, Section 23 on Sunday February 22, 2009 at the State capital would agree that passing of HB 444 would be unconscionable and in direct violation of the will of Hawaiian residents. Vote NO.

I've kept religion out of this request because this is not a religious issue, it is a legal issue and currently HB 444 is unconstitutional and opposes Article 1, Section 23. The legislature has no authority to introduce and pass legislation that is in conflict with the State Constitution, HB 444 is clearly conflicting and illegal.

It is up to you esteemed Senators to do the right thing and vote NO, support the Hawaii Constitution and most of all the will of the people. Mahalo for your time.

Respectfully,

Roger Breton
3255 Kaohinani Drive
Honolulu, HI 96817

From: Roger Breton [smoge@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:31 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB 444, Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m., Senate Judiciary Committee

February 23, 2009

Dear Senators,

This testimony is a request for you to vote NO on HB 444 introduced by the house. I ask this request not on religious grounds but on the basis that as it stands now the bill is in conflict with the current Hawaii Constitution, Article 1, Section 23. If you take the time to read Section 23 it clearly states that marriage defined in the State of Hawaii is between opposite sexes.

HB 444 is illegal because it would force the Health department to issue a marriage certificate to same sex couples under the guise of civil union. This would put officials at the Health department in a quandary because ultimately they would be responsible of which law to support or ignore. As it is today the people of Hawaii have clearly stated that Section 23 of the Constitution is the one we wish to support. Vote NO

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I've kept religion out of this request because this is not a religious issue, it is a legal issue and currently HB 444 is unconstitutional and opposes Article 1, Section 23. The legislature has no authority to introduce and pass legislation that is in conflict with the State Constitution, HB 444 is clearly conflicting and illegal.

It is up to you esteemed Senators to do the right thing and vote NO, support the Hawaii Constitution and most of all the will of the people. Mahalo for your time.

Respectfully,

Roger Breton
3255 Kaohinani Drive
Honolulu, HI 96817

From: Kiera Chase [kiera.chase@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:06 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: house bill 444 HD1: Civil Unions

I am writing from California where the right to marry whom ever one chooses was stripped from us and placed in the hands of the masses. There is no reason why a person should not be able to join forces and make a life with someone of the same sex. And there is no reason why that right should be taken away. You may as well take the vote away from women, or African-Americans.

--

Kiera Chase
Resource Specialist
Metropolitan Arts and Tech High School
2340 Jackson St.
San Francisco CA 94115
415-430-8121

From: Leslie Foster [mamaleslie@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:04 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: HB444

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee.

My name is Leslie Lam Foster and I ask you to take a moment to make note of my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

While I am a heterosexual and have been married to my husband for 20+ years, I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and that equal treatment and benefits be required by our Constitution.

HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union, therefore is a necessary tool in allowing non-traditional families, especially their children the safety and benefits of our system.

I do not believe in the argument of opponents to this bill that the constitution of traditional marriages will be harmed by HB444. Traditional marriages have an incredibly high track record of failure. It is on your shoulders to allow couples who have to fight so hard for acceptance and rights the opportunity to show society that their bonds are just as strong, if not stronger, than those of traditional couples.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many.

I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Leslie Foster

313 Kuliou'ou Rd.

Honolulu, HI 96821

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:04 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: sammyschwab@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: sammy schwab
Organization: Individual
Address: 54-271 Kawaihemo Pl Hauula, Hi
Phone: 808-781-9156
E-mail: sammyschwab@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

The job of the representative and the senator is to represent the will of the people. It is clear that 70% of your constituents oppose this bill. It sends a confusing signal to our state about healthy relationships. It confuses our children and indirectly promotes homosexual relationships to vulnerable young people. It is after all a learned behavior.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:43 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: heidiburgoyne@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: To Members of the State Legislature.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Heidi Burgoyne
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: heidiburgoyne@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:
Please vote NO on bill HB444

To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, “**extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.**”

HB444 has only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" **without changing the definition at all.** The legislature should not attempt to override the popular vote and the State Constitution. The Constitution and its Amendments should act as the highest authority in our state. Overriding the Constitution will set a dangerous precedent. I urge you all to vote NO on HB444. You have the power to protect our communities, state, and nation.

From: kapihes [kapihes@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:36 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Opposition to HB.444

I stand in Opposition to HB. 444 for the following reasons

1. This bill is about same-sex marriage, but the people already voted against same-sex marriage back in 1998.
2. I believe the best way and proper way of raising a family is between a man and a wife. Every child needs a father and mother in their lives, this is the best way to make complete.
3. This is not a civil rights issue, this is a lifestyle issue. Blacks and many other ethnicities were discriminated because of their race and the color of their skin. I oppose this bill because I stand against the lifestyle of homosexuality.

Ellie Kapihe
Senior Pastor of Windward Missionary Church

From: Susan Johnson [hisusanj@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:40 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444hdl (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I support Equality. I support Civil Unions.

Thank you,
Susan Johnson
917 16th Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96816
808.206.7497

From: mauidivemaster@gmail.com on behalf of Jeff Brown, Secretary [j.brown@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:45 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Fwd: HB 444 support this

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff (Jr) Brown
Secretary
Aha Alii O Kapuaiwa Kamehameha V
Maui, Hawaii

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 6:37 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: matthewt1983@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: To Members of the State Legislature.docx

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Matthew Newbold
Organization: Individual
Address: 54-016 Waikulama St. Hauula, HI
Phone: 647-4223
E-mail: matthewt1983@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, “**extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.**”

In 1998 the voters of the State of Hawaii chose to amend our Constitution by a large margin of victory to specifically define marriage as a union between couples of the opposite sex. HB444 has only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. Our constitution does not allow for this even if you simply change the name. The legislature should not attempt to override the popular vote and the State Constitution. Is that even legal? I thought the Constitution and its Amendments were the highest authority in our state. Overriding the Constitution will set a dangerous precedent. I urge you all to vote NO on HB444.

Testimony Presented To
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Relations
House Committee on Judiciary
By
Dr. Marvin and Barbara P. Mathews

HB 444, HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions

Chair Taniguchi, Chair Karamatsu and Members of the Committees:

We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong Support of HB 444, HD1, Relating to Civil Unions**. Extending the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union is a positive step forward for our state.

Partnerships in civil unions have long strengthened our community. Individuals involved in such partnerships represent the full spectrum of professions and occupations, and hold responsible positions throughout our community. They contribute fully as community volunteers, church members, neighbors and friends.

These individuals are entitled to fully participate in our society and cannot do so now. This bill represents no threat to marriage, family or our culture, and will strengthen the traditions of multiculturalism and diversity that characterize Hawai'i. The individuals involved represent the family values that strengthen our nation, and it is time to allow them the rights to which they are entitled.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Greg & Doreen Sokolowski
84-687 Ala Mahiku Dr. 122A
Waianae, HI 96792
2/23/09

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444

Thank you so much for serving us and our community. As a voting member of the community, we'd like to express our concerns and desires regarding HB 444. It's our understanding and belief that there are a number of laws that protect civil unions and this bill is unnecessary and unwanted by the majority of the people of Hawaii. People should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors, especially when we already have laws that protect people in general. We strongly suggest that you oppose HB 444.

Praying for you,
Greg & Doreen Sokolowski

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

My name is Nathan Colgrove. I am a Hawaii resident, a committed husband, a proud father, and a follower of Jesus Christ. I would like to strongly encourage you NOT to support HB444. I do not discriminate against homosexuals, but I do not agree with their lifestyle. I don't want to see the further degradation of the meaning of marriage, which I believe the passing of HB444 would do. I also do not want my child being taught immorality in school, which I believe would be the result of the passing of HB444. In favor of Hawaii's families and children, I strongly urge you NOT TO SUPPORT HB444.

Thank you,



Nathan Colgrove

February 20, 2009

Relating to HB 444 HD 1
Testifying in Support
On Behalf of
The Progressive Democrats of Hawai'i

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Nicole Silver and I am writing to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I still remember the summer of 1994 when my dad, sister and I drove seven hours from Delaware to Boston to witness my uncle and his partner bound together in a church ceremony. My uncle's church was actually the first non-gay church in Boston to officiate a gay wedding. The wedding may not have been legal at the time but it was one of the happiest moments in my uncle's life. My father still tears up when he thinks back to how excited and proud his brother was on that day. Although there was some debate about whether to hold the ceremony among the church members, most of them attended the ceremony to show their support for their union. My uncle was an active and appreciated member in the church as their treasurer and youth educational director.

Unfortunately, not every day in my uncle's life was as happy as that one. After receiving his masters of education he went to teach high school in Bennington, VT. When a parent found out he was gay, he wasn't directly fired but his life was made quite uncomfortable by his employers and co-workers and he felt he had to leave VT. He moved to Boston because he felt it was a more open-minded community and there met the man he would eventually wed. One of his regrets in life was being unable to adopt a child with his partner, but it wasn't even an option they could consider at that time because of public opinion.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Nicole E. Silver

2760 Kahoaloha Lane #2
Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

From: Jeff Brown [Jeff.Brown.ctr@mhpcc.hpc.mil]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:05 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Written Testimony in support of HB 444

Captain Jeff R Brown, USAR (Ret)
550 Lipoa Parkway
Kihei, HI 96753

February 20, 2009

Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony on HB 444, Civil Unions your support is requested

Aloha Senator's:

I am a long-time resident of Hawaii, and I am writing to express my support for HB 444 granting civil unions to same sex partners in Hawaii. I know many voters don't believe this bill is necessary as there are no problems with discrimination in Hawaii; that however is not the case. I work for the largest employer in the State of Hawaii (University of Hawaii (UH), Research Corporation of the University Of Hawaii RCUH)) and I can tell you first hand that they say they do not discriminate against gay and lesbian employees in all their advertising materials. However in practice they DO discriminate as evidenced by their lack of same sex partner benefits and unfair compensation practices aimed at supporting heterosexual couples and unfairly disadvantaging same sex couples.

When I accepted my current position I was informed that they would not pay for the relocation of my partner of 20 years as we "are not a married couple". I later learned that they do however pay for the relocation of heterosexual unmarried couples. I also learned that they would not allow my partner of 20 years to have any benefits as we "were not a married heterosexual family". I tried to work inside the system for 3 years to get the policy changed only to be told, we are working on it, it's very difficult, we are not "allowed by state law" and other such delaying and blocking tactics. Finally at the end of year 3 I filled a Hawaii Civil Rights Commission complaint alleging discrimination in compensation by a protected class. I was saddened to learn that this State agency has no interest in protecting gay and lesbian citizens - they went through the motions then denied my claim. The reason given was that UH was not directed "by law" to furnish any benefits to same sex couples. They did not even give any due consideration to the facts of the case concerning unfair compensation and the deliberate disadvantaging of same sex couples working for UH/RCUH. Only after I informed UH/RCUH that I would file a civil suit against them did they reluctantly allowed same sex employees to obtain medical and dental coverage.

Four years later they still discriminate against same sex couples in all other benefits and compensation practices such as:

* family death leave -if you are married you can take three (3) days paid leave to go to your father-in-law's funeral, if you are gay you have to take vacation to attend your father-laws or even your own spouses funeral. When my father-in-law died they would not allow me to use family death leave.

* Married couples with families receive benefits of \$300-\$400 per

month per family for "family medical coverage premium payments". Same sex couples have to pay out of pocket for their partner's coverage.

* Employee retirement benefits are provided to employees and their "married" spouse, but no retirement medical benefits are provided to same sex couple partners - only the employee.

* UH discriminates against same sex couples in providing campus housing for students (there is pending litigation at this time) - not very fair for a University that bills itself as "not discriminatory".

So the bottom line here is if the largest employer in the State of Hawaii who publicly claims they do not discriminate against gays and lesbians in employee and compensation actually does discriminate in practice, how bad is the private employment sector in Hawaii?

No same sex couples I know want to be married in a church; we just want to have the same rights, benefits and compensation as our married co-workers. This is just a basic case of fairness and doing what is right for hardworking voters who happen to be same sex couples.

The passage of this bill will also ensure that Hawaii employers furnish equal benefits for same sex couples which will reduce the pressure on state medical assistance programs where same sex spouses have been forced to go by this discrimination. As you know if medical coverage is not provided by employers it's next to impossible to purchase coverage on your own.

Without the passage of this bill you will continue to see discrimination by mean spirited, religious zealots who are employed in Human Resources position both with state agencies and private industry as I have experienced with UH/RCUH.

As long as these mean spirited persons feel that they can hide anomalously in the dark and continue their hidden religious agendas against gay and lesbians, we will be second class citizens who are not allowed to exercise our rights.

Please give your full support to HR 444 when it comes up for a vote in the Senate next week - Hawaii needs to end all forms of discrimination and eliminate the loop holes that allow persistent discrimination against its gay and lesbian citizens.

I am also available to testify in person at my own expense at any Senate hearings on this topic if you feel it will garner support of HR 444.

Sincerely,

S/S
Jeff R. Brown

Jeff Brown
Director of Security

Maui High Performance Computing Center
A US Air Force Laboratory Center
550 Lipoa Parkway
Kihei, H I 96753

Voice (808) 879-5077
Secure: (808) 874-0457

From: Erenio Arincorayan [erenioa@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 10:39 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Sen. Brian Taniguchi
Subject: opposing HB 444, hearing Tues., Feb 24, 9AM

--- On Mon, 2/23/09, Erenio Arincorayan <erenioa@yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Erenio Arincorayan <erenioa@yahoo.com>
Subject: testimonial on opposing HB 444
To: fkogachi@yahoo.com, "Eric Arincorayan" <erenioa@yahoo.com>
Date: Monday, February 23, 2009, 10:29 AM

Dear Senator Brian Taniguchi of District 10 and
Senate Judiciary Committee,

For three reasons I am writing my testimonial to you,
as to why I oppose HB 444 on civil union.

- 1- HB 444 on civil union gives the rights and privileges of traditional marriage to civil union couples, where two men or two women joining together in sexual intercourse have the rights and privileges of traditional marriage. I am opposed to two men or two women receiving the rights of traditional marriage since the public has already voted that the rights and privileges belong to a union of one man and one woman.
- 2- Gender minority and sexual minority is being confused. Gender minority is a promised right by the constitution of America. Where discrimination against race, creed, color, and sex against the minority is not to hinder human rights of life, liberty, and property.

Sexual minority refers to the act of sexual intercourse behavior between two men or two women. The minority here refers to an act of sexual behavior not sex meaning gender of male or female.

Therefore, I oppose the use of the words which refers to this bill as defending the rights of the minority (sexual minority).

When the constitutional minority is not referring to a sex act.

- 3- Lastly, our form of government is a representative republic, where the majority makes the laws that are in place by voting for a representative that will represent their beliefs. The majority voted in the 1997 election. Therefore, the laws were put in place.

By our Representatives and Senators,
bring up this bill they are wasting taxpayers money by

wasting time on an issue already determined by law.

For these three reasons, I oppose HB 444 on civil union.

Thank you for your consideration,

Karen Arincorayan
2714 Kahoaloha Ln. #1403
Honolulu, HI 96826

From: debra laorosa [deb_laorosa@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:05 AM
To: JGO Testimony

I reside in Hawaii and ask for a NO vote in opposition to HB444 civil union, meeting Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM.

Thank you for listening and responding to our voice as it was heard as a majority. Thank you to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

We appreciate our legislators.

Debra Laorosa

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From: Jeff Lilley [lilley.j@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony on HB 444 HD1 The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Testimony on HB 444 HD1

From:

Rev. Jeff M. Lilley
1938 Aumoae Street
Honolulu, HI 96817
808.271.9926

To:

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Hearing on HB 444 HD1 Feb 24 9 a.m.

Dear Members of the Senate,

Thank you for your fine work and for taking time to read my testimony. I am writing in full support of the adoption of HB 444 D1 concerning the matter of Civil Unions in the state of Hawai'i. The measure establishes legislation that will afford those joined in civil union the same rights and responsibilities as those afforded the privileges of marriage under a statute that preserves earlier legislation defining "marriage" as a union between man and woman. At the heart of the bill is an attempt to treat gay and lesbian person equally under the law. Although the domestic partner law made some strides in closing the gaps in equal right for the gay community, subsequent applications of the law gutted much of its practical application. HB 444 will help restore and expand this law.

As a clergy person, I appreciate the testimony of my colleagues who oppose the bill, and want to offer a different perspective. In my nearly 20 years of ministry I have witnessed the pain and anguish of gay and lesbian persons who have been denied the privilege of civil union under the law. As a result, these couples, some of whom have been together for over 40 years, are treated as "friends" rather than the life-long partners they truly are. How ironic that persons with great commitment and seriousness and commitment are unable to solemnize their relationship simply because they are gay, while heterosexual persons can obtain a marriage license and be married on a whim!

Some religious leaders have testified that this measure "threatens the sanctity of marriage." While civil unions would afford the "rights and responsibilities" of marriage, it poses no actual or perceived threat to marriage. I truly appreciate the desire to defend religious convictions and traditional definitions of marriage. Every religion should have the right to do so. But civil unions are a civil, not religious issue. Under current law, no church or other religious institution is required to solemnize by marriage or other rite any particular couple. This will not change under HB444. If a pastor, priest or rabbi is unwilling or unable to perform a civil union, they will not be compelled to do so.

On a personal note, I must say that the marriage of a homosexual couple in no way diminishes the beauty, sanctity, protection, or legitimacy of my own 28-year marriage to my wife Jean. I am not sure why others seem to think that "marriage" is under siege by allowing civil unions for homosexual persons. Rather, by strengthening the relationships of those couples that choose a life-long committed relationship by guaranteeing their equal treatment under the law, the fabric of society is strengthened.

I hope and pray that you will vote affirmatively on HB444 and give the entire community of the State of Hawai'i equal rights under the law.

Blessings and Aloha,

Jeff M. Lilley

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 a.m.

Auditorium

HB 444

SUPPORT

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

As long as people are not harming each other, they should be free to pursue their own interests and dreams. Civil Unions should be the domain of the State and carry with it the legal relationships between people. Marriages should be the domain of churches.

In college I knew two gay couples, one male, one female. In order to fit in, and protect their legal interests, they legally married and became two heterosexual couples, but maintained their gay lifestyle.

This "solved" societies needs.

Children need stable families, whether they are one parent, two parents, a commune, etc. What they do not need is unstable parents. That should be the test, stability, not some outsiders personal moral code.

Henry Curtis
P.O. Box 37313
Honolulu, HI 96837-0313

From: jonipherkwong@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 8:00 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: IN SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1

Date: February 23, 2009

Submitted by: Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kwong, Metropolitan Community Church

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee, c/o Sgt.-At-Arms, State Capitol

Re: In STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1: A Bill for an Act Relating to Civil Unions
Tuesday, 2/24/09, at 9 a.m.
State Capitol Auditorium

To The Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

It is a pleasure for me to submit this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444 HD1 as an ordained clergy and as one who also believes strongly in religious freedom. My denomination (Metropolitan Community Church) has been performing Holy Unions for same-gender couples since 1969. We believe the loving relationships of adult, consensual, non-related gay and lesbian couples are blessed in the eyes of God and ought to be celebrated by communities of faith and families and friends. That is why we provide this rite or ritual to those who seek such an affirmation.

I have had the honor and privilege of performing these Holy Unions in Hawai'i and also legal marriages in California last summer. The one that stands out most in my mind was for an interracial couple in Silverlake, California. They have been together for 39 years! Half a century ago, interracial marriages would not even be recognized, were it not for *Loving vs. Virginia* challenging this discriminatory law in the Supreme Court. Now, same-gender relationships face a similar challenge. As this couple was reading their vows to one another, they openly wept – realizing the hardships and obstacles that stood in their way for years – until they were able to finally proclaim their love and commitment in such a public way at that moment. The rest of those gathered there were also crying, empathizing in their struggle for equality and human dignity. Now, their marriage stands in suspension once more. Will they be forced to divorce by a slim majority of Californians who voted for Prop 8? I hope not. The tyranny of the majority should never be allowed to dictate a minority groups' rights. That is the genius of a constitutional democracy, instead of a pure democracy that makes room for mob rule.

I realize, however, that not all religious communities share our perspective on marriage equality or even granting civil unions to same-gender couples. In fact, those of us who support marriage equality may even be in the minority compared to the Roman Catholic and Mormon Church in Hawai'i. It is also important to note that minority religions such as MCC, Unity, Unitarian Universalists, Buddhists, and Jews also deserve religious freedom. No one religion is established by the Constitution of the United States of America.

These majority religions do not have to perform marriages for same-gender couples. That is part of the beauty of the separation of church and state. What the state offers its citizens is not the *rite* I just mentioned, but rather the *rights* to its tax-paying, law-abiding citizens. The constitution is supposed to offer equal protection under the law and pay close attention to "suspect" classes such as gays and lesbians, who are more prone to discrimination and unfair treatment. That is my understanding of the spirit in which the United States was founded.

I would also encourage each of you, out of respect to the *'aina*, to go back to Hawaiian history, when *mahu* (“two-spirit” people who were ancient equivalents of modern-day gays and lesbians) were treated with the utmost dignity and respect. They were thought to have embodied that delicate balance between the earthly realm and the spiritual realm. They were shamans and chief advisors to *ali'i* because of their unique sensitivity.

President Obama, during his inauguration speech, calls us to “a new era of responsibility.” We are indeed responsible for same-gender couples being able to visit each other in the hospital, sharing insurance policies, and being able to draw from their partner’s pension upon retirement. We are responsible for treating each other as fellow first-class citizens, not relegating certain people to the “back of the bus.” We are responsible for making sure we broaden our definition of “*kakou* (we)” to include same-gender *'ohana* and truly embody “*malama kakou* (caring for one another)” in order for there to be “*pono* (righteousness)” in our land.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration. It is once again my prayer and my audacious hope that HB 444 HD1 will pass.

Blessings and Aloha,
Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kwong

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

FROM: Ray Chan, President, Real Estate Investment Group - Hawai'i
MEASURE: HB 444 HD1
Date and time of the hearing: Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.
COMMITTEE: Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

Aloha Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Please support HB444, The Civil Union Bill. My partner and I suffer everyday without equal protection.

I see on the local news Sunday several churches bused their congregations to the State Capital for a rally oppose Civil Union -- what I see their statements are so very oppressing and misleading. First of all, this issue is not is not a religious issue, and it saddens me to see the opposition to this bill are framing it so. Civil Union is NOT same-sex marriage - we could care less about getting married. We are not looking for a church wedding; far from it. We just don't want to be discriminated. We respectfully request the rights available to all good citizens of Hawai'i.

There's long history of misguided religious leaders cramming ideologies down the throat of uneducated citizens, and results are always regrettable and tragic events.

As a Christian; I'm so insulted by the rally yesterday. I don't think my religion is overbearing and domineering; I would like to think Christianity is a living religion that guides our modern society, and not some dogma chisel in stone for ages, but again, this is not a religious issue; I know that you know the Civil Union Bill is about Civil Rights.

Whatever happened to separation of church and State?

Thomas Jefferson said, and I quote his exact words that are written on the wall of his memorial in DC: *"I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions, but laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors."*

We do not live in a mob-ruled Democracy system where the majority mass always rule -- rather, we live in a Republic system that you, are representative of us, the public. None of the Human Rights progresses in America would exist today if not for past enlightened leaders of this great Republic, and, that is why you are in the office isn't it - to lead the mob and not to follow the mob?

Minority Rights, Women's Rights, Civil Rights, Inter-racial Marriage laws... would you oppose such Acts today because they're not popular or don't conform to the majority opinion? How would YOU vote on those issues today? You are the enlightened leaders right?

You and I know, there are those leaders who will use this issue to attempt to advance their career
-- history will tell the truth on this issue.

I hope for your support, and thanks for taking the time from your busy day.

Respectfully,

Ray Chan
President, Real Estate Investment Group - Hawai'i

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:49 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Nekokichigai@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Suzanne Watanabe
Organization: Individual
Address: 85-329 Imipono Place Waianae, HI 96792
Phone: 696-5891
E-mail: Nekokichigai@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

If Hawaii and America institute same sex marriage and are allowed to go on with life as usual, then God owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:49 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: Nekokichigai@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Suzanne Watanabe
Organization: Individual
Address: 85-329 Imipono Place Waianae, HI 96792
Phone: 696-5891
E-mail: Nekokichigai@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

If Hawaii and America institute same sex marriage and are allowed to go on with life as usual, then God owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology.

From: Patrick Waring [waringp001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Patrick Waring in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Hawaii has always used its own constitution and legislation to protect the human rights of our diverse populations, each a minority on the islands, let us continue to do so with civil unions.

I am a gay catholic man with a debilitating illness other than HIV/AIDS who lives and works in Honolulu. I live in Hawaii because the Legislature and Courts of Hawaii have always believed in protecting the rights of minorities and does so much better than the Federal Government.

We all know what it means to be a minority of either race, gender, religion, or some similar fundamental part of our selves. Well I can tell you that being gay, for me and most gay men I have talked with was not a choice but is a part of how we were born. If this was a marriage issue regarding inter-racial marriage, inter-religious marriage, prevention of marriage between to people who cannot reproduce due to illness, there would be no hoopla or questions or protests against these marriages. Your entire brethren would support marriage/civil unions in those situations, no matter the majority opinion by proposition that entitles the legislature to do so if it wishes.

Same Sex unions are no different. I am attracted to men. As a Christian, I believe in sex within the context of a life term relationship. I do not believe I have the spiritual gifts nor the belief that God wishes me, even if I could, remain a celibate the rest of my life. I should be allowed to pursue a civil union as the only rational choice for me.

Please support the establishment of civil unions here in Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick J.S. Waring, J.D., LL.M., Ed.D
60 N. Nimitz Hwy, Apt 1207
Honolulu, HI 96817

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:01 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: blivr82@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: ORLINO CARAANG JR
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: blivr82@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Please respect our long time tradition of marriage, which defined only by man and a woman.
Thank you.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:03 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: blivr82@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: ORLINO CARAANG JR
Organization: Individual
Address: 94-1023 Lumipolu st Waipahu HI 96797
Phone:
E-mail: blivr82@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Please respect our long time tradition of marriage, which defined only by man and a woman.
Thank you.

Orlino
HD 35 Prec. 1

From: Lois Perrin [lperrin@acluhawaii.org]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:57 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Lois Perrin in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

VIA EMAIL: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government
Operations
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium
Re: Testimony of Lois Perrin in Strong
Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

My name is Lois Perrin and I the Legal Director of the ACLU of Hawaii. The ACLU of Hawaii is also submitting testimony in support of this bill but I write today in my personal capacity to express my strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois K. Perrin
Legal Director
ACLU of Hawaii
P.O. Box 3410
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801

From: Beattie [dabeatties@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:56 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: STOP HB 444

Beattie Family
324 Olomana St.
Kailua, HI 96734

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Re: Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009
9:00 am
Measure number: HB 444

Dear Senators:

We request that you STOP HB 444. We oppose the State of Hawaii extending the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. From the beginning of time marriage has always been committed for 1 man and 1 woman. If it were not so, GOD our Creator would have created 2 men or 2 women on earth first to start multiplying the earth. But through that union, there would be no procreation. Marriage is for 1 man and 1 woman to take part in the sanctity of this holy and honorable union. Through a married couples love and commitment, procreation can occur and the extention of the generations to come.

We say, "Listen to the voices of the people!" And we the people of the State of Hawaii have made our stance that Marriage is made for 1 man and 1 woman. You have been elected by the citizens of Hawaii to listen to their voices and vote majority rules. So do your duty to the citizens of Hawaii...STOP HB 444.

Thank you and may GOD help us.

Sincerely,
Christian, Janell, Christian Y.S. & Danielle Beattie

From: M. Elise Rumpf [rumpf@higp.hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 11:11 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony of Elise Rumpf n Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Elise Rumpf

--

~~~~~  
M. Elise Rumpf  
Graduate Research Assistant  
Hawaii Institute of Geophysics and Planetology University of Hawaii at Manoa 1680 East-West Road, POST 512A Honolulu, HI 96822 [rumpf@higp.hawaii.edu](mailto:rumpf@higp.hawaii.edu)

---

**From:** Donna Guan [donna.guan@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:47 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STOP HB 444

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Donna and I am asking that you would put a **STOP** on the HB 444. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 9 AM. Though I am not able to testify on this day, I wish that you would help me speak.

I **DO NOT** wish to support the Civil Union Bill because I **DO NOT** believe that a man and a man or a woman and a woman defines a family. A family is defined as a group of people who are closely related by blood. A man and a man or a woman and a woman may think that marriage may bond them together to start a family, but this will not be possible. The child(ren) will not inherit the genes of both parents because only the genes of a male and a female are able to produce offsprings. And isn't offspring production what keeps us populated? Without offsprings, the population of human beings will take a deep dive and before we know it, humans may be wiped out on the face of the earth.

Please do this simple favor for me. I am not able to be in front of the legislature, senate, state officials, representatives, etc., to let my voice be heard. I do wish to let my voice be loud and only you are able to help me.

Thank you,  
Donna

---

**From:** Greg [kele01@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:53 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB 444 relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing Date/Time: February 24, 2009 9:00 am  
Re: HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and members of Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I support HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions and urge you to pass this measure.

I trust that Hawaii legislators are committed to carefully considering each bill, especially when it is an divisive issue such as this. I ask you to be mindful of a basic principle - equal protection for all people - in considering this measure. Equal protection for a minority should be guaranteed even with the majority's opposition, because if we allow injustice to some, civil liberties for people as a whole are threatened.

The same arguments that were enacted in the passing of Civil Rights laws, should be considered at this time. HB 444 has absolutely nothing to do with the definition of Traditional Marriage. Our current President Barack Obama, who is from Hawaii is a firm believer in civil liberties for all and I can only imagine how disappointed and embarrassed that he would be if Hawaii's legislators do not do what is Pono by passing HB 444. Thank you for your consideration,

Aloha no,

Gregory Crawford  
Honolulu, HI.

---

**From:** Cal Takara [caltakara@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:50 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Vote against HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Re: HB 444  
Hearing date: February 24, 2009 at 9 am

Dear members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank for your dedication to serving the people of Hawaii. HB 444 is an emotionally charged bill, and I appreciate your willingness to weigh and balance these three issues:

1. The will of the people that voted in 1998 that marriage to be between a man and a woman
2. The historical data that healthy societies were based on traditional marriages and families
3. The need for individual civil rights within the context of societies, especially our Island Ohana

Many people state that same-sex civil unions should have the same rights and privileges as traditional marriages, that this is a civil right. Although I believe in fairness to all within our Island Ohana, I do not believe that same-sex unions is a matter of civil rights and is the case of ethnicity or race. There is no definitive or conclusive research at this writing that would declare gender preferences to be a product of unalterable genetic coding. Because of that, this should not be a civil rights issue. I do believe that Hawaii's Reciprocal Benefits Bill provides adequate rights and privileges for same-sex couples.

The people of Hawaii would also be best served by keeping to the traditional definition of marriage, one that is between a man and a woman. The people of Hawaii have already spoken on this through their vote in 1998.

I urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to vote against HB 444 and support traditional marriage.

Aloha,  
Calvin N. Takara  
928 Kinau Street  
Honolulu, HI 96814

---

**From:** Emi J Osumi [osumi@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:49 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Oppostion to HB 444 HDI.

My name is Emi Osumi. My senate is David Ige. The time of date of hearing is going to be on February 24,2009 at 9:00 am. My testimony is for House bill 444 also know as same sex marriage. We should not have same sex marriage because it is not right. Men don't suppoaed to be married to a men and women don't supposed to be married to a women. It is supposed to be a men married to a women or a women married to a men. Because it its not right to have same sexual marriage. Thanks for hearing my tesitmony.

Sincerely,  
Emi Osumi



RE: Oppose HB 444

Dear Judiciary Committee,

I am an educator, homemaker and a Hawaii resident. As a HAWAII voter it is my responsibility to express to my government leaders that I strongly oppose HB 444 and that you will consider opposing this bill also.

Hawaii's voters made it very clear that marriage rights are to be preserved for a man and a woman. In 1988 Hawaii constitution was amended to say "The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couple. "Civil union" is just another name for same -sex marriage.

I have family members who are homosexuals that I love dearly and will stand with. I will never discriminate them as human beings although I don't agree with their lifestyle. And this is why I will not support this bill which goes against what Hawaii believes in.

I would like to thank you for serving the people of Hawaii and that you will continue to serve us in TRUTH. As a Hawaii voter I strongly wouldn't want you to misrepresent Hawaii. Please honor Hawaii's voters and withdraw your support from HB 444.

Respectfully yours,  
Julie Pascua  
94-462 Kahuanani Street  
Waipahu, Hi 96797  
808-258-7331

---

**From:** Jonathan Gillentine [jmgillentine@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:47 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony in strong support of HB 444 HD1  
**Attachments:** "AVG certification"

Concerning HB 441 HD1 to be heard on Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00 am

Dear Sen. Taniguchi,

I am writing in strong support of HB444 HD1. As a Christian and an educator, I believe that diversity is an essential part of life. I know how important it is to support and care for those who may be different than the majority. This measure seeks to do just that - to provide rights to those who need protection.

Please support this bill.

Aloha no,

Jonathan Gillentine, PhD, NBCT  
Kaneohe, HI

Testimony In Support of HB444 HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions)

To: Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee.  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice-chair  
Members: Senator Robert Bunda, Senator Mike Gabbard, Senator Sam Slom

From: Kevyn Fong, Academy for Creative Media, University of Hawaii

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB444 HD1 as a private citizen.

I am here to encourage the Senators and Members to vote yes and pass HB444 HD1. I've barely begun my life outside of school and I'm already extremely saddened and disappointed in the way my community and country has tried to make me feel unequal to everyone else. In the U.S., don't we have the freedom to choose how we dress? Where we want to eat? What music to listen to? Don't we also have the same freedom to vote, go to fight in a war, or even find what religion we wish to belong? We do these things and actions because they are an expression of who we *are*. Upon these same principles, why am I not able to be free in whom I love?

I'm not here to give you statistics. I'm not here to tell you about my beliefs according to this situation. I'm here to tell you how your decisions affect me. I'm not supporting this bill solely for myself; to do that would be extremely selfish and would be taking a moral step backward. I'm supporting this bill for those who have tried to bring equality and for those in the future that should know that their government protects and grants them the same rights as everyone else.

As a person of color, I cannot hide who I am; and I do not want to hide who I love. This is the first testimony I have sent in to the government; ever. I now know my voice can be heard and with enough people who fight for the same things I believe in, I'm extremely passionate about this. Please just look at the other side for one moment, the side in support of HB444 HD1. we're here because we all want equal rights as everyone, the right to come into a union with whomever we please and feel necessary to live in a society where in the end, all we have is each other.

I urge you to make a change. And when you come to a decision, please think about the community. Think about your children, your grandchildren, your nieces and nephews, and think about how they would feel about you if you took away their right to enter into a relationship with a person they care about. You have more power than I do, a 20 year old 4<sup>th</sup> generation Asian-American male in college raised in a military household. My generation has been taught to make a change and we know now that in two decades, we will be in the position you are making decisions based off of our generations greatest achievements. Why not beat us to the punch and make the change starting now? I am asking you to take a step forward, because you won't go anywhere if you don't.

Kevyn Fong  
Academy for Creative Media, University of Hawaii  
956-9250

---

**From:** Joan Rich [joanrich@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:06 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Joan H. Rich in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government  
Operations

**Hearing Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the  
Auditorium

**Subject line:** Testimony of Joan H. Rich in Strong Support of  
H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. Hawaii prides itself on being the "Aloha State" -- a meaning I hope includes tolerance and acceptance and respect for all.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan H. Rich

3777 Pukalani Place

Honolulu, HI 96816

---

**From:** Stanford Brown [stanford.brown@riskresolutionpartners.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:07 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony strongly opposing HB 444 HD1

To: Senate Judiciary Committee,

Date and time of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)

Measure number: HB 444 HD 1

Subject: Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Hello my name is Stanford Brown and I live at 6770 Hawaii Kai Drive. I am strongly opposed to HB 444. In 1998 the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that the marriage in Hawaii should remain between one man and one woman. The reciprocal beneficiary law achieves the goal of providing benefit without giving same sex partners the legal right to marry. Traditional Marriages and families should not be undermined and this bill 444 will lead us in a direction you will not want to go.

Respectfully,

Stanford Brown

---

**From:** islevegan@gmail.com on behalf of Eric Barker [eric.barker@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:09 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Eric Barker in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

Another major inequality exists in matters involving a shared home or similar property, one partner is considered nothing more than a friend regarding access and decisions regarding that property. This is a big issue in boating at the state and privately owned marinas where only one partner can be on a waiting list for years as the same gender couple are not considered "betrothed", but instead as separate individuals. Waikiki Yacht Club is just one example that currently practices this discrimination.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eric Barker  
Student  
Honolulu, HI

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your time considering my testimony on the matter of HB 444, civil unions. I support civil unions in Hawaii because I see it as an acceptable compromise. House Bill 444 allows marriage to remain defined as it is now, but affords my partner and me the rights we desire. I do not support gay marriage because I believe that marriage is a religious sacrament and central to religious beliefs and tenets. This should not prevent the State from granting gay couples the same rights afforded to married men and women under state law.

In my opinion passage of HB 444 would strengthen the argument against gay marriage because it would turn it into a fight of semantics. With civil unions in place proponents of gay marriage could no longer argue that the rights desired by homosexual couples were being denied whatever those rights may be. Under current state law the argument is still valid, but HB 444 would mean that the only difference is what the state calls it.

In summary, I support, and I hope you will too, HB 444 because it is an acceptable compromise on the issue. Neither the proponents nor the opponents of gay marriage will be happy with HB 444 passing, but it will those of us in the middle the rights we desire while preserving marriage as being between one man and one woman. Again, I thank you for your time and humbly ask for your support.

Sincerely,  
Brad Lee Hamasaki

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**From:** MILES MILLER [mpm01@live.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:57 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** CIVIL UNIONS HB 444 HD1

i am strongly opposed to this bill. marriage is meant to be between man and woman as stated in the bible.

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Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary Government Operations Committee:

My name is Marty Guerriero. I come to you from Maui to speak to you as the President of Both Sides Now and as a concerned citizen.

Formed in 1981, Both Sides Now is an organization dedicated to the education and celebration of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community and their many friends and supporters on Maui. It is our opinion that all people should have the right to the equality afforded by Civil Unions no matter what their sexual orientation. This country was founded on the principle that we are all created equal. House Bill 444 is a recognition of and agreement with that foundation of America.

I have many gay and lesbian friends who have lived their lives as partners. Like any relationship, they have gone through good times and bad, but they have one thing that holds them together. That is their love for one another.

By having House Bill 444 pass, these partners will have the same legal rights as any couple in Hawaii. I ask you to give equal rights to all the people of this State. I ask for myself and I ask for my friends.

Rob Boettner and Don Bradstord committed for 24 years  
Michael Waddell and Llevellyn Lightsey committed for 35 years  
Jim and Leon committed for 31 years  
Scott Dean and Ron Calvert committed for 32 years  
Steve Hansen and Karl Hensel committed for 14 years  
William and Jerome committed for 12 years  
Sky Lewis and Evan Foster committed for 10 years  
Gary Canier and Owen Howson committed for 20 years  
Martin and Alfred committed for 36 years  
Patrick and Peter committed for 13 years  
Steven Kruey and John Barberick committed for 10 years  
Richard Anderson and John Lyle committed for 12 years  
Gerald (Stephan) and Richard, committed for 21 years  
Timothy Grisier and H. Michael Fong committed for 12 years  
Jose Serano and Chris Larwood committed for 7 years  
Mark Jesuroga and Dennis Chamberlian for 13 years  
Janet and Jane committed for 41 years  
Caron Barrett and Deborah Vial committed for 10 years

Joseph Bella (age 26) and Michael Percello (age 25) committed for 8 years

We thank you for your attention to this matter and ask you to vote YES on House Bill 444.

Martin Guerriero  
President  
Both Sides Now

---

**From:** Shari T [sharit121@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:16 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
**Hearing Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Auditorium  
**Re:** Testimony of Shari M. Tsukayama in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shari M. Tsukayama  
Citizen  
PO Box 893391  
Mililani, Hawaii 96789

**TO: Senate Judiciary Committee**

**FR: Daniel Kaneshiro**

**RE: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

**Measure Number HB 444 HD1**

**Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)**

Thank you, Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Dwight Takamine and distinguished members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, for giving me the opportunity to share my perspective with you in strong opposition to HB 444 HD1.

For those against this measure, thank you for your support. For those in favor of this measure, thank you for listening to a couple of perspectives that you can consider in your final decision. Although you may have your initial position, I pray that the testimony you hear today will provide you a new understanding that the people that you represent have valid concerns and positions.

Although I believe in God and the spiritual perspective of marriage being confined to one man and one woman, I would like to focus my testimony to two other basic positions.

First, adoption of children into these “unions” will fundamentally destroy the virtues of the traditional family structure. Their lives will begin with confusion and their lack of understanding of what are the true family values will follow them for the rest of their lives. This confusion will contribute to more social issues due to the maladjusted children population it would create.

Here’s something closer to home. What would you say to your own son that with his male partner wants to adopt a young girl? Or what if they wanted to adopt a young boy? I don’t have to elaborate further as you can understand the many developmental and social issues that would create an unstable family life.

Second, the proponents constantly forward the position that this bill is one of civil rights and equality for all people. If this posture would hold for all people seeking “civil rights and equality”, then how do we address future requests for those that choose a life of polygamy – which is against the law. How do we address future requests from those that choose any alternative lifestyles or choose to live outside the law?

If we say yes now and say no later for other groups, aren’t we discriminating? If this position of “civil rights and equality for all people” does have limits of applicability, we need to avoid now laying precedent for a position that does not have general application.

I humbly request that you consider the flood of public sentiment against this bill and fairly represent the majority voice of the people – the people that are not only your constituents, but also are your family, friends, neighbors, and associates.

Mahalo and I pray God’s wisdom for you in this future changing decision.

---

**From:** Shannon K Smith [shannon.smith@pruhawaii.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:32 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of shannon smithin Strong Support of H.B.

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing

Date/Time:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

Re: Testimony of \_\_\_\_\_ in Strong Support of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair  
Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government  
Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to  
Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and  
responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those  
they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward  
ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment  
under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and  
gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444,  
HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several  
significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not  
permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court  
proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex  
couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no  
provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or  
for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would  
provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to  
same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure  
that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1  
represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge  
you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully  
submitted,  
Shannon smith  
Real estate agent  
614 kapahulu

---

**From:** Robert S.Gross [rgmvcc@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:21 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony

Dear members of the Senate JGO Committee--

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 444 Relating to the establishment of Civil Unions.

You were elected to serve the people's will. And the people's will has been explicitly stated on this issue when in 1998 a clear majority voted to retain the "one man-one woman" definition of marriage that has held for millennia.

This is not an issue of equality, as even those in favor of the bill will acknowledge that the legal rights purportedly denied them are already available to same-sex couples through Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. No, be assured that the aim of this bill is to redefine marriage to include not only same-sex couples but also any other behavior-based group that desires civil approval of their lifestyle choice. Can others who practice currently unacceptable sex-based behavior be far behind in their demand for "equal rights" and for their right to "marry" the ones with whom they practice their preferred behavior?

This bill is a legislative endorsement of sex-partner civil unions as on par with sex-partner marriage. Please do not shred the definition of marriage to include any people who practice sexually-based behavior who express their desire to call themselves "married".

Again, you have a solemn responsibility to serve your constituents and the generations to come in the decisions you make. Please vote NO on HB444 HD1, as it seeks to establish a ruinous precedent in granting special legal protection and benefits based on sexual preferences and behaviors.

Thank you,

Rob Gross

---

**From:** gpshima@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:19 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB444HD1

February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

From: Glenn Shimabukuro  
98-500-4 Kaonohi St.  
Aiea, HI 96701

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

I am strongly opposed to HB444 HD1.

Sincerely,

Glenn Shimabukuro

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**From:** mauidivemaster@gmail.com on behalf of Maui Sales [mauisales@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:31 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB 444

Aloha Senators,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify in writing in support of HB 444. My partner of 20 years and I face almost daily discrimination in Hawaii in the areas of employment, employee benefits, obtaining medical and dental services (we don't treat people that are gay or that we suspect are gay) not to mention the disturbance of our peace by mean spirited bigots who feel that there are no protections for gay members of society in Hawaii.

This bill is not about any one trying to get married in a church or adopting children, it's about having full and equal civil rights as do all citizens of Hawaii. The small but vocal right wing religious groups have engaged in down right hateful anti- HB 444 activities so this should be your first indication that discrimination against gay and lesbian citizens is real and a daily occurrence.

HB 444 will be good for tourism to Hawaii and will create much needed jobs to support gay and lesbian tourists.

Even the Kingdom of Hawaii Constitution of 20 August 1864 gave full and equal rights to all the citizens and visitors to the Kingdom, how could His Majesty Kamehameha V be 160 years ahead of his time on civil rights?

Article 1 of the Kingdom of Hawaii Constitution states " God hath endowed ALL men with certain inalienable Rights, among which are life, liberty, and the right of acquiring, possessing and protecting property and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness".

Article 2 of the Kingdom of Hawaii Constitution stated " All men are free to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, but this sacred privilege hereby secured, shall NOT be so construed as to justify acts of licentiousness, or practices inconsistent with the peace or safety of the Kingdom".

Article 13 - The King conducts His Government for the common good; and not for the profit, honor, or "private interest of any one man, family, or class of men among His subjects" So you as legislators should put your personal religious beliefs aside and do what is proper for the common good of "all" Hawaiian citizens.

Article 14 - Each member of society has a right to be protected by it, in the enjoyment of his life, liberty, and property".

So in closing Hawaii extended civil rights to all it's citizens since the mid 1800's so we need to get back on track and approve HB 444 so all Hawaii citizens have equal and full rights and protection under the law.

Sincerely,

Randy Fressle  
Kula, Hawaii



---

**From:** K.M. Kelly [stardance@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:27 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Kathleen Kelly in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Kelly  
545A Keolu Drive  
Kailua Hi 96734

---

**From:** Thomas [dsluguy14@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:23 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Thomas Ayers in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thomas Ayers  
Student  
91-1534 Halahua Street  
Kapolei, HI 96707

Thomas Ayers  
[dsluguy14@yahoo.com](mailto:dsluguy14@yahoo.com)

---

**From:** Holm, Richard (DSCPP) [richard.holm@dla.mil]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:27 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 Testimony

My name is Richard Holm and I am saying vote NO on HB 444 it is a smoke screen for gay marriage and a abomination to God. If this bill is passed it will further dissolve the foundation of the laws that our forefathers built this country on the Rock of God's WORD. The downward spiral in which our country has been headed since the 60's is moving at a neck breaking speed toward total separation from God. If it were not for the godly folks who still remain in America and stand in the gap and make up the hedge, America would have fallen a long time ago. I'm calling on the Hawaii appointed officials to stand for righteousness and vote NO on HB 444.

Respectfully,

Richard Holm

---

**From:** Cy Yamamoto [cglyama@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:25 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to bill HB444 HD1

**Testifier: Cy Yamamoto**

**Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**

**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009**

**Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.**

**Hearing Location: Auditorium**

**DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE,**

**Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.**

**WITH ALOHA,**

**Cy Yamamoto**

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My name is Eva Gallegos and I support civil unions and the important protections they provide for families in Hawaii. Please vote yes on HB444 HD1. This bill is an important step for Hawaii to end discrimination and support all of its citizens.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

Civil Union involves two adults making a commitment to share life together and having it recognized by the State.

I have been in a committed relationship for 8 years and we have made Hawaii our home. We are both professional registered nurses and are strong supporters of people's rights. As nurses, the Code of Ethics is our guiding light in our practice. There are nine Codes that we follow and I will only read the first one because it speaks volumes about the rights of people. It states: the nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.

I have promised to care and advocate for you and your family with the utmost dignity and respect no matter who you are.

However, without the passage of HB444, as a nurse, I am forced to discriminate against same-sex couples because legally, I cannot release information to the same-sex partner in the event one partner is hospitalized. What's more ironic is that this situation applies to me and my partner, I have vowed to take care you (any one of you) without prejudice or discrimination, yet if I am hospitalized, my partner will not be acknowledged as my immediate family. She will be disrespected, she will be discriminated against and she will be restricted from knowing about my condition.

Yes, we could register as "Reciprocal Beneficiaries," in the state of hawaii, but those rights are limited. We are still denied our right to share property when purchased jointly, claim health insurance benefits or file joint state tax returns.

I am being denied my civil rights by politicians who put forth their own personal agenda of discrimination against same-sex couples. They state that civil union is a threat to traditional marriage, but lack a legitimate explanation of "how" same-sex marriage threatens traditional-marriage. For example, Senator Gabbard made a perverted comment on the local news by attempting to explain his reason why he does not support HB444, he said, "What you do in the privacy of your bedroom, that's your business," he said. "When you start teaching to our keiki that these relationships are on equal basis as heterosexual marriage then we're opposed to it."

My question is, what should we teach our keiki today about same-sex couples. Nothing? Should we implement the same motto as the Military by "Don't Ask, Don't Tell?" Should adults 'dare' to talk to their keiki about same-sex couples or should they let them find out for themselves or

worse, from their friends? Do children even care about this social issue at their stage in development?

Yes, these are rhetorical questions, but each family has the freedom to choose how they will explain civil injustices, social discrimination or political prejudices to their children. It is not the place or business of distorted-thinking Senators, who equate civil union with "bedroom activities" to guide people toward inaccurate information or to instill fear by using innuendos that mislead parents into thinking civil union is an unacceptable behavior.

My brother and sisters are all happily married and have children. My family and friends all know and accept me for who I am. I am open and honest about my lifestyle. They are not ashamed to introduce me and my partner to their friends.

If I were to die tomorrow, I am confident they would continue my fight for civil union and not vote against same-sex marriage because they are TRULY proud of who I am and what I stand for.

On the opposite spectrum, House Member Lynn Finnegan gave a moving confession about her lesbian sister. She seemed more saddened about her sister's lifestyle than about losing her to cancer. Her speech was heartfelt, and after listening to her story, I found it difficult to understand why she opposed same-sex marriages. Unless she used her personal experience to gain credibility and momentum to oppose HB444.

Please, Senators, set aside your own personal agenda and realize that you can put an end same-sex discrimination.

Civil union is not a threat to the sanctity of traditional marriage.  
The institution of marriage is alive, strong and doing well.

Today, tomorrow and forever, the gay, lesbian and transgendered community will always be a part of the American culture and every culture. We are everywhere.

As a citizen, tax payer, a professional nurse and believer in God, I'm here today, to ask each of you, to support HB444 so that my civil rights can be respected on the same level that I respect yours.

Mahalo.

---

**From:** Travis Idol [traviswidol@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 8:40 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony in support of HB 444 HD1

Relating to HB 444 HD 1  
Testifying in Support

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 444 HD1, the bill to allow for civil unions among same-sex couples. This bill is an enormous step toward equal rights and equal treatment for all Hawaii and US citizens. It is also a bill that recognizes the changing attitudes throughout America and the growing consensus among the judiciary that equal protection under the law means extending to same-sex couples the rights and responsibilities provided for in civil unions.

Despite what some opponents may claim, allowing same-sex couples to enter into a civil union in no way infringes on the religious beliefs of any person or group. It also in no way threatens or degrades marriage as traditionally defined among opposite-sex couples. There are churches in our community that already perform marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples that they recognize and honor within their own tradition. Each community of faith has the right to recognize marriage and partnership, however they define it. This is a separate issue from whether the state should recognize a civil union between two consenting adults. It is also a separate issue from the Constitutional Amendment allowing the State to define "marriage". Marriage is properly a religious sacrament that should have no bearing on how the state chooses to recognize civil unions between consenting adults.

This bill is needed to support the homosexual community. Our gay friends and family members have a harder time obtaining health and life insurance for their partners and children. They pay more in taxes. If any of them chooses to adopt a child, he or she has a much harder time going through the process because he or she is considered to be a single parent. Plus, that child has fewer rights than a child born of, or adopted by, same-sex couples.

Simply put, this is not right. It's not fair or just. The courts are increasingly finding this to be the case and demanding, as in California and earlier in Hawaii, that the rights and responsibilities of civil unions cannot be denied to individuals by the state because of their sexual orientation.

As a married straight man who is afforded all the benefits of a state-recognized marriage, I do not feel that allowing civil unions for same-sex couples would in any way detract from, or lessen, the value or importance of my marriage. Indeed, the emotional and financial support of my marriage has been instrumental to my health and success. I can only believe that extending this to same-sex couples would help them similarly, which would be of great benefit to our society, overall.

I urge you to support HB 444 HD1. Hawaii may be a small state in the middle of the Pacific, but now as we approach our 50th anniversary as a state, we can become among the leaders of the country in extending full civil rights and truly full citizenship to our gay friends and family, neighbors and co-workers, and even our elected officials and policy makers by legalizing civil unions for same-sex couples.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Travis Idol

2640 Dole St. C-135  
Honolulu, HI 96822



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**From:** Agcaoili, Rogelio B Jr CIV USA NGB [gel.agcaoili@us.army.mil]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 8:42 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** garret@hopechapelkapolei.org  
**Subject:** Strongly opposing Same Sex Marriage HB 444

Testifier: Rogelio B. Agcaoili Jr.

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

I Rogelio B. Agcaoili Jr., Strongly oppose HB 444 HD 1 relating to Civil Unions. Thank you for allowing me to be heard. Aloha, and have a great day.

Respectfully ,

Mr. Agcaoili

RE: Oppose HB 444

Dear Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to strongly express my opposition to HB44 which will extend the same rights and benefits to partners in a civil union. This bill is insulting and demeaning to the true meaning of marriage. The purpose of marriage is to procreate and is a union between a man and a woman. It is not to gain benefits from the government or any other entities. I strongly urge you not to pass HB444.

Respectfully yours,  
Ronald Pascua  
94-462 Kahuanani Street  
Waipahu, Hi 96797  
808-258-5168

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**From:** Solomon Nahina [solisa77@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:46 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION ON ALL CIVIL UNION BILLS & ALL DEATH WITH DIGNITY BILLS

Aloha to All,

My name is Solomon K. Nahina. I live on Koolina St. out in Waianae. I want all respective Representatives and Senators in the State of Hawaii to know that, I, along with thousands of citizens on the Leeward Coast, OPPOSE ALL BILLS RELATED TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444, SB 458, HB 878) INCLUDING THE DEATH WITH DIGNITY BILL (HB 806, HB 587).

Please protect TRADITIONAL Marriage and say "NO" to CIVIL UNIONS. Back in 1998, the People of Hawaii have already spoken OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST SAME-SEX MARRIAGE. It is disappointing and somewhat disturbing to know that the Health Committee is not going to hear these bills.

Much Mahalo for all your Kokua.

Michele M. Golojuch  
92-954 Makakilo Dr. #71  
Kapolei, HI 96707  
672-9050

February 23, 2009

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hawaii State Senate  
State Capitol - Auditorium  
415 South Beretania Street

RE: HB 444 HD 1 - Civil Rights - STRONG Support

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and committee members,

In January 1996, I wrote my very first testimony for capitol business ever. I was asking for the House's support of a bill that would support my brother, Michael's civil rights so that he could have the equal marriage rights. It is unbelievable that after all these years, I'm still writing testimony asking for support for my brother's equal Civil Rights, but instead of marriage he now has to settle for Civil Unions.

I know in the US Constitution it states that we all have equal rights. My brother and my other GLBTIQ friends deserve the same rights I have to love the person I choose to marry. Anything less is discrimination.

Let's get the records and laws in line with the US Constitution and pass HB 444 HD 1 so that at least my brother will have the same rights, benefits and responsibilities that I have because I'm an US citizen.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

*M. M. Golojuch*

Michele M. Golojuch

OPPOSE TO THE "CIVIL UNIONS" BILL  
(HB 444 HD1)

HEARING IN THE SENATE JUDICIARY AND  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE (JGC)

TUES. FEB. 24, 2009 9:00 A.M.

FROM:

MARCELLA U. VIERRA  
GRACE REDEMPTION MINISTRIES  
P.O. BOX 4104 KANE OHE HI, 96744

TO:

SEN. BRIAN TANEUCH (CHAIR)

I'm TRULY TROUBLE AND OPPOSE THE  
"CIVIL UNIONS" BILL (HB 444 HD1) "SAME-  
SEX MARRIAGE" — THIS WOULD BE A DOWN-  
WARD SPIRAL "FALL" OF MAN IN CORRUPT  
MORAL CONDUCT. OUR CONSTITUTION AMEN-  
DMENT THAT DEFINED MARRIAGE AS BE-  
TWEEN ONE MAN & ONE WOMEN. LETS BUILD  
OUR NATION AND NOT TEAR DOWN PURE,  
FREE POLITICAL RIGHTS & OBLIGATIONS:  
TO LEGAL PROCEEDINGS IN CONNECTION  
WITH PRIVATE. (MARCELLA U. VIERRA)  
Marcella U. Vierra

February 23, 2009

Gary Murakami  
PO Box 1475  
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair

**RE: STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444**

Dear Senator Taniguchi,

I am sending this fax to express my opposition to **Civil Union Bill # 444**. Just a reminder that the people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same sex marriage therefore, I would like to encourage you to protect traditional marriage and say "NO" to civil unions.

Mahalo,



Gary Murakami

James A. Mitchell  
98-941 Moanalua Road, #101  
Aiea, HI 96701

February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

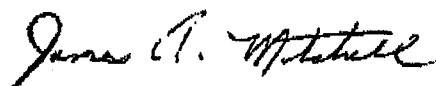
RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444

Dear Senators,

My heart and prayers go out to the people you think HB 444 will help and protect. I am repentful for the way much of society has treated so called "gays and lesbians". But to legalize this life-style is to make a mockery out of the very institution that has sustained some 82 civilizations through the ages, traditional marriage, and to legitimize the very agent that was at the root of their destruction, the decay of the family unit.

**Please vote "NO" on HB 444 because a "NO" vote is a vote to save the family, to save our children, even to save our world.**

Sincerely,



James A. Mitchell

**EPOXY RESTORATION LLC**

1030 AULOA ROAD

KAILUA, HAWAII 96734-4605

808-230-8673 FAX: 808-230-8671 Website: epoxy.net.com email: don@epoxy.net.com  
BC-23853 GENERAL CONTRACTOR, MASONS, WATERPROOFERS**CORRESPONDENCE****Date:** 2/22/2009**Project:****To:** Senate Sergeant-At-Arms  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813Reference Hearing on House Bill 444  
Hearing Tuesday 9:30 AM 2/24/2009  
Senate Judicial Committee

Dear Chairwoman Colleen Hanabusa:

As a voter and businessman in Kailua I am very concerned about passing house bill 444 granting state sanctioned Civil Unions.

As a business owner I provide many benefits to my employees. Some of these can extend to spouses and family members. Civil Unions appear to be too broad, granting marital like status to nearly any two people who want to form a civil union. This could include friends, room mates, business partners and people wanting to get citizenship in the U.S. I would have no legal ground to decipher the validity of these arrangements and would have to provide benefits for any such union.

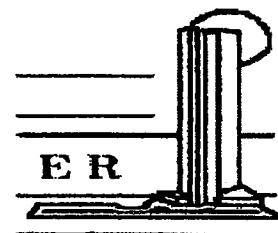
On a societal note I believe it would encourage couples into temporary unions rather than the life long intended relationship of marriage. I believe these unions will come and go, clogging the courts with broken up relationships and leaving employers, who are often burdened with enforcing the decisions of the court. Believe me, garnished wages, because of dissolved relationships, is a big administrative burden to employers.

I know this bill was formulated out of a want to seem fair to homosexual couples. However, the ramifications goes far beyond the realm of the homosexual community. I believe the Hawaii voters have indicated they only want to recognize the now standing institution of marriage.

Sincerely,



Don Fernandez, President





**FROM: Ezra Kung**  
**2920 Ala Ilima St., Honolulu, HI 96818**

**DATE: February 23, 2009**

**TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL  
AUDITORIUM**

**FOR HB 444, HD1**

**IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

**ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS:**

**In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.**

**I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.**

**Thank you,**

*Ezra Kung*

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members  
Roland E. Maurer  
123 D Maunalua Avenue  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821  
808-395-9527

Re: HB-444--PLEASE VOTE NO

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to use your vote on HB 444 to vigorously oppose civil unions. The people of Hawaii have spoken clearly about this in 1998, affirming that a clear majority of Hawaii residents believe that marriage should remain between one man and one woman. We do not need this new law to re-open divisive and controversial battle already settled by the people.

You are aware that we already have a reciprocal beneficiary law, passed in 1997. HB 444 is unnecessary to protect rights, and Civil unions will simply be a tool to re-define marriage.

Data is irrefutable: children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and a dad. We must think of our keiki, and not indulge in selfish catering to the desires of a small sector of adults by rewriting our most basic marriage laws.

Please do the right thing and oppose this with your voice and your vote. Mahalo for your consideration of your constituencies.

Mahalo,



Roland E. Maurer

Testimony in Support of HB444HD1  
Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee: Senator Bunda, Senator Nishihara, Senator Gabbard,  
Senator Slom

From: Jessica Torres (Name)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am in strong support of HB444HD1, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of marriage to partners in a civil union.

Date: 2/19/09

  
(Signature)

99.015 Lohia Pl. A109 HI, 96701  
(Address)

Testimony in Support of HB444HD1  
Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee: Senator Bunda, Senator Nishihara, Senator Gabbard,  
Senator Slom

From: Leilani Ann deCastro (Name)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am in strong support of HB444HD1, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of marriage to partners in a civil union.

Date: 2/19/09

Leilani Ann deCastro  
(Signature)

98-1637 Kiawe St. Aiea, HI 96701  
(Address)

Testimony in Support of HB444HD1  
Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee: Senator Bunda, Senator Nishihara, Senator Gabbard,  
Senator Slom

From: Kassandra Ozol (Name)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am in strong support of HB444HD1, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of marriage to partners in a civil union.

Date: 02/16/09

Kassandra Ozol  
(Signature)

2009 ELUMBER ST. HONOLULU HI, 96819  
(Address)

Testimony in Support of HB444HD1  
Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee: Senator Bunda, Senator Nishihara, Senator Gabbard,  
Senator Slom

From: Petra A. Dooa (Name)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am in strong support of HB444HD1, which extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of marriage to partners in a civil union.

Date: 2/18/09

Petra A. Dooa  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

2003 Bluwana St Honolulu, HI 96819  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

**Testifier: Ayman El-Swaify**  
**Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**  
**Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**  
**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009**  
**Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.**  
**Hearing Location: Auditorium**

### **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

**This bill is being proposed despite the prior expressed will of the people of the State of Hawaii to define marriage between one man and one woman and the existence of a 1997 Reciprocity bill, which already provides benefits previously reserved for spouses to those prohibited from marrying.**

**So, then, why this bill? It is a deliberate step in putting the legal stamp of approval on homosexuality and imposing it with force throughout the various social and political institutions of a society that would never accept it otherwise. It is about mandating each person's acceptance of homosexuality as a normal lifestyle.**

**As the example of Massachusetts illustrates, this is not "a benign Eccentricity that won't affect the average person". It will have negative impacts on adoption, individual religious rights, religious organizations, parental rights, health care providers, families and children, schools; virtually all societal institutions.**

**Homosexuality is not an innate part of human beings as are age, race and gender. It is a lifestyle choice. The human rights of someone choosing to live a homosexual lifestyle are already protected by current law. Marriage is a sacred act between opposite genders and thus simply should not be extended to same-gender couples.**

Testimony in Opposition to HB 444

Jerry W. Jordan  
Senate judiciary Committee  
02/24/2009 @ 9:00 AM  
Auditorium

Thank you for the opportunity to express my strong opposition to HB 444. I urge you to **NOT** clear HB 444 for full Senate action.

In my opinion the basic premise of HB 444 rests on a distinctly false interpretation of the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution and the Hawaii State Constitution. Whereas equal rights are guaranteed no matter a person's gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation, no such guarantee exists for the institution of marriage. Marriage is defined and sanctioned by the State as the union between one man and one woman, and **only** one man and one woman. In 1998, this concept was reaffirmed by the passage of a Constitutional Amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution by an overwhelming vote of the People of the State of Hawaii. The aforementioned Constitutional Amendment clarified in statute that marriage between one man and one woman is NOT equal to "same sex marriage" (or civil union, or whatever term is chosen). After all, if it walks like a duck and talks like a duck, it probably is a duck. Civil Unions are the same thing as Same Sex Marriages. The Legislature could better spend their valuable time by strengthening the existing Reciprocal Benefits Statute to assure appropriate privileges and "rights" provided to those relationships rather than spinning their wheels on civil union legislation that has been ill conceived and based on false premises. Additionally, re-focusing your attention on the real needs of family survival in this very difficult current economic situation would be appropriate.

Society retains an important stake in marriage since one of marriage's critical tenets is that of procreation and thus continuation of society and the human race. Such procreation is not possible in a union between two men or two women. Certain segments of the State's economy (e.g., tourism) would likely benefit from passage of HB 444; however, such passage would be at the potential expense of the moral fabric of our society and could lead down the path to "State Sanction" of polygamy and other socially repugnant relationships.

I strongly urge you to defeat HB 444 in Committee and to **NOT** clear the path for HB 444 to reach the full Senate.





Monday, February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members

Pastor Mike Stangel  
North Shore Christian Fellowship  
66-437 Kamehameha Highway  
Haleiwa, Hawaii 96712  
808-637-6225

**Re: HB-444 HD1--PLEASE VOTE NO**

Aloha!

I attended the rally yesterday at our State Capitol building. As I approached the building, I again saw that huge metal work of art, hanging in the front of the building, bearing our State Motto (in Hawaiian), "The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness." I concur wholeheartedly! I also believe the opposite is equally true: **"THE DEATH OF THE LAND IS GUARANTEED IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS."** Our own State motto, if not followed, will become an indictment against us!

Let's not kid ourselves. We all know there is an agenda behind this bill. This is just the first step towards legalizing Same Sex Marriage. I believe this goes completely against what Hawaii's founding fathers meant by the term "righteousness."

Please hear the will of Hawaii's people. Please search the scriptures and see: passing this bill would be a huge mistake. Please take a stand for traditional marriage, which is one man married to one woman.

Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,

Mike Stangel

*"May He grant you according to your heart's desire,  
and fulfill all your purpose," Psalm 20:4.*

Mike Stangel, Sr. Pastor  
North Shore Christian Fellowship  
66-437 Kamehameha Hwy. Ste 101-A  
Haleiwa, HI 96712  
Ph. 808•637-6225, Fax 808•637-0072  
Email: mikeinoffice@hawaii.rr.com

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**From:** Iris Maneafaiga [iris03@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:12 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

TESTIFIER: IRIS M. MANEFAIGA  
BILL NUMBER AND TITLE: HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS  
COMMITTEE: SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPEERATIONS  
HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2009  
HEARING TIME 9AM  
HEARING LOCATION: STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

DEAR COMMITTEE,

MY NAME IS IRIS MANEFAIGA, I AM 40 YEARS OLD BORN AND RAISED IN HONOLULU. I AM WRITING TO YOU TODAY TO BE A VOICE FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND THE SAKE OF HUMANITY. PLEASE KEEP THE DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE AS BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN.

THANK YOU,  
IRIS MANEFAIGA  
1764 HOOLEHUA ST.  
PEARL CITY, HI 96782

---

**From:** CHARLES LUCE [charlie\_in\_paradise@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:32 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** H.B. 444, HD1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charles Luce  
1720 Ala Moana Blvd #A208  
Honolulu, HI 96815

HB 444  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
February 24, 2009

Dear Senator,

My name is Cathy Thourson. I am a registered nurse. I have no problem working with gay co-workers or caring for gay patients in the same manner that I care for all my patients. I respect their right to choose a homosexual lifestyle.

I am also a mom. My daughter is 16. She is blessed with a mom and dad who love her and 2 older brothers. Her dad and I have been married for 26 years. Both sets of her grandparents have been married over 50 years on my side and over 60 years on her dad's side. Today she sits in the audience pondering a proposed radical restructuring of the traditional institution of marriage.

It does not seem that long ago that I was 16. In my day, I remember my shock and befuddlement that the word "gay" which I originally understood to mean "happy and cheerful" was changed to mean "homosexual". Interestingly, the original meaning has been abandoned as the latter has taken dominance.

It seems that the whole gay movement has been an evolution of redefining words, social standards, and now the institution of marriage. There is an inherent dishonesty in the reference of the bill to "civil unions" as if traditional marriage is not at stake. I wish to pose a few thoughts and questions in the matter.

Supporters of civil unions site *equality, love, fairness, and civil rights* as reasons why society should sanction their choice of cohabitation and radically revamp thousands of years of marriage tradition to a new definition, their own. Some even go so far as to claim a genetic component as a reason to justify this end. This being said, some questions can be fairly raised.

If "gayness" were found to have a genetic component, it stands to reason that families with one gay member would have a greater likelihood of another. Say a brother with a 'gay gene' fell in love with his brother (also with a gay gene) and they desired to have a civil union (ie. get married), why not? Since we are talking same-sex, no offspring are involved so there is no concern about genetic defects. If they love each other, why would anyone want to deny them the American dream to be happy? The same would go for 2 sisters in a lesbian relationship with each other. Why would any one in the civil union/same sex marriage camp be opposed to such a relationship? After all, two sisters cannot produce offspring with each other; **and if** the determining factors are "equality, love, fairness, and civil rights" **and if** they are 2 consenting adults, **and if** they are not 'hurting anyone', then who can stand as their judge and tell them otherwise or deny them their freedom? If a civil union advocate would stand opposed, would they not then be

justly labeled a *judgmental-incest-phobic-bigot*? (Oh the name-calling can get ugly!) After all, **equality for all** rules out any exceptions. If HB 444 is passed, Pandora's proverbial box is logically propped wide open to **every conceivable** possible union.

As Dr. C. Everette Koop and Francis Schaeffer wrote in the book, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*, "On a humanistic base, people drift along from generation to generation, and the morally unthinkable becomes the thinkable as the years move on."

Some of the "unthinkables" I fear will become the thinkable are as follows:

- Churches to perform same-sex marriages or face litigation
- Christian schools mandated to hire a percentage of gay teachers united in civil unions or face discrimination lawsuits
- Private adoption agencies, regardless of their religious convictions, to place children with gay couples
- Christian churches must hire gay "married" members to their pastoral staff
- All textbooks must be rewritten to redefine marriage
- Marriage retreats must include gay couples
- Church valentine dinners must accommodate gay couples
- Photographers, regardless their convictions, must shoot gay weddings
- Pastors would be prohibited from speaking on scriptures which refer to homosexuality as a sin
- Bibles would be rewritten to eliminate any negative references to homosexual practices
- High school homecoming courts must include lesbian and homosexual couples so as to represent civil unions and not to discriminate one as better
- Sex ed classes in school to provide instruction on lesbian and male to male sex
- School students to have assembly speakers touting the benefits of same sex unions
- Trans-gendered, bisexual, polygamous, incestuous same sex unions granted the same status as same-sex marriage
- The original meaning of traditional marriage obsolete
- 'hate crimes' penalties imposed on persons voicing opposition to same sex practices

These "unthinkables of today" could become the "norms of tomorrow". I hope the senators have the wisdom to forsee what lies down this path of relativism and heed the warnings of Koop and Schaeffer. We must have overriding principles or we will surely "slide into each new thinking without a jolt." I respectfully ask you senators to *preserve traditional marriage and vote NO on HR 444*.

Cathy Thourson  
dafisheye@gmail.com

---

**From:** Daniel Colton [dicolton@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:37 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Regarding Bill 444 Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha Senators,

Thank you for giving a moments pause to read my email communique with you.  
I live in Makiki and I wanted to voice my opinion with you regarding bill 444.

It would please me if this bill was not passed unless it had the direct voice of the people. The matter is delicate and many people have very strong emotions invested in this matter. We would all like to proclaim our individual positions on this delicate matter.

I do not feel that my opinion or the opinion of other constituents was heard in the House of Representatives.

Please do not let a bill get signed into law when the bill affects very personal views of so many involved individuals.

Thank you very much for giving your consideration to what I have said.

Daniel Colton  
1146 Alohi Way,  
Honolulu HI, 96814  
[dicolton@gmail.com](mailto:dicolton@gmail.com)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Aloha!

Mahalo for the opportunity to present my testimony before this committee. My name is Joseph Savino and I want to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

My partner and I have been together for 6 years. I am currently employed by the State of Hawaii and my partner works in the hotel industry. As a result of us not having legal recognition as a couple, there are over 1,100 rights, responsibilities, and privileges that we lose out on that legally married people get to enjoy. Does that sound fair? I am pleased that the HGEA also SUPPORTS this bill.

This unequal treatment that me and my partner endure is unfair and unjust. How would you feel if you or one of your family members was treated in this manner? Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. This is NOT a marriage bill! It is an equality bill. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many do to discrimination. It is sad that in this day and age people are still discriminated against because of their sexual preference.

I did NOT choose to be gay, I was born this way, just as people do not choose their race or where they are born.

I humbly ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Joseph A. Savino  
PO BOX 390  
Kaumakani, HI 96747

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**From:** Kevin O'GradyEsquire [KevinOGradyEsquire@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:35 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil Unions HB 444

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee,

I urge you to vote no on this measure. We are all bound by the same limitations in marriage. A man cannot marry his close relative, a child, an incompetent person, an animal, or three women, no matter how much he may say he loves them. It is not logical, right or fair to equate homosexual relationships and the radical push toward homosexual marriage with the prohibitions of the past with regard to men and women of different races. A man cannot marry anyone he wants because of the limitations I stated above. In the past a man could not marry a woman he could otherwise marry solely because of her race. That prohibition has been eliminated. But the concept of marriage, that is a husband and a wife, of appropriate age, competent and only one at a time, has been the standard for mankind. Even polygamy had the right genders involved. This bill is essentially an end run around the constitutional amendment passed by the people of the state of Hawaii. Please vote no.

Sincerely,

Kevin O'Grady, Esquire.

The Law Office of Kevin O'Grady, LLC  
1136 Union Mall, Suite 704  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Telephone 808-521-3367  
Facsimile 808-521-3369

[WWW.CriminalAndMilitaryDefenseHawaii.com](http://WWW.CriminalAndMilitaryDefenseHawaii.com)

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**From:** jharuki@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:36 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Julie Haruki in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Haruki  
Kama'aina  
710 Lunalilo St #101  
Honolulu, HI 96813

---

**From:** Daniel Suthers [dan\_suthers@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:39 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Daniel Suthers  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions

Please accept the following testimony concerning HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions, since I am unable to attend on Tuesday morning.

**Name:** Daniel D. Suthers  
**Occupation:** Professor, University of Hawaii at Manoa  
(Testifying as a private citizen, not representing UH)  
**Measure:** HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions  
**Date/time of hearing:** February 24, 2009 at 9:00 am.  
**Committee:** Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee

I favor passage of HB 444 HD1 for the following reasons. The United States is based on the principle of equality for all. At its founding, this principle was not fully realized, as (for example) women could not vote and slavery was permitted. The story of the history of our country is in large part the story of fuller realization of equality in rights. Extension of equal rights to civil unions between any consenting adults regardless of gender is a natural continuation of the realization of the ideal society towards which we strive. I believe that the state of Hawai'i holds similar values as well.

Additionally, restriction of the benefits of adult unions to conventional concepts of marriage as being between a man and a woman that have their roots in religious beliefs is a violation of the separation of church and state.

To personalize the story, the most brilliant Ph.D. student I have had the privilege of working with to date happens to be in a long term "gay" relationship, which he acknowledges openly and without apology. This couple has greater commitment to a stable family than we sometimes see in mixed-gender couples. To deny life-long partners such as them the benefits that we give others is to deny them basic rights that the rest of us enjoy. Also, we only hurt ourselves if we drive skilled people such as these out of the state.

Dan Suthers

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:41 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** dbentz@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Donald L. Bentz  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 87-1962J Pakeke Street Waianae, HI 96792  
Phone: 808-888-5657  
E-mail: [dbentz@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:dbentz@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

First, I thank this esteemed body for the opportunity. My name is Donald L Bentz and I am here to express my strong support for HB444 HD1 - Civil Unions.

No current issue touches core issues set forth by our founding fathers and the basic principles guaranteed by the Constitution than the legislation before you today.

This great nation was forged on the noble concept that all men are created equal.

All men.

All equal.

No exceptions.

But for more than two centuries, we, as a society, have denied that promise to a select few, singling them out to be intentionally denied fundamental rights and responsibilities all other Americans take for granted.

This is discrimination in its purest form and spits on hollowed vision that birthed this nation. I cannot fathom how any American can willingly say to their neighbor, "you do not deserve the same rights and protections as me."

A vote against civil unions endorses, encourages and continues this blatant discrimination against one class of our citizenry.

As does putting it to a public vote.

Allowing the majority to decide which "men" of "all men" should be allowed which rights and privileges afforded by government is a bastardization of "all men are created equal."

I shudder to think where this nation would be if Lincoln decided to put slavery to a vote in the 1860s. Or if Wilson put women's suffrage to the voters in 1920. Or if Kennedy put civil

rights to the voters in 1964. It is up to our government to ensure that all its people are treated equally, not the electorate.

A cornerstone of our nation has also been religious freedom. State-sanctioned religion was the main impetus that started this nation and opponents of civil unions are trampling upon the sacred concept, attempting to force their religion's values on the entire state while ignoring the many faiths that embrace the equality civil unions offer.

Civil unions are a civil matter that corrects an injustice while allowing all Hawaii's many faiths to continue the traditions and customs they hold dear as HB444 does not affect any religious ceremonies or practices.

How simple can it be? Make all men equal. Guarantee religious freedom.

I thank you for your consideration, urge you to take this next bold step forward and allow this session to be one that leaves a lasting legacy of equality for generations to come.

Sincerely,  
Donald L. Bentz

**From:** Loreen Akamine [akamine2525@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:37 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Loreen Akamine in Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

Testifier: Loreen Akamine  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. This bill would not define marriage appropriately to couples who support traditional marriage. In spite of this I am also writing on support and behalf of our children in Hawaii to be constructed to if the law should pass through the Department of Education which would confuse them in spite of parenting. Children are used to a parent of each gender, female and male, to understand family. I also do not think that it would be appropriate for the next generation to grow up in a society of mixed families as well as learning it in school. I understand that the Department of Education is trying to advance circumstances so that the children of Hawaii will get the best benefit but what would make it more beneficial is to understand a traditional marriage so that their perceptions shall not be confused on behalf of what society has to offer of different orientations. I also don't see why civil unions should get the same benefits as a regular marriage. I am also opposing the bill because I don't see why the diversity of America should have the same benefits as traditional marriages i.e. special treatment of an orientation. In spite of all this my main concern is how children will be taught in the future of the department of education in the near future as well as understanding family variables. Understanding family values is very important to children of the future. It's not so much a religious matter though that does have some say in opposing the bill. Passing this law would rise benefits of employers for health benefits as well. Issues that passing the bill will also bring up the following issues: 1) Negative impact on adoptions forcing the religious communities 2) Individual Religious Rights 3) Religious Organizations 4) Parental Rights 5) Health care providers 6) Families and Children. In 1998, over 70% of Hawaii has been against Same Sex Marriage. We urge you to use wisdom to confirm the best of interest of Hawaii's residents and their children. Civil Union is wrong to even take as children have a need to understand proper values of a marriage which is not of the same sex. Please understand I am not by any means against any orientation but we are trying to keep a tradition value here in the state of Hawaii and not mixed understandings of family value. It is important that children grow up in a healthy loving family. From our understanding it is that we are able to give them loving homes which shall benefit them later on in their years. In conclusion I ask that the committee reconsiders the bill and say NO to civil unions to keep the righteousness of our land. I believe on behalf of the residents of Hawaii that opposing the civil union bill should also be vetoed in spite of same sex couples being able to adopt children in a single court proceeding. Thank You for hearing my testimony.

Sincerely,  
Loreen Akamine  
Resident of Honolulu

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:01 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** ptLanelaHI@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Angela Colleen Gerona Ho  
Organization: Moanalua Gardens Missionary Church  
Address: 1401 Mahiole St Honolulu, HI 96819  
Phone: 8394002  
E-mail: [ptLanelaHI@aol.com](mailto:ptLanelaHI@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I strongly oppose HB444 & any bills related to civil unions, thus preserving the sanctity of marriage between man & wife as God ordained. As God appointed you to be leaders & stewards of His laws, you are accountable to Him & to Hawaii's people & their previous overwhelming, majority declaration against same-sex marriage. You are charged to serve justly, humbly, obediently w/"clean hands & pure hearts". We will ultimately answer to Jesus for each word & deed @ life's end. I pray that you will uphold His standards, the 10 commandments, so your final account will be our Lord's pleasure as He welcomes believers to everlasting life w/Him: "Well done, my good & faithful servant. Enter into your eternal rest".

Please listen to our pleadings & be aware of God's Word that promises "Greater is He in us (people of faith) than he (satan) that's in the world", that He's a God of Love & Justice too, that "w/God, all things are possible", that "He will turn the hearts of the fathers (parents, pastors, leaders) to the children (Hawaii's people) & the children's hearts to their fathers otherwise He'll come & curse our land", that He "knows the plans He has for us, plans not to harm us but to give us a future & a hope"---the lasting legacy we pass to next generations.

For true wisdom/deep understanding, insight & accurate discernment, I challenge you to read Proverbs in any Bible translation for really tough issues. God's Word is filled with truth--clarity, hope, agape. Accepting Jesus as Lord & Savior is blessed assurance of eternity w/Him

As a Christian woman loving God first, then a wife & mom blessed w/ 2 wonderful children & pet dog, also as a leader/mentor in Oahu's marketplace, a retired teacher & counselor of HI's children, an advocate for kids, elderly & families, a minister to women & as a prayer intercessor, I humbly ask for God's & your favor to defeat HB444 & other civil union bills. I'm in powerful prayer agreement w/many other faithful, God-fearing Hawaii people. May our Lord truly bless & keep you & your ohana. Thank you for this opportunity. Mahalo w/God's Aloha Spirit,

Gratefully & Respectfully Submitted,  
Angela Ho/Mrs. Chester Ho

---

**From:** elvanette silva [dutchess\_102744@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:13 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** I am against civil unions because.....

Genesis 2:18 The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him."

Genesis 2:21-24 So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken."

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

Elvanette Silva  
[dutchess\\_102744@yahoo.com](mailto:dutchess_102744@yahoo.com)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:40 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** mothdustz@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Rob O'Connor  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 576 Kuikahi Drive Wailuku, HI  
Phone: 808-250-2149  
E-mail: [mothdustz@yahoo.com](mailto:mothdustz@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:  
February 23, 2009

IN SUPPORT OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY - HB444HD1

I am a Hawaii citizen, living in Maui for 18 years. My grandfather, a Pearl Harbor submarine gunner, fought in WWII to defend Hawaii while under attack. My father and uncle witnessed the attack, and they with my grandmother were evacuated from the islands during the war. In defending our nation, my grandfather fulfilled his duty, believing in the righteousness of our country's systems. He would have hoped that his own grandson would inherit our constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the laws.

In 1998, Hawaii's Judge Chang ruled that I had the right to marry my loved-one. Then the clerks were prevented from issuing licenses until our Hawaii constitution was amended through political opposition. Through this amendment, a majority of voters took away my rights. This mean-spirited action, which catered largely to views supported by religious preferences, ought to have been disallowed for constitutional reasons. Minority rights ought to have been protected and preserved as the courts attempted to do, as Judge Chang ruled correctly. The politicians understood that, but quietly ignored acknowledging it. This experience was hurtful and very upsetting. Most people never even fully understood the actual argument - that it involved discrimination on the basis of sex. -that a woman is equally qualified as a man to fulfill the role of spouse to a woman.

In 2004 I flew to San Francisco and married my loved-one there at City Hall on a Tuesday morning. I shared my happiness afterward with my family as well as with my students and friends at school. Six months later my marriage was forcibly annulled by the California courts. That was very humiliating and depressing.

In 2008, the California Supreme Court approved same-sex marriage. Although the voters there later amended their constitution, as was done here in Hawaii, that action is being challenged in their courts right now. - Why? - BECAUSE A MAJORITY OF VOTERS IS NOT ALLOWED TO REMOVE CIVIL RIGHTS FROM A MINORITY GROUP, AND IN CALIFORNIA, THEY WILL NOT GET AWAY WITH IT. The truth will prevail eventually in California, and everywhere else, and then Hawaii will have to face up to the mistake made 10 years ago.



You can begin correcting the wrongful practices of Hawaii's past right now. Please restore my right to equal protection, so that I can finally live in peace and pridefully live up to the promise of America that my grandfather fought to preserve for everyone.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. O'Connor  
576 Kuikahi Drive  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

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**From:** Sharon Toyomura [masae626b@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:03 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony re HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Sharon M.S. Toyomura  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00am  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

"Civil Unions" is a euphemism for same-sex marriage. It is an attempt by same-sex marriage supporters to push their agenda on the people of Hawaii, who voted against it by a decisive margin in 1998. It is harmful in several ways: it legitimizes same-sex relationships, it opens the door to same-sex couples adopting children, it is the launching pad for another attempt to win not just "tolerance" for homosexuality but legitimacy. They see homosexuality as a positive alternative to heterosexuality. It isn't. If their parents had been homosexual, they wouldn't be here. In order to have children, they will always have to involve a member of the opposite sex. Unless the marriage is a threesome, their offspring will always be cheated out of living with both biological parents. Children need a mother and a father. Homosexual unions can imitate, but they can't duplicate the unity in diversity that is a heterosexual marriage.

As a public school counselor, it bothers me that some people think they are doing children a favor by saying "embrace your gayness" or "be proud you're gay": sometimes being gay is symptomatic of a traumatic sexual past or unhealthy family dynamics. I cringe at the thought of heterosexual young people experimenting with the gay lifestyle because it is touted as a legitimate, "normal" alternative. Many children will grow up confused and scarred. Once civil unions are legalized, pro-gay propaganda will proliferate and it will be difficult to reach out to these children, to steer them towards healthy heterosexuality without being called a homophobe or a bigot. Please vote no on HB 444 HD1.

Thank you and God bless you.

Sincerely,

Sharon Toyomura

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**From:** Rachel S. Orange [rachel@pd-hawaii.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:39 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB444

Senate Sergeant at Arms  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

For: Public Testimony Hearing on Tuesday, 2/24/09, Auditorium  
Re: Testimony in Strong Support for HB 444 - relating to Civil Unions  
From: Rachel S. Orange

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee. I strongly support HB 444 relating to civil unions.

Granting civil unions, with all the current benefits of marriage, to same-sex couples is simply the right thing to do. This is a basic civil rights issue and the time is long overdue for Hawai'i to offer equal rights to all of its citizens.

My husband and I have always supported civil unions as way to offer same-sex couple the benefits of marriage that we can enjoy. After attending a hearing on this topic two years ago and listening to testimony of others, it became clear to me that legal acknowledgment of a union is just as important for when that union may end. Same-sex couples and their children deserve the right to the support of the legal system when seeking child support or equitable division of property.

Our society has long recognized the special unions between two individuals that are bound by love. Let's get our collective heads out of the sand and acknowledge that that recognition should be allowed to same-sex couples as it has always been for opposite sex-couples.

Please vote in favor of HB 444. It is simply the right thing to do.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel S. Orange  
2457 Lamaku Pl  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
[rachel@pd-hawaii.com](mailto:rachel@pd-hawaii.com)  
265-1334

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Tara O'Neill and I am here to express my strong support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. At the heart of this bill is the belief that all people should be treated equally under the law and that our state Constitution serves to protect the economic and civil rights of all its citizens. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

For the past ten years, I served as a public school high-school and middle-school science teacher and recently became an Assistant Professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. While still teaching seventh grade science, in June 2008, my long-term partner and I held a private commitment ceremony, where we dedicated our lives to each other. As a sign of this commitment, we exchanged rings. It is important at this point for me to explain that I do not regularly wear jewelry, and the only "jewelry" I am know to wear at school is a Timex sports watch. Thus, when I returned to teach following our commitment ceremony, my commitment ring was noticed immediately by eagle-eyed seventh graders. Before I could finish explaining the class activity for the day, a student raised her hand and asked, "Did you get married?" I told her and the my students, "Not exactly but I will explain after class to those of you who are interested." And science class continued as planned.

When the students were dismissed, five elected to stay behind in an effort to get to the bottom of the marriage question. I explained that my partner and I had a commitment ceremony. To which a student asked, "Why didn't you get married?" I said that we did not get married because my partner is a woman and same-sex couples are not allowed to get married or have civil unions based on state and federal law. The five students were quiet for a moment and then one asked in thoughtful tone, "*Are you worth less than other couples?*" It is this student's response that has made the issues of civil unions in Hawaii central to my heart. While I was touched by how much love and support my

students showed me in their genuine joy for my happiness, they were upset that this was the first they had heard of my partner or my commitment to her and troubled at the idea that our love somehow counted for less.

I have had many students with two mothers, with gay and lesbian siblings, aunts or uncles, and students who identify themselves as gay and lesbian. The idea that my students question the worth of their gay parents' love and/or the value of themselves and their gay teachers, friends and family due to the lack of state and federal government action to uphold the civil rights of its gay and lesbian citizens brakes my heart.

The majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives support civil unions. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is *the* civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and send a clear message to my kind, thoughtful and confused students that the members of the gay and lesbian community that they love, admire and look-up to are not "less than" other couples.

I appreciate your thoughtful and careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Tara O'Neill, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
College of Education, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Home Address:  
3111 Pualei Circle  
Apt. 203  
Honolulu HI 96815

**Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations (JGO)**

**Hearing Date/Time: Tues., February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.**

**Place: Capitol Auditorium**

**Re: Testimony in STRONG Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am writing in STRONG support of HB444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. As a long term resident of Hawai'i, lesbian, Catholic, Social Worker, and a current student in the Master's of Social Work Program at University of Hawaii, I believe that the rights of the gay community have been long overdue. The purpose of HB444, HD1 is to instill equal rights and protection for domestic partnerships and should not be used to protect moral tradition. Tradition is a set of customs or beliefs taught by one generation to the next and I believe it to be unconstitutional if legislation holds a position on protecting these beliefs. Instead, I hope that JGO committee votes yes toward a movement that provides equal rights for same-sex partners and not undermine their rights for the protection of traditional religious beliefs.

Hawai'i has a rich history in the arena of protecting the rights of same-sex couples and I hope that Hawai'i continues to foster the journey of equality which began back in 1991.

Although it took six years, Hawai'i made social justice history by being the first state to mandate statewide domestic partnership benefits to same-sex couples through the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law (Act 383). Act 383 was triggered by the *Baehr v. Anderson* case which was filed in 1991, allowing ANY two single adults to have access to less than 60 spousal rights on the state level, and none on the federal level. And now, twelve years after the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law was enacted, the search for full protection and equality continues. Today, partners in a civil union should be given the SAME or EQUAL rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage and should no longer be limited to 60 spousal rights as provided by Act 383.

The *Baehr v. Anderson* case is monumental. Based on the evidence presented at trial, the case presented strong specific findings of fact that focused on sensitive issues such as the role of traditional marriage in society and same-sex couples as parenting roles. Specific findings from the case are the following:

- 1) There was insufficient evidence to prove the legal significance of the institution of traditional marriage and the need to protect traditional marriage as a fundamental structure in society***

- 2) Failed to present sufficient evidence to demonstrate how the optimal development of children would be adversely affected by same-sex marriage.**
- 3) It has been declared that the sex-based classification in HRS 572-1 is unconstitutional and in violation of the equal protection clause of article I, section 5 of the Hawaii Constitution (Due process and equal protection).**

These findings found in the Baehr V. Anderson case in 1996 clearly states how denying benefits to same-sex couples is deemed unconstitutional. Based on these findings alone, I urge the JGO committee to vote yes to HB444. And allow Hawai'i to continue the road to equality for same-sex partners and give them the rights and protections that should have been rendered to them years ago.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for the opportunity to make the citizens of Hawaii's voice heard.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danmerle Capati  
Resident of Ewa Beach, HI  
EMAIL: danmerle@hawaii.edu

Senator Brain T. Taniguchi  
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
House Bill 444, H.D.1  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. Auditorium  
State Capitol  
415 South Berentania Street

My name is Ernest C. Jackson, and I am a graduate student at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I am testifying on the House Bill 444 H.D.1. I am testifying in support of House Bill 444 H.D.1.

I am a heterosexual African American male who supports House Bill 444 H.D.1, because everyone deserves his or her rights. To be treated fair means all people, to include those in civil union, deserve the same treatment and rights as others.

There have been numerous periods in history where individuals and groups were not given their fair share or access to rights and fair treatment. Women and African Americans stand as a good example of such a lack of equality.

Women were denied the right to vote until 1920. Until the 1920's, women took the back seat and merely gave their opinions, and they were not really heard as a strong voice in America. Similarly, African Americans struggled to gain rights as individuals and to be heard as a group. For too long, African Americans were treated as merchandise and as the property of others, and rights were also held from African Americans.

Without rights we as a people would not be able to come to such gatherings and testify our concerns to committees.

I firmly believe that when we, as a people, as a state, and as a nation, deny people their rights we are excluding them from society and marking them as unwanted. It is also my belief that when we deny people their rights we are not giving them a fair chance at life, and we are denying them the chances of reaching their full potential at being fully capable citizens. When two individuals want to join together to get married they have benefits, protection, and responsibilities. When two individuals want to join in civil union it is only fair that they receive the same benefits, protection, and responsibilities as those who choose to get married.

After reading over the House Bill 444 H.D. 1 it appears that those who seek civil union will follow similar procedures as those who choose to get married. It would therefore seem logical that those seeking civil union also be given the same benefits, protection, and responsibilities as those who get married.

I support House Bill 444 H.D.1, because it provides rights for those who are seeking civil union. Thank you for your time and this opportunity.

Ernest C. Jackson  
Graduate Student of Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work  
(808) 554-9940 / [ernestj@hawaii.edu](mailto:ernestj@hawaii.edu)



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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:42 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** pharperhi@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Paul Harper  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 576 Kuikahi Drive Wailuku, Hawaii  
Phone: 808-250-2922  
E-mail: [pharperhi@yahoo.com](mailto:pharperhi@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:  
February 23, 2009  
Re: SUPPORT HB444HD1

Senate Majority Leader, Honorable Senator Hooser:

My name is Paul Harper and I am writing to express my support for House Bill 444 HD 1- Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 HD1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

My partner and I have been together for since 1989 and have raised our 22 year-old foster son here in the islands, when no other Hawaii foster parents would accept him. I have been a civil servant in Hawaii since 1993, when I graduated from Maui Community College. My partner is a high school teacher.

We lived through the affirming of the right for same gender couples to marry in Hawaii during the early 1990s and then the public amendment of state constitution to prevent us by being legally joined.

Times have changed, as witnessed by Sean Penn winning the Best Actor Award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences for his portrayal of civil rights activist, Harvey Milk.

I strongly urge you to allow passage of HB 444 HD1 as a step in the right direction for the 21st century Hawaii.

Mahalo nui loa.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Harper

576 Kuikahi Drive

Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii 96793

808-250-2922 (voice)

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**From:** pohaku222@juno.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 1:34 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444, HD1

From: Debra Shito

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444, HD1

Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - Auditorium

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and JGO Committee,

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. I would like to encourage you to protect traditional marriage and oppose HB 444, HD1.

Thank you,

Debra Shito

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Aimee Ilac and I am in support for House Bill 444 – Civil Unions.

The fact that I, an Asian woman, can have my voice heard is a true testament to the advances this great country has seen in our relatively brief history. I am proud to share the same birthday as one of our greatest presidents and one that is nearly synonymous with abolition, Abraham Lincoln. Beginning with the abolition of slavery, the nation has been increasingly more inclusive of minorities. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony helped to ensure women were able to equally participate in government. I stand here today in the spirit of these civil rights advocates to urge you to right an inequality similar to the ones were seen less than a century ago.

House Bill 444 seeks to provide same-sex couples with equal rights that their heterosexual counterparts share. Those of you that are of an ethnic minority consider that less than a century ago it was illegal to marry a white person. Pre-Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s an interracial couple faced similar, often violent, opposition that same-sex couples face today. This amendment, in a similar spirit, will help to provide true equality. There is no legal basis as to why this law should not be passed. Please do not let religious ideology color the ruling of this bill. We are a nation made up of nearly every type of person. It would be unfair to force people to abide by laws that have a religious basis.

This bill needs to be passed. It is time that we put an end to unjust laws and ensure that everyone has equal rights. We must not forget that the freedoms that most of us enjoy today took years of fighting. History's greatest asset is that it allows us to learn from our mistakes. Let us avoid the decades of strife and protests that the Suffrage and Civil Rights movements saw and provide equal rights for all of our citizens.

Thank you,

Aimee M. T. Ilac  
94-1437 Kahuli St.  
Waipahu, HI 96797

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**From:** Jarrett S L Kodani [jkodani@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 1:41 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**Testifier:** Jarrett S.L. Kodani  
**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
**Hearing Time:** 9:00 a.m.  
**Hearing Location:** Auditorium

Monday, February 23, 2009

DEAR SENATOR RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN (D),

Thank you for all your effort in representing the people of our district. We seek your insight and leadership in opposition to HB 444, which legalizes Civil Unions in Hawaii. The people's voice was heard in the 1998 vote. Civil Unions is a concealed term for Same-Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not allow the people of Hawai'i to lose their stance on the issue. Please be mindful that we accept everyone's differences in Hawai'i. However, we still hold firm to our beliefs. We respectfully request that should it ever come to a vote, that you would vote against HB 444.

Sincerely,

Jarrett S.L. Kodani  
16-2135 Silversword Drive  
Pahoa, HI 96778

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chairman Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My husband and I are in strong support of HB 444 HD1. We are not gay. We don't have any gay children. As people of faith we feel compelled to speak out against discrimination as a matter of social justice.

Homosexuality is normal behavior. It has always been with us. Please listen to the voice of Science and Reason. The American Psychological Association, The National Association of Social Workers, The Assembly of the American Psychiatric Association, The National Education Association and The American Academy of Pediatrics have all issued statements putting them on record in support of Civil Unions and striving to end discrimination against gay and lesbian households.

We can't continue to punish people for being the way God created them. To say that their behavior is an abomination makes no sense. We can't use a document written over 2000 years ago to determine everything we do today. Since eating shellfish is an abomination should we all march down to Red Lobster and demand that that it be closed? Should we stone women for adultery?

We are appalled to listen to talk about "those people" as if they were a group of misfits and degenerates bent on destroying family life in America. "Those people" are our friends and neighbors. The gays and lesbians we personally know are: a nurse, a legal assistant, a teacher, a radiologist, a family practice doctor, an attorney, a rabbi, a minister, a business owner to name a few. They are part of America and part of the human family.

We go to church every Sunday and we are not asking you to make your decision based on our church's stand in favor of civil unions. But we are asking you to make your decision based on Reason and on the Constitution to determine what is fair and just for all our citizens.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Judith Hepfer

February 24, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I am Rabbi Peter Schaktman, and I serve as the rabbi of Temple Emanu-El, Hawaii's oldest and largest synagogue. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit testimony to this committee expressing my support for HB444 HD1, the Civil Unions bill presently before you.

This bill will extend to partners in a civil union exactly the same rights, benefits, and protections that come as a matter of course to spouses in a marriage. It also holds such partners to responsibilities similar to those who are married. As a member of the clergy serving a congregational community, it is my sacred calling to strengthen family life in the context of faithful covenants made by individuals with one another, and between such individuals and God. In my synagogue, like a growing number of synagogues, churches, temples and other religious communities, the need for and right to such sacred covenants is not limited to families led by heterosexual couples.

Rather, we understand that family life is **strengthened** – and the lives of children being raised by such families greatly **enhanced** – when a strong, publicly-validated commitment exists between the heads of the household. Civil unions, to the chagrin of those whose political or religious ideologies lead them to lobby against legislation like HB 444, are **unquestionably pro-family, pro-faith, and pro-children**. The state of Hawai'i must not sacrifice our families and our keiki on the altar of exclusivist or triumphalist ideologies that disguise themselves as religious faith.

The Reform Movement in Judaism, of which Temple Emanu-El is a part, has been an advocate of gay and lesbian rights for over 40 years. In 1998, the same year the people of Hawai'i granted to the State Legislature the right to define marriage, and asked it to exercise leadership on this issue, the Ad Hoc Committee on Human Sexuality of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) concluded that "*kedushah* (holiness) may be present in committed same gender relationships between two Jews and that these relationships can serve as the foundation of stable Jewish families, thus adding strength to the Jewish community."

How curious it is, then, that so many opponents of this bill claim that they wish to "preserve" and "protect" "traditional" marriage. But what exactly are they trying to protect and preserve? Marriages that currently enjoy legal sanction take many

different forms. There are, for example, national organizations with local chapters in Hawai'i that hold conventions in local hotels for couples who wish to regularly engage in sexual activity outside of their marriage. Oddly enough, those who wish to deny same sex couples the right to publicly commit to monogamy have expended virtually no effort toward ending organized heterosexual "wife swapping," which would seem to be a far more serious threat to what they refer to as "traditional marriage."

As a member of the clergy, what's striking to me about many of those religious leaders who are opposing civil unions is how impotent they seem to feel about their own faith and their ability to foster it. True moral leadership is not coercive but persuasive. Rather than have the government impose their vision of how the world should be, real religious leaders seek to demonstrate the power of their message, and thereby engender fidelity to it. I too have a moral vision of how I would like to see the world, and how I would prefer people behave. But I would never come to this or any other government body and ask **you** to do **my** job.

No, I would only ask you to do **your** job, which is to affirm that the US Constitution makes clear that this is in fact neither a "Christian" country, nor a "Jewish" country, nor a country in which any specific religion has priority. In the United States, the government's role – and it is a role critical to our democratic system – is to permit anyone who wishes to, to express their faith freely. This is why those religious leaders who support Civil Unions also support the right of other religious leaders who are so moved, to discourage, dissuade and even denounce those who may be considering entering into such partnerships. They should take their best shot – **from the pulpit or the meeting hall**. What they should **not** do, and what they are currently asking you to do, is do their job for them. They cannot expect those who serve the Constitution and people of the State of Hawai'i and the United States to impose what they cannot upon their followers, and you cannot accede to such a request.

Ethicists at every place on the spectrum have long ago determined that morality requires free will for it to have any meaning. Coercive laws paradoxically **deprive** people of the ability to act morally, but depriving them of free will. If we only have one choice regarding how to respond to a moral challenge, our response has no ethical value any more than an election with only one party or candidate can really have a "winner." Ethical behavior occurs when we are faced with a variety of choices and then make one based on deeply held (or even revealed) principles. The image of God is much diminished when the Divine is painted as One who expects simple obedience rather than loving – if imperfect – fidelity. The same is true when those who have been created by God have the audacity to assert exclusive insight into the Divine will.

I therefore pray, with humility and hope, that whatever your spiritual beliefs or affiliation, and whatever the spiritual beliefs of your constituents, that you will recognize that legislating religious values is not your kuleana. Creating state in



which all are free to express their own religious beliefs and perform those religious rituals that they deem meaningful in their community, however, is.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rabbi Peter B. Schaktman

Temple Emanu-El

2550 Pali Hwy.

Honolulu, HI 96817

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**From:** Jon Leong [omega.ranger7@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 1:49 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444

Jon R. Leong  
99-614 Aiea HTS. DR.  
Aiea, HI 96701

Feb. 23, 2009, 1:50am

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Testimony to Senate Judiciary Committee on HB 444, hearing Feb. 24, 2009, 9:00am

Honorable Senate members:

As one of your constituents I am expressing strong opposition to HB 444 for these reasons:

- Health – man-woman marriage is the healthiest design for all members in a family. Children need nurture from two opposite-sex parents to thrive and fulfill a healthy, balanced, well-adjusted lifestyle. Same-sex unions cannot offer this necessary diversity. For the two men/women, legitimizing their union would increase, perpetuate, and model to children an unhealthy sexual activity that is harmful to themselves and their relatives both physically and emotionally.
- Marriage and Family – passing HB 444 will erode natural marriage and families by promoting "anything goes" morality, ethics, responsibility, acceptable attitudes and behaviors. Conferring equal benefits and privileges from natural marriages to same-sex couples will negatively encourage, subsidize, and proliferate broken families and broken people. Families and marriage already suffer from many social ills yielding emotional baggage and scarring. Passing HB 444 will worsen this by fostering degrading relations; hinder each person from prosperous growth, which affects our society and Hawaii's future.
- Not necessary – there is already a reciprocal beneficiary law in place to address sharing of finances. In addition, the people already expressed their will to keep marriage exclusively between one man and one woman. As is your duty of office, please, I implore you to follow the peoples' will in this matter.

Sincerely Yours,

Jon R. Leong

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**From:** k aa [kaarnnow@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 1:55 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** br.kingscathedral@gmail.com; bophgossett@netzero.com  
**Subject:** testimony opposition to HB444 HD1

Kimberly Ann Adamson  
WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS THIS TO SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 0900 AM aUDITORIUM  
MEASURE NUMBER HB444 HDI  
OPISITION TO HB 444 HDI

I hope you will consider what a difference it will make if this passes, you will be denying our children the right to know good moral values, when in my heart at the bible says and i was raised with a mother and father, marriage between one man and one woman, now your going to change the morals and allow my grandchildren to be taught in school that its ok to be raised by two daddys or two mommys and not a mommy and daddy like i have.

Confusion it will be for these kids especially the ones brought up under good morals, normal family lives. No I personnaly feel invaded if this passes be cause in my heart I dont believe union should be recognized between to women or men, I live by what our countrywas founded on GOD. TRUTH IS MARRIAGE IS MORALLY CORRECT WITH ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN. GOD did not create adam to marry steve he created adam to marry EVE Female one male and one female united. Shouldn't I have a right to raise and feel peace knowing my grandchild will not be forced to learn unmoral family values. Please I pray hear my hearts cry and look out for the good morals in society.

What ever happened to normal, we should not have to accept immoral values. Please send this HB 444 HDI back to pits where it came from and not belong any where in our normal human moral society. Thank you for hearing my heart.

Kimberly Adamson  
CRYING OUT PLEASE KEEP HAWAII A MORAL PLACE LET MY GRANDBABYS GROW UP WITH GOOD MORALS AS I WAS BROUGHT UP WITH. WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO LET GAY SOCIETY IMPOSE ON MY FAMILY, i CANT CONTROL THEIR LIFE BUT I PRAY I CAN CONTROL MY FAMILY AND GENERATIONS TO FOLLOW THE PROPER MORALITY THAT ONE MAN TAKES ONE LADY AS WIFE TO BEAR CHILDREN AND LOVE THE CHILDREN AS A COMPLETE MORAL FAMILY.  
AMEN

HB 444 HD1

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.**  
(Auditorium)

RE: Oppose HB444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444. I speak in opposition to 444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. Traditional marriage is an essential institution of our society.
  - a. Traditional marriage is the basis of family and strong families are the building block of society. HB444 undermines family.
  - b. Homes with no female mothers have no children. Homes with no male fathers have no children.
  
2. The 70% to 30% victory of similar legislation dictates that the senate carryout the will of the people.
  
3. Some mainland cities have a curriculum aimed at helping students as young as kindergarten embrace homosexuality. "The Welcoming Schools program was created by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a homosexual agenda," ADF Senior Legal Counsel Austin R. Nimocks said. "If HRC merely cared about bullying, they would simply endorse the school district's vigorous bullying and hazing

policy. Parents and school officials need to be aware of what HRC is really trying to do.”

The pilot program is in three school districts across the U.S.; HRC hopes the project will expand.

4. Homosexual marriage is not the norm. This segment of the population should not dictate the definition of marriage.

- As reported in *WorldNetDaily*, September 16, 2005 from the Centers for Disease Control’s National Center for Health Statistics reveals that only 2.3% of the population considers themselves homosexual.
  - Homosexual activist groups have finally admitted that their claim that 10% of the population is “gay” is false.
  - *“The most widely accepted study of sexual practices in the United States is the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs) found that 2.8% of the male, and 1.4% of the female, population identify themselves as Homosexual.*
- a. Same-sex families *always* deny children either their natural mother or father.
  - b. Same-sex family is a vast, untested social experiment with children.
  - c. Where does it stop? How do we say “no” to group marriage?
  - d. Schools will be forced to teach that the homosexual family is normal. Churches will be legally pressured to perform same-sex ceremonies.

## **Marriage Is Always About the Next Generation...**

- A loving and compassionate society *always* comes to the aid of motherless and fatherless families.
- A loving and compassionate society *never* intentionally creates motherless or fatherless families, which is exactly what every same-sex home does.
- The same-sex family is not driven by the needs of children, but rather by the radical wishes of a small group of adults.
- No child development theory says children need two parents of the same gender, but rather that children need their mothers and fathers.

## **A Vast Social Experiment Inflicted Upon Children...**

- No society, at any time, has ever raised a generation of children in same-sex families.
- Same-sex “marriage” will subject generations of children to the status of lab rats in (name of debate opponent’s) vast, untested social experiment.

But we know how the experiment will turn out...

America has raised millions of children in fatherless families for three decades and that experiment was a stunning failure by every measure! We know how damaging it is to raise children in intentionally fatherless families. Let’s not create more child-suffering to satisfy adult desire.

Thousands of published social science, psychological and medical studies shows that children living in fatherless families, on average, suffer dramatically in every important

measure of well-being. These children suffer from much higher levels of physical and mental illness, educational failure, poverty, substance abuse, criminal behavior, loneliness, as well as physical and sexual abuse.<sup>1</sup> Children living apart from both biological parents are 8 times more likely to die of maltreatment than children living with their mother and father.<sup>2</sup>

### **Lessons From the World's Most Famous Lesbian Mom...**

Rosie O'Donnell shared this story in an *ABC Primetime Live* interview with Diane Sawyer:

Six-year-old Parker asks his mother, Rosie: "Mommy, why can't I have a daddy?" Rosie answers: "Because I'm the kind of mommy who wants another mommy."<sup>3</sup>

- Two most dangerous words for a parent to utter together: "I" and "want."
- Parker has never asked, "Momma, why can't we have all the rights and protections of marriage?" You see, such things only matter to adults. But he *has* said, "Momma, why can't I have a daddy?"
- What matters for children in marriage is whether their mothers are married to their fathers.

### **How Your Same-sex Family Will Harm My Family...**

- If this were just about *your* family, there would be no real danger. But same-sex "marriage" advocates are not seeking marriage for *you* alone, but rather demanding me -- and all of us -- to radically change

our understanding of family. And that will do great damage.

- Your same-sex family will teach my little boys and girls that husband/wife and mother/father are merely *optional* for the family and therefore, meaningless.
- And I will *never* allow my (grand) children to be taught that their gender doesn't matter for the family. Their masculinity and femininity matter far too much, as does everyone's in this auditorium. Full Acceptance Will Be Mandatory...My civil rights to object to homosexuality as an idea will be gone.
- Same-sex relationships and homes *are* tolerated in society today. Our nation has no existing problem where same-sex couples are evicted from their neighborhoods because of how they live. Americans tolerate such relationships.
- But this is not about mere tolerance. Instead it is about *forcing everyone to fully accept* these unnatural families.
- Only months after legalizing same-sex "marriage" in Canada, activists there successfully passed C-250, a bill criminalizing public statements against homosexuality, punishable by up to two years in prison! Say the wrong thing; go to jail. The same will happen here.
- Every public school in the nation would be forced to teach that same-sex "marriage" and homosexuality are perfectly normal -- *Heather has Two Mommies* in K-12. Pictures in text books will be changed to show same-sex couples as normal.



- Your church will be legally pressured to perform same-sex weddings. When courts -- as happened in Massachusetts -- find same-sex “marriage” to be a constitutional and fundamental human right, the ACLU will successfully argue that the government is underwriting discrimination by offering tax exemptions to churches and synagogues that only honor natural marriage.
- Gay and lesbian people have a right to form meaningful relationships. They don’t have a right to redefine marriage for all of us.

### **Where Does It Stop...?**

- If, “The right to marry whomever you want is a fundamental civil right,” how do we say “no” to a woman or minor who wants to become the third wife of a polygamist...?<sup>5</sup>

### **FMA: Why Would We Write Discrimination Into the Constitution...?**

- Our United States Constitution *is* going to be changed one way or the other. Either a small handful of unaccountable, activist judges are going to write a radical new definition of marriage into the Constitution, or, the American people can protect marriage constitutionally through the option the founding fathers provided via the amendment process.
- Supporters of the Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) did not just dream up the need for such an amendment. We have been forced into this battle

because a very small few want to constitutionally redefine marriage for all of us. Same-sex activists brought this fight to all of us.

### **Conclusion...**

All of the family experimentation over the past 30 years – no fault divorce, the sexual revolution, cohabitation, fatherless ness -- have all been documented failures, harming adults and children in far deeper ways, for longer periods of time, than anyone ever imagined. Why do we think that this radical experiment will somehow bring good things?

We all know that men and women are necessary for the family and that no child should intentionally be denied her mother or father in order to fulfill your adult desires.

That is why we cannot accept the same-sex family. It serves no public purpose.

The fact that Hawaii has already decided on Civil Unions through the 1998 vote and that our leaders have masterfully crafted the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law to provide all of our citizens with their needed civil rights leaves only one logical decision; civil union is not needed but divides Hawaii at a deep level. Please vote no on 444.

Rev. Brian Reynolds  
KC Kapolei & KC Windward

John R. Pobuk  
45-152 Lilipuna Rd.  
Kaneohe, HI 96744  
February 22, 2009

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Senate, State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Taniguchi:

Subject: HB 444, HD 1, Relating to Civil Unions

This testimony is offered against HB 444, HD 1, which would institute civil unions for homosexual couples in Hawaii.

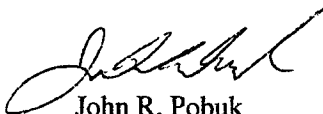
Public referendum is needed. The majority of the citizens of Hawaii voted to preserve traditional marriage in a referendum not too long ago. A public referendum was the right thing to do, given the importance of this issue to our society. The State Legislature should not be advancing HB 444, which merely re-packages the legalization of same-sex marriages under the name "civil unions", without a more thorough public process, preferably another public referendum.

Protection of traditional marriage is a legitimate function of the government. The basic building block of civilization is a nuclear family of 1 husband and 1 wife, with their children. The legal status and benefits provided to the traditional family are for the purpose of protecting the innocent and promoting the good, which are basic functions of government, and to provide for continuation of our society. HB 444 would institute government legalization of homosexual civil unions, which is arguably a promotion of immoral lifestyles. HB 444 does not serve to protect the innocent, promote the good, provide for continuation of society, or any other legitimate function of government.

HB 444 provides special rights for a limited group. HB 444 institutes civil unions for two people of the same sex, not closely related to each other. However, the justification for civil unions would seem to be the same whether for same sex couples, opposite sex couples, two people related to each other, or more than two people. What logic does the government follow to justify civil unions for only a limited group? HB 444 seems to be discriminatory, and therefore constitutionally flawed.

The lives of our children and future society are directly affected by the laws and moral standards we set today. Surely we have all seen the effects of the changes in standards over the past 50 years, and are shocked by them. I urge you to defeat HB 444, HD1.

Sincerely,



John R. Pobuk  
Kaneohe, Hawaii

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:21 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** sunphlower3@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Lorelei Albert  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [sunphlower3@hotmail.com](mailto:sunphlower3@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

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**From:** de Mille Elena [edemille2000@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:16 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony

Testifier: Elena A. de Mille  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium Subject Line: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly oppose HB444 HD1 for many reasons:

1) I do not endorse HB444 HD1 because it is not the norm. I do not wish Elementary, Middle School and High School Students to be exposed to homosexual acts and behaviors in public and private institutions. These youngsters will be more confused especially the High School students who are going through identity crisis in their lives. Also, it is not necessary for me to explain to youngsters why gay people do what they do. Students come to school to learn not to be educated in homosexuality.

2) I do not wish to see Hawaii as the capital of homosexuality. It will change the dynamic of the community if this "Bill" goes through. Let us remember that our Founding Father intention of marriage is between a man and a woman.

3) I do not wish to revisit this "Bill" again because the gay community has already received many of the STATE of HAWAII benefits such as partner's medical, dental, vision, life insurances, annuities, estate and etc. They are entitled to these under our law now. Why mess up the institution of marriage? Think of the future, will our islands be a place for exhibitionists, promiscuities, outrageous lawsuits because we cannot determine who likes who? Do you want a man to desire you if you are a man?

Marriage is only for a man and a woman. Fear God because he is our final judge.

---

**From:** Scott Doty [scotdoty@aloha.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:26 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** 'Scott Doty'  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Scott Doty  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

2/22/09

Dear Senate President Hanabusa:

**Re: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

In regards to Bill HB 444 HD1 relating to civil unions, should it ever come to a vote in the senate, please vote No on HB 444.

Very truly yours,

Scott Doty

Andrew Reynolds  
75 Hanapepe LP.  
Honolulu HI, 96825

February 23,2009

To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice – Chair  
Senator Robert Bunda  
Senator Clarence Nishihara  
Senator Mike Gabbard  
Senator Sam Slom

Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu HI, 96823

## Live verbal Testimony in **OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

HB 444 HD1

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)**

RE: Oppose HB444

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

**Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444.**

**I'm a senior in high school. I speak against HB 444.  
The people of Hawaii have expressed their will on this subject.  
NO same sex marriage. NO Civil Unions.**

**I am in agreement with the majority on this topic. NO on 444.**

**Throughout my educational career and as a soccer player for 11 years, I have never had a single person tell me of their homosexual plans. The homosexual community from my perspective is tiny. It is inappropriate for same sex marriage advocates to redefine marriage for everyone else.**

**People my age look to our government leaders in positions of influence such as yours to make many decisions that affect the future of our state. Please do not be swayed by the agenda of this small group. Lead this next generation by doing what is right.**

**Please represent us well by voting NO on 444.**

**Thank you**



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**From:** Herman S. Ferreira [braddahh@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:20 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Fwd: In Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions

**Subject:** In Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

I wish to express my support for HB 444 HD1 regarding Civil Unions for your upcoming public hearing on Feb. 24 at 9 a.m. This bill will establish equal rights for same-gender couples under Hawai'i law. It will NOT change marriage law. It is written to protect the rights of all families, and to guarantee freedom for Hawaii's diverse religious communities. In the spirit of fairness, I urge you to pass HB 444 HD1.

Thank you and aloha,

Herman S. Ferreira  
318 Aina Mahi Place  
Kapaa, Hi. 96746

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 A.M.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 444 HD1 – RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS  
TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE:**

My name is Kristi Fuchikami and I am a 16-year-old student in my junior year. I strongly oppose House Bill 444 HD1, which would allow civil unions between people. Civil union is just another name for marriage.

If this bill were passed same-sex couples would have to do everything a man and woman must do in order to get married. They would have the same rights as a married couple. If I took an apple and told you that it was a pear, you would probably think I was crazy. This is like saying that a civil union is not marriage. It is marriage in all but name.

I oppose this bill for many reasons, one stated above. Second, it is against my beliefs. God intended for marriage to be between one man and one woman. Anything else is wrong.

Third, children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mother and a father. (I am not picking on single parents; I am just stating a fact.) Rosie O'Donnell's son told her that he wanted a dad. Her response was 'I'm the kind of mommy who wants another mommy.' What ever happened to what is best for the child?

Fourth, Hawaii's people have already spoken. In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a crystal clear message with a 70% to 30% vote that marriage is to be between one man and one woman. Is our government not for the people, by the people?

I thank the committee for taking the time to hear my opinion on this very important issue and ask that you please hold this bill for the good of Hawaii's people and future generations.

# Live verbal Testimony in **OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

Brian Reynolds  
75 Hanapepe Loop  
Honolulu HI, 967825  
808.330.7574

To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice – Chair  
Senator Robert Bunda  
Senator Clarence Nishihara  
Senator Mike Gabbard  
Senator Sam Slom

HB 444 HD1

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)**

RE: Oppose HB444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB444.

I Speak in opposition to HB444 on Civil Unions. I oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. Traditional marriage is an essential institution of our society.
  - a. Traditional marriage is the basis of family and strong families are the building block of society. HB444 undermines family.
  - b. Homes with no female mothers have no children. Homes with no male fathers have no children.
  - c. Same-sex families *always* deny children either their natural mother or father.

A Child's right to live with both biological parents is annihilated by this law. This annihilation of their human rights will bring hurt to their lives and ultimately the State of Hawaii.

## **2. Will of the people**

The 70% to 30% vote against similar legislation in 1998 dictates that the senate carryout the will of the people.

## **3. Education:**

Some mainland cities have a curriculum aimed at helping students as young as **kindergarten embrace homosexuality.**

“The Welcoming Schools program was created by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), The pilot program is in three school districts across the U.S.; HRC hopes the project will expand.

Schools will be forced to teach that the homosexual family is normal.

**4. Homosexual marriage is not the norm.** This segment of the population should not dictate the definition of marriage.

- a. As reported in *WorldNetDaily*, September 16, 2005 from the Centers for Disease Control’s National Center for Health Statistics reveals that only 2.3% of the population considers themselves homosexual.
- b. “The most widely accepted study of sexual practices in the United States is the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs) found that 2.8% of the male, and 1.4% of the female, population identify themselves as Homosexual.
- c. Same-sex family is a vast, untested social experiment with children.
- d. Where does it stop? How do we say “no” to group marriage?
- e. Churches will be legally pressured to perform same-sex ceremonies.

### **Marriage Is Always About the Next Generation...**

- A loving and compassionate society *always* comes to the aid of motherless and fatherless families.
- A loving and compassionate society *never* intentionally creates motherless or fatherless families, which is exactly what every same-sex home does.
- The same-sex family is not driven by the needs of children, but rather by the radical wishes of a small group of adults.
- No child development theory says children need two parents of the same gender, but rather that children need their mothers and fathers.

### **A Lesson From one of the World's Most Famous Lesbian Moms...**

Rosie O’Donnell shared this story in an *ABC Primetime Live* interview with Diane Sawyer:

Six-year-old Parker asks his mother, Rosie: “Mommy, why can’t I have a daddy?” Rosie answers: “Because I’m the kind of mommy who wants another mommy.”<sup>3</sup>

- Two most dangerous words for a parent to utter together: “I” and “want.”
- Parker has *has* said, “Momma, why can’t I have a daddy?”
- What matters for children in marriage is whether their mothers are married to their fathers.

### **How Your Same-sex Family Will Harm My Family...**

- If this were just about *your* family, there would be no real danger. But same-sex “marriage” advocates are not seeking marriage for *you* alone, but rather demanding me -- and all of us -- to radically change our understanding of family. And that will do great damage.
- **Only months after legalizing same-sex “marriage” in Canada, activists there successfully passed C-250, a bill criminalizing public statements against homosexuality, punishable by up to two years in prison! Say the wrong thing; go to jail. The same will happen here.**
- Every public school in the nation would be forced to teach that same-sex “marriage” and homosexuality are perfectly normal — *Heather has Two Mommies* in K-12. Pictures in text books will be changed to show same-sex couples as normal.
- Your church will be legally pressured to perform same-sex weddings. When courts -- as happened in Massachusetts -- find same-sex “marriage” to be a constitutional and fundamental human right, the ACLU will successfully argue that the government is underwriting discrimination by offering tax exemptions to churches and synagogues that only honor natural marriage.
- Gay and lesbian people have a right to form meaningful relationships. **They don’t have a right to redefine marriage for all of us.**

### Where Does It Stop...?

- If, “The right to marry whomever you want is a fundamental civil right,” how do we say “no” to a woman or minor who wants to become the third wife of a polygamist...?<sup>5</sup>

### Conclusion...

All of the family experimentation over the past 30 years – no fault divorce, the sexual revolution, cohabitation, fatherless ness -- have all been documented failures, harming adults and children.

Why do we think that this radical experiment will somehow bring good things?

We all know that men and women are necessary for the family and that no child should intentionally be denied her mother or father in order to fulfill adult desires.

The fact that Hawaii has already decided on Civil Unions through the 1998 vote and that our leaders have masterfully crafted the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law to provide all of our citizens with their needed civil rights leaves only one logical decision; civil union is not needed but divides Hawaii at a deep level. Please vote no on 444.

Rev. Brian Reynolds  
KC Kapolei & KC Windward

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**From:** Betsy Cherrie [betsy@wlrubottom.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:34 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI

Please vote against this bill relating to Civil Unions on Tuesday.

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**From:** Caroline G Sinavaiana [sinavaia@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:48 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support HB444 - HD1 -- 2/24/09 - 9AM - JGO Committee

**Importance:** High

Honorable Senators:

I am writing in strong support of HB444, KD1.

As a lifelong educator, a tenured professor at UH Manoa, as a Samoan-American, as a US citizen, I believe in the basic equity, fair mindedness, and good sense put forth in this bill. In a crucial moment in the US and the world community, in fact on our very planet, the idea of denying families the legal right to care for each other makes little sense.

Clearly our community holds diverse views on this issue. Clearly all families disagree on something. But when we disagree with our own family members, do we then seek to deny them fulfillment of the most basic human needs for love? For health, education, fulfillment of their God-given talents? For the pursuit of happiness guaranteed to us by the founders of our republic? As citizens of and residents of our islands, country and planet, do we really choose to distance ourselves from each other in such a counterproductive way? At a time when our collective survival depends on our pulling together? Will we really choose fear over love? Over survival?

We have an opportunity here to choose good sense and community over fear and misrepresentation. We have the opportunity to discern between anxiety and courage. I sincerely hope we can move beyond our fears of the unknown and instead hold in our minds and hearts the faces of our own family members and friends who are asking our community to support all families, regardless of our differences with each others' choices.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Caroline Sinavaiana

Associate Professor of English, UH Manoa

National Delegate to the Democratic National Convention

Founder of Hawai'i Educators for Obama

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:18 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** k11jejelf@ksbe.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jessica Jelf-Albert  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [k11jejelf@ksbe.edu](mailto:k11jejelf@ksbe.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:27-28



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**From:** Sabrina Franks [hawaiianpsalmist@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:51 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB444, HD1 by Sabrina Franks

Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi (Chair) & Sen. Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair)

From: **Sabrina Franks, LSW** (2 Pages)

Hearing: **Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM in the Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium**

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444, HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions)**

*To the Senate Judiciary Committee:*

I am writing in **STONG OPOSSITION to HB 444 HD1**. I am a resident of Waialua, Hawaii and a Licensed Social Worker in the State of Hawaii. I am also an ordained Minister and an Administrator.

Undoubtedly you will receive much opposition to this bill on the basis of religious beliefs so I will not repeat many of the same sentiments, but please allow me to elaborate on some other vital information and facts.

1) As stated in the HB444, HD1, it would extend the “same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as marriage” to partners in a civil union. This clearly **makes no distinction** between “civil unions” and “same-sex marriage”. This would “lawfully” make “civil unions” the exact same thing as traditional marriage.

Allowing civil unions will make provision for much more than just medical benefits. It will change the definition of marriage and family. When government prescribes a wholesale redefinition of a family, it knowingly sets a policy that knowingly deprives children of a mom and a dad. Study after study of those that have been done in a non-partisan manner tell us that children need a mom and a dad to do well in life. Two moms can be two great moms, but they can **never be a great father**. And that’s the point of it all...the genders compliment each other, it is in our inherent design and make up. My dad can do things for me that my mother can’t and that’s because he is a man. My mom can provide me; give me understanding and impressions in life that my dad can not ever have any hope of providing me because he is not a woman.

2) Homosexuals define themselves based on their sexual desire and sexual behaviors, but try to link themselves to the civil rights movement of the 1960’s. The Civil Rights Movement was fighting for the inalienable rights of people of color, not on a behavior. Homosexuals weren’t confined to homosexual drinking fountains, they weren’t confined to the back of the bus, they weren’t bought and sold as slaves and certainly since there have been tens of thousands of people who have been in that lifestyle and have found freedom from the lifestyle, that it can certainly not be equated with the Civil rights struggle of the 1960’s.

The Civil Rights Movement was about living up to and **applying** America’s principles, **not re-writing or re-inventing** them. There was no tradition on which this country was founded that Dr. King challenged. It was upon those very traditions that he made his challenges and claim. Gay political operatives work to **re-write our traditions to suit their own proclivities**, in a fashion quite the opposite of Dr. King who challenged an unjust nation to **return to its principles and traditions** from which it had strayed. They say their struggle is

about equality, but it's really about the exercise of political power and claims for entitlement.

3) The gay activist community wants tolerance. They want their ideas and views to be tolerated...but they can't seem to tolerate anything else other than their views; for example personal stories of the many who have come out of homosexuality with the help of Jesus Christ. Why doesn't the tolerance work both ways.

Sure there are people who attempt the journey of coming out of homosexuality, but don't make it and fall away, they either give up or say it's too hard. And because there are some for whatever reason that stop on their journey toward freedom from homosexuality, doesn't negate or invalidate the stories of those who have come out of homosexuality. Thus, proving that there is no homosexual gene!

Those who are saying that I want to have the rest of the public recognize my homosexual relationship are essentially saying... "don't just tolerate what I do, don't just say I'm going to let you live the way you want to, don't just say that whatever anybody else does is their own business, I'm not going to interfere with it"... You **MUST** approve of what I'm doing, and you don't just have to approve of it, you have to say that it's legitimate religiously. You have to say that what I'm doing is not sinful; you have to say that what I'm doing is just as legitimate, just as valid as a marriage between a man and a woman.

They want everyone to have the same mindset and thinking as they do, especially those with religious beliefs. They want those of a religious faith, especially Christians to change their tenants of faith!

4) In every instance throughout our nation when the definition of a family has been put to a vote, the American people have voted to keep marriage a sacred institution between a man and a woman. This was clearly done in Hawaii in 1998 with an overwhelming 70%. Please uphold the will of the people!

I urge and implore you to **VOTE AGAINST "Civil Unions" bill (HB 444 HD1)**. Remember God is the foundation of our nation and government.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Franks, LSW  
Business Administrator

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**From:** Rose [titapauoa@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:43 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** titapauoa@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**February 22, 2009**

**FROM: My name is William Kaimi**

Dear Senator Takamine,

I am writing you about your hearing on same-sex marriage. I am deeply concerned that this issue has even made it this far. This state, I believe, is a democratic state, in which the people have the last say on such issues. The people have already spoken and they have said that they do not want gay marriages in this state.

I, also, believe that we, as a people want to be a God blessed people. We don't want any of His curses falling upon us.

(read Gen. 18:20 – 19:25) Please don't pass this issue on. You are the representative for the people. You make the laws, which are representative of the people's ideals. This state has seen enough bad, dry times. We don't need to give God any more reasons to send us more.

I thank you for your time and understanding.

God Bless you and Malama Pono,

Sincerely,

John Kurokawa

[Jkurokawa1@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:Jkurokawa1@hawaii.rr.com)

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**From:** Bill Ciano [corners4\_2000@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:42 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to 444

"We must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt."

--Thomas Jefferson, letter to Samuel Kercheval, 12 July 1816

February 23, 2009

Testimony for HB 444 HD 1 RE: Civil Unions by, Gene Corpuz - IN SUPPORT  
Hawaii State Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Hearing on February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Gene Corpuz, and I am supporting House Bill 444 regarding Civil Unions. I am currently employed as a Health Educator for HMSA (17 years) and am a member of Dignity USA, and organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Catholics, where I serve on the national board of directors. I am supporting this bill because I believe that all people in the State of Hawaii should be treated equally under the law and that would include same-gender couples who reside here. Although my preference would be for full marriage rights, HB 444 would extend the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in marriage to partners in a civil union.

My partner and I have been together for 18 years and we became Reciprocal Beneficiaries in 1998 when that was the only option for acknowledgement of limited rights for same gender couples. Due to that law, since my partner was employed by the State of Hawaii, and a member of HGEA, I could have been added to his health plan. However, I could not offer the same benefits from my employer to him since our relationship is not recognized as a family unit. Just recently, my employer released information regarding the Family Leave Act, and how employees can take a leave of absence to care for a sick family member and be able to return to their job without loss of status and pay. Again, same gender couples were not specified as a family unit, and therefore not recognized for receiving this benefit.

I just highlighted a few ways in which same gender couples are discriminated that opposite gender couples are not generally aware of when they apply for joint benefits. Since I'm Catholic, the church will oppose this bill since homosexual acts are considered "intrinsically disordered" and therefore gay and lesbian people are not worthy of equal rights. This bill is supported by Dignity USA & the local chapter, Dignity Honolulu, as well as other religious groups because it is a basic civil rights issue. Several states and municipalities already offer benefits to same gender couples either through civil unions or marriage including Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, New Jersey, California, Oregon, Washington and the District of Columbia. Catholic countries such as Spain and Belgium already have same gender marriage and Mexico City offers civil union benefits. President Obama has stated he supports civil unions. I believe that equal treatment under the law should be the policy in the State of Hawaii. I again ask for your support of HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Gene Corpuz  
1139 9<sup>th</sup> Ave., #1602  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
(808)734-7313

---

**From:** jodi [jnahinu002@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:42 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Oppose HB 444 HD1

My name is Jodi K Nahinu, I am pastor of Lahaina Gospel Fellowship, and I am writing to verify from the biblical stance that this bill is an abomination to all that is sacred. The Bible condemns such sin and it is not natural according to the thing of this world. Even nature itself knows that male with male, female with female, is not accepted or displayed.

If this bill is passed, our children will be exposed to this lifestyle and be confused as to what is right and what is wrong. I urge you to oppose this bill and stand for what is natural, true, and right.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:41 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** kokekoa@ksbe.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Kordell Kekoa  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 144 ke ala ola rd Honolulu, HI. 96817  
Phone: 842-1793  
E-mail: [kokekoa@ksbe.edu](mailto:kokekoa@ksbe.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I do not believe this is a wise choice for us to approve HB 444.  
The people of Hawaii have spoken, let their voice resound. Marriage is for one man and one woman only. Civil union is different than marriage. Don't compare the two and put them into the same category.  
Don't get me wrong. I do not hate those who support this House Bill, I oppose the idea that marriage could be interpreted on the same level as civil unions. Mahalo.



---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:10 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** rt.gochenouer@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Teresa Gochenouer  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 956-A Lei Road Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 595-6922  
E-mail: [rt.gochenouer@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:rt.gochenouer@hawaiiantel.net)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I am respectfully requesting a "NO" vote on HB444. I have sent you emails, individually, regarding my stance on this bill and why it is not good for the people of Hawaii. Just look at the repercussions of this law in the state of Massachusetts which has legalized same-sex marriage. It will do nothing but undermine and usurp parental authority, and break down the family unit. Please vote "NO" on HB444.

Respectfully,  
Teresa Gochenouer

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** bobrameyer@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** hb444.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Robert Rameyer  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 3006 Pualei Circle #209 Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808-923-5512  
E-mail: [bobrameyer@gmail.com](mailto:bobrameyer@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

I'm asking for your support of HB444. I believe in fairness and equality which this bill addresses. I'm not asking for special rights, only the same rights. I don't understand why this basic request creates such division. I think there is a lot of misinformation out there which has created fear and anger. But we're talking about love here. I wish those opposed to this could be in my shoes and know that my love is just as real as their love. And my rights should be the same as theirs. Please support fairness and equality.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:40 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** reismueller@me.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Renee Eismueller  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 919 Spencer St Apt A3 Honolulu, HI 96822  
Phone: 303-908-9981  
E-mail: [reismueller@me.com](mailto:reismueller@me.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:  
equal rights for everyone

---

**From:** Violet Anderson [vanderson3@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:46 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444, HD1

Regarding : HB 444, HD1  
(HSCR157)  
Testimony  
Status

RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

I respectfully submit my opposition.

Violet Anderson

THE SENATE  
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2009

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE:  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
TIME:  
9:00 a.m.  
PLACE:  
Auditorium  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

A G E N D A

HB 444, HD1  
(HSCR157)  
Testimony  
Status  
RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS.

Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. (HB444 HD1)

JGO

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:47 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** olivetron@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** Civil Union hb444 testimony to Hawaii State Legislature.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Olivia Jones  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 45-210 Nakuluai Pl. Kaneohe, HI  
Phone:  
E-mail: [olivetron@yahoo.com](mailto:olivetron@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Copy of testimony:

Dear Chair Karamatsu, Vice-Chair Ito, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Olivia Jones and although I am a straight individual, I would like to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,  
Olivia Jones  
45-210 Nakuluai Pl.  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

---

**From:** Max Purcell [poualae@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:09 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Senate Hearing on Bill HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions on Tuesday, February 24th, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

- I am totally against this bill. It should never have gone this far.

Why isn't the voice of the people being respected? How many times does the message have to be sent? How many more times do we have to vote? Which part of "NO" don't these folks understand?

The gays and their supporters say it has to do with their civil rights and generally the media (newspapers, tv, movies, etc.) has been on their side. Well, for me who opposes it, it has to do with my religious principles, my values and my core beliefs in the sanctity of the traditional family. I cannot compromise what I earnestly believe to be a commandment of God and that is why I will never support, nor condone, or accept same-sex marriage/civil union regardless how it's packaged. And you know what, the majority of the people in this state and nation agree with me.

Lastly, those who voted in the House for this bill (including one who represents some of us in Ko'olauloa) have not learned a lesson from the past. That we, the people who voted them into office, are against same-sex marriage or civil unions, and will long remember this betrayal of the trust we had placed in them. Don't make the same mistake in the Senate.



Testimony in **OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1**

Anne Fujii  
908 Noela Place  
Wailuku, HI 96793  
And  
3909 Niele Place  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
808 870-3187

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for this opportunity to speak against this House Bill HB444.

As a former educator for over 15 years and now in full-time ministry for the last 25 years, I have spent thousands of hours counseling individuals and families. I am vehemently opposed to this Bill, because same-sex marriage advocates are demanding to radically change our understanding of the family. This will cause tremendous change. Same-sex marriage will teach little boys and girls that husband/wife and mother/father are merely optional for the family and therefore, meaningless. It will teach children that their gender doesn't matter in the family. Their masculinity and femininity in the family identifies who they were born to be in their family and society. The changing of these rules will create great confusion.

Our society needs strong families of a male/dad and female/mom figures. As one who works with thousands of people each year, I am asking you to vote against House Bill 444.

Thank you very much,

Rev. Anne Fujii

---

**From:** Akamu, Anna [anna.akamu@heco.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:10 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

Tuesday, Feb 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – State Capitol Auditorium

RE: HB 444, HD1

FROM: Anna Akamu

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members:

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444.

Proposal HB 444 is being raised in the attempt to once again legitimize same sex marriage (- simply by using the title "Civil Union"). In 1998, the people of Hawaii already made it clear for marriage in Hawaii to remain between one man and one woman! The people of Hawaii are held together by the sharing of common values, which in turn continues to strengthen family bonds (i.e., what we now call "ohana"). We, who believe in the spirit of Ohana, believe in traditional marriage! Please do not make the people of Hawaii go through this divisive debate again.

In addition, the people of Hawaii have also spoken through their representatives in reaching a compromise in establishing Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. We do not need HB 444 to add further damage to the current economic slump in the process of providing benefits to same sex couples.

Please prevent the re-opening of this controversial battle, as we have already put this to rest !! We ask that you support the people of Hawaii in reverence to our long held tradition of marriage being between one man and one woman. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you please vote NO to HB 444. Thank Youuu!!

---

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**From:** Kristy Lum [kristylum804@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:33 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strongly opposed to HB444 (Date Correction)

Testifier: Kristina Lum  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimony. I am registered voter here in Hawaii. I work in education and come from a family of educators. I have a great interest in seeing children do well.

I was recently reading information that really sums up why we need strong families. We all have basic human needs: identity, protection, provision, companionship, communication, comfort, nurturing and teaching. We would all agree that these are important needs and can recognize them. This article challenged how I viewed raising children and how important the entire family is to their development.

The article said that it is the fathers that provide the identity, protection and provision for children. Siblings and friends provide for companionship and communication. Mothers provide comfort, nurturing and teaching. If any of these relationships are lacking, or are not healthy, the children as a result grow up with unmet needs. We can all recognize those that have not had these basic needs met. For example, there is a dramatic difference in the behavior of children in school when their fathers are deployed. They have a hard time paying attention, they get in trouble often, etc. When their fathers are home, they have a sense of peace and security and are able to pay attention in class.

In Hawaii, we NEED strong families. Children NEED mothers AND fathers. We NEED children who are emotionally healthy. They are our future. In this "Year of the Family", I urge you to do all that you can do to build up and support families. Please oppose HB 444.

Thank you so much for your service to the people of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Kristina Lum

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

Hi, my name is Jeremy and I strongly disapprove of HB 444 HD1. If our state government were to

pass this bill, I would lose all faith in our elected officials. I don't appreciate your deception in attempting to pass a law that legitimizes same sex marriage while disguised as civil unions.

Thankfully, many Hawaii residents are not so easily deceived. I ask that you support the 70 % of Hawaii voters who previously voted Yes to a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman and NO to civil unions.

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

Thursday, February 24, 2009  
0900 HST

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

I am testifying in **strong opposition** to HB 444. In 1998, we the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii is to be defined as being between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already been settled by the people.

I am a resident of Kapolei and I ask that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

Mahalo,

Brandon Reynon

---

**From:** Mark Levin [mlevin5@juris.hokudai.ac.jp]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:05 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** House Bill 444 HD1, A Bill For An Act Relating to Civil Unions, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations, Tuesday, 2/24/09, 9AM, Capitol Auditorium

Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice-chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Mark A. Levin  
Identifying information below

Hearing, Tuesday February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m., Capitol Auditorium

Strong Support of HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and members of the Committee:

My name is Mark Levin. I teach at the William S. Richardson School of Law where I also serve as a faculty adviser to our Lambda Law Student Organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender law students and allies.

I strongly support HB 444, HD1.

Same-sex couples in "reciprocal beneficiary relationships" suffer from disparate treatment under approximately 500 Hawai'i statutes. This is surely unfair, unnecessary, and unwise. Unequal treatment continues to be an affront to notions of fairness, inclusion, and personal dignity that are important to our collective sense of community.

One of my students recently shared with me from personal experience:

"I pay more in taxes, I can't get coverage under my partner's medical insurance plan, and I even pay more to go to law school than I would if I were 'married.'"

As Dr. King said so eloquently in his Letter from Birmingham Jail:

"injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Perhaps that is why this bill has such strong public support.

Aloha and thank you for your consideration.

Mark A. Levin  
(For identification purposes only)  
Associate Professor and Faculty Adviser, Lambda Law Student Organization) The William S. Richardson School of Law The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
2515 Dole St., Honolulu, HI 96822

Opinions presented here are personal views and not the official views of the University of Hawai'i or any other organization or entity.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:45 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** susan.koki@halekulani.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Frank Hernandez  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 2470 North School Street Honolulu, HAWAII 96819  
Phone:  
E-mail: [susan.koki@halekulani.com](mailto:susan.koki@halekulani.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Susan Koki and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

I am a straight single mother of one and I support HB444. Two of my best friends are lesbian. They both are in loving committed relationship and they are mothers to a beautiful little girl. The love they share is worthy of marriage in my eyes, however HB444 is not about marriage, it's about civil rights they work for and deserve as a human beings.

This is not about religion, this is about people and the rights they have as law abiding, tax paying individuals. HB444 is about this little girl and her mothers having the same rights that my son and I share.

I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Susan Koki  
2470 North School Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

## **Support for HB444 HD1 Civil Unions**

Dear Sen. Bunda,

I am writing to ask that you reconsider your position against HB444 HD1 and vote for its passage. It is a Civil Rights issue that is being confused and opposed by some religious sects. Marriage is not simply for procreation; there are rights and protections guaranteed to each partner and their children however and by whomever conceived or adopted. Please keep church and state separate by supporting HB444 HD1. Mahalo nui loa.

--

Gail P. Gnazzo  
19 Ohia Lehua Place  
Pukalani, Maui, Hi 96768



TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

Hi, my name is J. B. Kuhio Vellalos and I strongly disapprove of HB 444 HD1.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii were allowed to vote on whether marriage should remain between one man and one woman, and the outcome was clear. It is deceitful of the State Legislature to circumvent this decision of the people of Hawaii, with HB 444 HD1.

This deceit is compounded by the idea that HB 444 HD1 would simply provide 'equality' to same sex couples. The Reciprocal Beneficiary Law provides any two adults in a relationship, the same benefits afforded to a man and woman in a marriage.

The wording of HB 444 HD1 clearly would require that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to 'marriage', or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to 'civil unions,' . . ." (H. B. No. 444 HD1). This bill would in fact legalize 'same-sex' marriage, an issue that the people of Hawaii have already spoken on.

I strongly urge you to vote against HB 444 HD1.

---

**From:** R. Boddy [rboddy@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:03 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** For HB444

**FROM: Robin Boddy (Resident Of Hawaii)**

**TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL  
AUDITORIUM**

**FOR HB 444, HD1**

**DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE,**

**Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.**

**WITH ALOHA,**

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444 HD 1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

My name is Elizabeth Vellalos and I am a resident of the State of Hawaii. Having been an educator for the past 21 years, it astounds me that the issue of same sex marriage has been resurrected and disguised as Civil Unions in House Bill 444 HD 1. According to CNN.com "Just as Hawaii's high court seemed poised to allow same-sex marriages . . . voters approved Constitutional Amendment 2, giving the legislature power to "reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples." (CNN.com, *Hawaii gives legislature power to ban same-sex marriage*, 1998). Clearly, your job as our elected officials is to "reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples." Did you forget that the people of Hawaii voted in 1998 to Reserve Marriage to Opposite-sex Couples? That would mean that a man could not marry a man nor a woman marry a woman.

- Unfortunately, HB444 HD 1, section 1-9 clearly states that "partners to a civil union lawfully entered into pursuant to this chapter shall have all of the same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as **marriage**, whether derived from statutes, administrative rules, court decisions, the common law, or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a **marriage**." [bold added]
- According to Section 1 -10 we will now have to recognize civil unions, domestic partnerships, or marriages of the same sex from other jurisdictions.
- Section three- 1) "Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to the status of partners in a civil union. 2) Every reference to "husband," "wife," or "spouse" shall apply equally to a partner in a civil union: and 3) Every reference to marital status, including without limitation provisions pertaining to parties and procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution, shall apply."

Throughout the 1990's I felt that it was extremely necessary to testify in both the house and senate. Year after year after year, my children and I journeyed down to the state capitol and stood before lawmakers in order to communicate our opposition to same sex marriage. Eleven years after our victory – eleven years after the voters of Hawaii made it extremely clear that we want you "the legislature" to reserve marriage to opposite sex couples – I find myself standing before you yet again today. Please, allow me to clearly state that I am extremely, incredibly, and explicitly, opposed to civil unions. I urge you, the Senate Judiciary Committee, to uphold the voice of the people of Hawaii and say NO to Civil Unions.

---

**From:** Colette Oshiro [colettenurse@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:18 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** FW: HB 444 HD1

---

Testimony In **OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Unions**

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00 A.M.

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Seventeen years ago my brother, Brandon Bray, died of the dreaded A.I.D.S. disease. Brandon was mostly known as a singer and songwriter, and won a Na Hoku Hanohano Award. He spoke and wrote fluent Hawaiian, had Bachelors Degree in Hawaiian Studies, and a Master's Degree in Social Work. He later worked for the Public Defender's Office and was an Administrative Social Worker for a nursing home. Entertainment writer, Wayne Harada, wrote in Brandon's obituary article that Brandon's passing was due to Leukemia, not A.I.D.S. We, his family, were ashamed that Brandon's death was caused by H.I.V.

I am writing to you in opposition to HB 444.

HB 444 not only legalizes same-gender's civil benefits, it encourages homosexual relationships.

When my brother was dying of A.I.D.S., he wanted everyone to know that homosexuality is wrong--that it leads to suffering and death. No good could become of it.

Until now, my family and I have never made a public statement about the truth of Brandon's death. I believe that the time is right to speak-up against the promotion of rights, which will only lead to the deterioration of Hawai'i's people.

Please consider the death of HB 444, before it becomes the death of our loved ones.

Very sincerely yours,

Colette Oshiro

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---

**From:** Charles Couch [couchjrc@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:04 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444

This is a written testimony for Hb444. This bill is scheduled for hearing on Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> at 0900 in the morning.

My name is Charles Couch Jr. and I am the Senior Pastor of Calvary Chapel West Oahu. I would first of all like to start off saying that I am in opposition to Civil Unions or bill HB444 and I would very strongly urge a NO VOTE. This issue has never been one of intolerance because I have loved ones who are living in this lifestyle and I love them dearly. I think we have tolerated this chosen lifestyle, or behavior whichever you would choose to call it. What they choose to do at home is their business. We have never had a problem with that issue, but when this issue of civil unions is brought to the public arena by way of asking us to accept this behavior as the norm, and by doing that having the potential of affecting everyone else in a negative way then it becomes an issue to refuse. I also believe they have rights just as everyone else covered under the same constitution as we all live under. There have been previously noted additional rights not needed to get into at this time, but Civil Unions is nothing more than seeking "SPECIAL RIGHTS" by those who have by choice chosen to live an alternate lifestyle and one that is morally wrong and not right for that matter.

I make that statement first of all based upon my faith and belief as a Christian. That is true. But I also have to say that even nature and natural law would declare the same truth. Let me offer a few simple examples.

- If you were trying to save a species of animal or birds, etc and all you had were two male animals or two male Bald Eagles for that matter the species would die and not survive because it does not work that way.
- If you only had two men or two women who survived by some miracle a catastrophic event and they were the only two left to repopulate then civilization as we know it would not survive because the natural human function does not work that way.
- If you who are making this vote had two moms or two dads only you would not be making this vote as well and in fact you would have never been born to consider this vote or even be elected because you would not exist.

Please hear my heart I do not say this sarcastically but lovingly. If you allow this group to have special rights based upon their wrong choice to live with two men or two women then where do you draw the line on what to allow next. What if two men want to be married to one woman then they would have a right too. What if one man wanted to marry 5 women then they would have a right as well. What if an older man wanted to marry a girl who is 11 years old or two 11 year old girls then they would have a right as well. Please answer me where then do you draw the line in determining what is right and what is wrong. The truth is that we would have no lines to draw any longer for right or wrong it would always simply be determined by the popular vote or someone's view and that is not always the right thing to do. Please answer me truthfully one more thing and that's is which of you as a parent making this determination to vote yes on this bill HB444 has told your son or daughter that you can't wait for that son of yours to grow up and bring home his husband or vice versa. Is that really where your heart is at, or can you honestly say that in your heart of hearts you know it is morally wrong and it just does not work. Where will this allowing special rights to special groups based solely upon a personal choice end? Truth is if you vote yes then the requests by others will be endless.

Please VOTE NO ON BILL HB444.

Charles Couch Jr.  
92-106 Ihi Place,  
Kapolei, Hi 96707

---

**From:** Deo Andres [deo.andres@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:04 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Oppose HB444

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Please vote NO on HB444 as it directly goes against the will of the people of Hawaii who voted overwhelmingly to affirm that marriage is between one man and one woman.

As elected officials I hope you will fulfill your duties to affirm the voice of the people that you were elected to represent.

Respectfully,  
Deo Andres

---

**From:** Sabrina Franks [hawaiianpsalmist@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:03 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG OPPOSTION to HB444, HD1 by Anthony Franks

Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi (Chair) & Sen. Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair)

From: **Anthony Franks**

Hearing: **Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM in the Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium**

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444, HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions)**

*To the Senate Judiciary Committee:*

I am writing in **STONG OPOSSION to HB 444 HD1.**

1) As stated in the HB444, HD1, it would extend the “same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as marriage” to partners in a civil union. This clearly **makes no distinction** between “civil unions” and “same-sex marriage”. This would “lawfully” make “civil unions” the exact same thing as traditional marriage. Our founding fathers based laws and decision making on the Bible, which is God’s word. They established a high moral standard and value system upon its contents. This bill will clearly go against what God established a family to be. It will change the definition of marriage and family.

2) In every instance throughout our nation when the definition of a family has been put to a vote, the American people have voted to keep marriage a sacred institution between a man and a woman. This was clearly done in Hawaii in 1998 with an overwhelming 70%. Please uphold the will of the people!

I urge and implore you to **VOTE AGAINST “Civil Unions” bill (HB 444 HD1).** Remember God is the foundation of our nation and government.

Sincerely,

Anthony Franks

---

**From:** ESTHER MACHADO [esthermachado@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; Sen. Gary Hooser  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

From: Devin Anthony Machado

To: Judiciary Committe Members:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 - State Capitol Auditorium

For HB 444, HD1

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and JGO Committee,

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.

With Aloha,  
Devin Anthony Machado

---

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---

**From:** alvin.qingxing@gmail.com on behalf of Alvin Lim [alvinch@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 444

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing on Tuesday 24 February 2009  
9 AM in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Alvin Lim and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe all people should be treated equally under the law and that this is required by the American Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic Party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and I appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,  
Alvin Lim  
1641 S Beretania St, Apt 213  
HI 96826

---

**From:** Mary Elizabeth [nugayou@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444, HD1  
**Attachments:** stat3278.jpg

Resending. Typo in "to" block.

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m.  
Capitol Auditorium  
HB 444, HD1. Relating to Civil Unions  
STRONG OPPOSITION

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

I am opposed to this measure because the intent of HB444 is to introduce same sex marriage into the State of Hawaii. Senators, you are aware that the general public has voted on this issue in 1998 by an overwhelming vote of 70% for traditional marriage being between a man and a woman.

To overturn what the people have spoken, I believe, is not representing what the majority of the people desire and also expect of our legislative representatives in formulating new laws.

Please seriously consider the negative impact the passage of this bill would have on our fragile Aloha state.

I urge you to please not report HB 444, HD1, out of your committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elaine Funakoshi

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:33 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** mears\_shannon@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Shannon Mears  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 830 Pa'ahana Street Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808-381-7924  
E-mail: [mears\\_shannon@yahoo.com](mailto:mears_shannon@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I am writing in strong support of HB 444 HD1. Please pass this bill and provide equal treatment to all of Hawaii's citizens. Please help us to move past the embarrassing history of our country. In case no one has noticed, homosexuality has been a common practice since the dawn of humankind. Hating gays, beating gays, killing gays, denying equal treatment under the law to gays, and lying that gay marriage somehow threatens heterosexual marriages, has never and will never stop homosexuality. I hope that you can see that claiming that homosexual marriage will tear apart the social fabric of our society is just another lie, such as AIDS is a curse sent by God. Just because some people have toned down their rhetoric, doesn't mean that their arguments have somehow achieved validity. It is high time that we, as humans, accept all other humans among us and provide equality.

---

**From:** ESTHER MACHADO [esthermachado@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:34 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; Sen. Gary Hooser  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Jessica Uluihi Machado  
5258 Kawaihau Rd., Kapaa HI 96746  
808-822-9843

Attention: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 am - Auditorium

**I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444, HD1**

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

**Please vote against HB 444.**

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**From:** Tom Norris [musicmanof76@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:37 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** House Bill 444

Senate Judiciary Committee:

Re: Public hearing on HB 444  
Tuesday Feb 24th, 2009 @ 9:00am

As a resident of hawaii and a registered voter, I would like to voice my opposition to House Bill 444 and Senate Bill 458.

Thomas F. Norris  
94-092 Puanane Lp.  
Mililani, HI 96789

---

**From:** Gina Cardazone [cardazon@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:58 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB444 HD1 relating to civil unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Testimony in support of House Bill 444 HD1 relating to civil unions, to be heard on February 24th at 9am:

My name is Gina Cardazone and I am a member of Dignity Honolulu, a Catholic group devoted to recognition of equal rights for LGBT people. I would like to express my strong support for HB444 HD1.

I believe that all people should be treated equally, and that all forms of family should be respected. HB444 HD1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. It is a simple matter of equality, and may strengthen many families with LGBT members.

Thank you for your time,  
Gina Cardazone  
635 Hausten St. #4  
Honolulu HI 96826

---

**From:** Patricia Chung [pattikm@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:59 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony Opposing HB 444

Name: Patricia Chung

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Date and Time of Hearings: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00am

Measure Number: HB 444 HD1

Subject: Opposition to HB 444 HD1

My name is Patricia Chung. I am a public school teacher and have been teaching in Hawaii for 25 years. My husband is a fire fighter and has been serving our local communities for 33 years.

I am writing to say that we strongly oppose HB 444, and as voting residents we want to make our feelings very clear. We also oppose SB 458, HB 878 and any other bills related to Civil Unions.

What is being called Civil Unions is just another name for Same-Sex marriage. Remember that when the issue was brought before the people at the polls, we voted overwhelmingly against Same-Sex marriage. I am saddened that it is trying to be passed under our noses, without bringing it out to the public for us to decide upon again.

Please consider the wishes of the majority of the people before making your final decision on the passage of HB 444.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Chung

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:12 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** withacapitalm@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Maria Lebron  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 830 Pa'ahana Street Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808-386-4017  
E-mail: [withacapitalm@yahoo.com](mailto:withacapitalm@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I am writing in strong support of HB444. I feel very strongly that we, as a society, are way overdue to instill the same legal marital rights for homosexuals that currently exist for heterosexuals. I find it deeply embarrassing that America, a country with a military base in ever other country-so willing to enforce democracy at gunpoint, is so lacking in equality and democracy itself. Every State that eliminates legal descrimination against homosexuals is one more step toward nation wide equality and justice for all. That means ALL people that are marginalized, not just homosexuals.

One of the most important principles upon which our country was founded was the separation of Church and State, yet the only reason that homosexual people do not have the same rights as heterosexual people is religion.

The First Amendment guarantees people freedom of religion. It does not guarantee people the right to force their religious beliefs onto other people. Passing this bill will add another layer of protection for all people whose religious beliefs differ from the three major mono-theistic ones. People like me.

One of the arguments that the religious bigots use to oppose such a measure is to say that civil unions will weaken the value of their own marriages. I have never heard any details on exactly why that would be true, probably because it is a baseless argument.

As a legally married heterosexual, I feel that if anything it would strengthen my marriage and the reason why is because I am in a non-traditional marriage. I kept my own name, we do not abide by strict gender roles, and we don't intend to have children. I crave a world in which these factors, which I consider so basic, need not cause such looks of contempt from close minded people.

Therefor, I stand in solidarity with other members of my community who know what it is like to waste too much time and energy fighting for their place in the world.



Testifier: Matt Prellberg  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, and Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations:

Thank you for coming together and hearing House Bill 444: Relating to Civil Unions, and thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Matt Prellberg, I am an undergraduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa studying political science and religion, and I stand in strong support of HB 444 HD1.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776, the founding fathers of this nation declared that all men are created equal and that all have the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. A yes vote from you on HB 444 could help a countless number of Hawaii residents in their quest for equality and in turn verify their inalienable right for their lives, civil liberties, and most importantly, their pursuit of happiness.

I moved to Hawaii in 2005 from an area in the continental US widely renowned for its exclusive nature in manners relating minorities. I had been told by friends who grew up here that Hawaii was a paradise where anyone could find a home and have a life, no matter your race, religion or creed. I knew that when I chose the University of Hawaii, I was setting myself up for a more diverse and inclusive atmosphere. The moment I stepped off the plane, I felt an immediate sensation of welcome and love. This is the feeling we have all come to know as Aloha. Nearly every aspect of Hawaii has found a place deep within my heart. It is only in Hawaii where one can be encouraged and invited to taste a wide array of foods, learn the music and dancing of cultures from all over the world, and be taught to say hello in over twenty languages. Hawaii is known all over the planet for being the Aloha State. An area where anyone is supposed to be able to find love, life and pursue happiness, and in return, share love, life and happiness to our family, friends and neighbors. Our state even has the "Aloha Spirit Law" which asks the legislature to give consideration to the "Aloha Spirit" (HRS 5-7.5).

All of us here today, in support or in opposition, are here due to deeply held beliefs and have without a doubt added some extra pressure to each of your lives for the past few weeks. As an American citizen, I find it disheartening and slightly ironic that I am having to plead for the inalienable right to pursue happiness. I am humbly asking the members of this committee to exemplify the aloha spirit and provide countless Hawaii citizens our inalienable rights by voting yes on House Bill 444 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Matt Prellberg

2585 Dole St.

Honolulu, HI 96822

**Jonathon Berliner**  
**1561 Kanunu Street - APT 1507**  
**Honolulu, HI 96814**  
**(808) 946-0767**

**DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009**  
**TIME: 9:00 AM**  
**PLACE: Auditorium – State Capitol**  
**HB 444, HD 1**

**RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS.**

**Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.**

Dear Chair Senator Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Senator Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony before this committee. My name is Jonathon Berliner and I am providing this testimony on my behalf, as a community member, who has also been in a committed same gender relationship for over 8 years.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to express my **support for House Bill 444, HD 1 – Relating to Civil Unions.** I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444, HD 1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

It is personally demeaning and demoralizing to me to be a part of the one group that has been singled out and who has little rights afforded us in our relationships. We are deserving of the same equal rights the opposite sex couples in marriage enjoy.

The current unequal treatment that a large population experiences is unfair and unjust, when compared to opposite sex couples who enjoy many additional rights with marriage. Civil Unions are supported by the majority of the public locally and nationally. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many for too long now. I respectfully ask that you support HB 444, HD 1, and appreciate your careful consideration of this important issue. Help us join the other states that have rightfully and courageously made the decision to allow a form of equal rights for same gender couples who wish to be committed, and deserve these rights.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Jonathon Berliner

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:52 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** mikekelso@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Michael Kelso  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 25 S.Kalaheo Ave Kailua, HI 96734  
Phone: 808-262-0006  
E-mail: [mikekelso@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:mikekelso@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

---

**From:** Scott Orton [ortons002@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)  
**Attachments:** DaCoconutWireless2.vcf

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

**Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)**

Scott Orton  
1130 Hassinger St. #3A  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
808-383-2016

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

Hawaii needs to enact HB444 to ensure the rights of the gay minority here. Religion has long suppressed the rights of gay people and persicuted them relentlessly throughtout history. Religious persicution via political means needs to end here is Hawaii. It is important to acknowledge and permit equal rights with Civil Unions and let the gay population enjoy the same rights and freedoms that their straight counterparts enjoy.

President Obama supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples. Obama also believes we need to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and enact legislation that would ensure that the 1,100 plus federal legal rights and benefits currently provided on the basis of marital status are extended to same-sex couples in civil unions and other legally-recognized unions. These rights and benefits include the right to assist a loved one in times of emergency, the right to equal health insurance and other employment benefits, and property rights.

Again I am in Strong Support or HB 444 as amended.

With love and aloha,  
Scott Orton, HIV/AIDS Awareness Advocate  
[www.DaCoconutWireless.com](http://www.DaCoconutWireless.com)

Scott Orton

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Please support HB 444 HD1

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Bridget Murphy and I am a graduate student in the school of social work at the University of Hawai'i. I am here today to support HB 444 HD1 for civil unions. No person should be denied access to the basic rights given to spouses through the act of marriage. HB 444 would allow the same benefits, equal rights, and protections in a civil union.

Same-sex partners deserve the same equality, protection, and rights as opposite-sex partners to ensure the overall well-being of all family members and individuals. Same-sex couples are people who love one another in committed relationships, have families, and have the same goals and desires for their future together as married couples except for the difference of gender.

If you look back fifty years ago, interracial marriage was illegal in several states. At that time it was an issue of regulating ethnicity, today it is a debate on regulating genders.

Same sex couples must have the same rights as those who are allowed to marry. It is inhumane to deny these people the rights to the same protections such as insurance benefits, joint accounts, financial stability, and rights to visit loved ones in the hospital.

I am in a committed relationship with my partner of several years. We may one day decide to have children; however, without the benefits made available by civil unions my children would be made to suffer by not having a complete financially stable family.

Why are so many committed loving couples made to suffer?

There are already several states that have legalized civil unions starting with Vermont in 2000, followed by Connecticut, Oregon, Washington, and finally New Hampshire.

Even President Obama "supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples."

What example will Hawai'i set for the rest of the nation? Will it follow in the footsteps of honoring equality for all?

Mahalo,

Bridget Murphy

1002A Prospect St.

Honolulu HI, 96822

---

**From:** Kim MacDonald [kim\_macdonald@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium at the State Capitol

**STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)**

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

I would like to express my support for HB444 hd1 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people regardless of their ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution.

My partner and I have been together for almost 9 years and we were legally able to marry in Canada in 2004. It is sad fact, a civil rights injustice, and an economic loss for Hawaii and the US that we could not do so in our own state or country. While we live together as a married couple, our own government does not treat us as such.

The unequal treatment is unfair and unjust and unconstitutional.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii Senate. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB444 hd1 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Thank you,  
Kim MacDonald  
94-1185 Meleinoa Place, #B  
Waipahu, HI 96797

---

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**From:** John Moses [dropoutjohn@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:54 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is John Moses and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. (If you represent an organization or have a religious affiliation please say so). I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

--  
Mahalo,  
John Moses  
53-860 Kamehameha Highway  
Hau'ula, HI  
96717

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime." mark twain

---

**From:** Rose [titapauoa@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Kekuilani K; titapauoa@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**February 22, 2009**

**From: Rosalia Kaimi**  
**To: Senate Judiciary Committee**  
**Hearing: February 24, 2009**  
**Time: 9:00 A.M.**

## **HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

**I strongly oppose to HB 444 HD1.**

**In 1998 the people of Hawaii spoke on marriage being one man and one woman.**

**In 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS 572C (RBA) became law. This law allows two persons who are legally prohibited from marrying under state law to register their reciprocal beneficiary relationship by filing a notarized declaration with the state director of health.**

**I want traditional marriages. Traditional marriages and families should not be undermined.**

**Marriage is not an American invention.**

**People should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors.**



---

**From:** Andrew Pearson [andrew.e.pearson@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:45 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Andrew Pearson  
Addressed to the Senate Judiciary Committee

HB 444 HD1  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00am

Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Ladies and Gentlemen

My Name Is Andrew Pearson. I am 20 years old, and a Hawaii resident.

Thank You for your attention to House Bill 444.  
I speak in opposition to HB 444 on Civil Unions.

Although many of you claim that this bill on Civil Unions does not alter the definition and nature of marriage, I strongly disagree!

By placing placing civil Unions on equal par with traditional Marriage this bill has the exact same effect! Such a bill is against the will of Hawaii's people. As shown by the 70% of Hawaii voters who approved a constitutional amendment in 1998 that defined marriage as a "union between a man and a woman".

Secondly, traditional heterosexual marriage Is an essential institution to our society. One that provides stability and a sense of identity to Hawaii's families.

I have no desire to deny homosexuals any civil right whatsoever, however I am strongly opposed to the notion of denying the children of Hawaii the civil right of growing up in a stable and loving home environment with both a mother and a father.

Personally, I have experienced the benefits of growing up in such a home. I know without a doubt that my emotional stability, decision making ability, ambition, and positive outlook on life are the direct product of being raised in a stable home environment, with both a father and a mother.

I graduated from Waimea High school on the Island of Kauai, with a cumulative GPA of 4.00. During my high school career. It did not take long for me to realize that the vast majority of my class mates who did not share my background of a stable and nurturing home environment, lacked the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual foundation that I often took for granted. Whether the families of these individuals were fractured by divorce, or suffered from any other scenario, it was painfully obvious that the development of these students was stunted due to the lack of a stable home environment.

I realize that my Ideal home environment is a rare commodity in our society, However If we pass HB 444, we will be denying many of the children of our state even the slightest chance of experiencing the blessing of a both a father and a mother.

Just as it is physically and sexually impossible for a homosexual union to produce a child. It is equally Impossible for a civil union to nurture and properly develop a child. I am not implying that I doubt such a couple's love and good intentions for they're children. But I know beyond the shadow of a doubt that growing up within a homosexual union cannot begin to compete with the blessing that I have experienced in my home with both a father and a mother.

Ladies and Gentleman I implore you, please do not deny the children of Hawaii, the future of our great State, the Civil Right of a Family! The traditional family structure is the foundation for the success and well being of Hawaii's children!

Thank You Very Much

---

**From:** Rose [titapauoa@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:04 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**FROM: Aulani Hoomanawanui**  
**TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**  
**HEARING: FEBRUARY 24, 2009**  
**TIME: 9:00 A.M.**

**HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

**I strongly oppose to HB 444. I am for traditional marriages. Our traditional marriages and families should not be undermined.**

**We have a voice and our voices have been heard back in 1998.**

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:44 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** susan.koki@halekulani.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Frank Hernandez  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 2470 North School Street Honolulu, HAWAII 96819  
Phone:  
E-mail: [susan.koki@halekulani.com](mailto:susan.koki@halekulani.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Susan Koki and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

I am a straight single mother of one and I support HB444. Two of my best friends are lesbian. They both are in loving committed relationship and they are mothers to a beautiful little girl. The love they share is worthy of marriage in my eyes, however HB444 is not about marriage, it's about civil rights they work for and deserve as a human beings.

This is not about religion, this is about people and the rights they have as law abiding, tax paying individuals. HB444 is about this little girl and her mothers having the same rights that my son and I share.

I ask that you support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Susan Koki  
2470 North School Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

---

**From:** kweersing@gmail.com on behalf of Kimberley Weersing [weersing@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:44 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Bill 444

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Kimberley Weersing and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that **all** people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I have family members and close friends who are gay, in committed relationships, and are raising healthy, happy families. It is important that we recognize their relationships with the same respect that we grant to heterosexual couples.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Kimberley Weersing  
3517 Kilauea Ave  
Honolulu, HI 96816



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2600 Campus Rd. QLCSS #211  
Honolulu, HI 96822

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Hawai'i WomenWork!  
Board of Directors

Teresa Bill  
President

Christine Ishihara  
Secretary

Catherine Wehrman  
Treasurer

Date: February 20, 2009

TO: SENATE Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

From: Teresa Bill, Hawai'i WomenWork!

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT** HB 444,hd1 re: Civil Unions  
Tues. Feb. 24, 2009 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol Auditorium

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I am Teresa Bill, testifying **in strong support of HB 444, hd1** on behalf of Hawai'i WomenWork!

Members of Hawaii WomenWork! are employed in various non-profit and educational venues to ensure equal economic opportunity for all Hawai'i's families.

HB444hd1 establishing civil unions for same-sex couples is necessary to ensure that all families have full and equal access to all civil (relating to citizens as opposed to ecclesiastical, relating to church) rights and legal protections. Children of same-sex couples are currently without the same family protections and benefits that are provided to children of opposite-sex couples. We need to value and protect all families and all children.

Civil Unions do not impact religious "marriages," which are sanctioned by a church. Religious communities will always be able to define "marriage" within their churches according to their traditions.

Civil Unions are civil rights. Please support HB444 which assures equal rights.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Susan Chung

1319 Moi Way

Honolulu, HI 96816

To: The Senate Judiciary Committee

Senator Taniguchi, Chair

Re: Opposition to HB 444

Historically in 1998, the people of Hawaii spoke as they passed a constitutional amendment stating that marriage would be defined as a union between a man and a woman. In Hawaii, marriage is not defined as a civil union between two couples regardless of their gender. In 1997, the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act (RBA) was passed. This law affords any couple, who are in a committed relationship, the same benefits previously given to married individuals.

The sanctioning of civil unions is against the will of the people. Under the guise of civil liberties, the door will eventually open to the acknowledgement of same sex marriages in Hawaii. The homosexual community acknowledges that sanctioning civil unions is the first step to sanctioning same sex marriages.

Under the guise of civil liberties, HB 444 erodes the concept of marriage. This erosion of marriage is an erosion of the fabric of our lives in Hawaii. The fabric of our state is woven in the acknowledgement that righteousness perpetuates the life of our land. May the righteousness of our land be perpetuated through the laws that reflect the will of Hawaii's people.

The people spoke overwhelmingly against same sex marriages in our constitutional amendment. RBA protects the rights of those in committed relationships. May the laws of our Hawaii continue to weave the fabric of our land.—A land which will continue to perpetuate in righteousness.

I urge you to stand with me in opposition to HB 444.

*Respectfully Submitted  
Susan Chung*

Aloha,

I would like to make known today that I **OPPOSE** the bill at hand called **HB444\_SD1**.

The purpose of opposition is that it is against the nature of law by God and by man. For if we continue to encourage such acts in regards to same-sex marriage, or under a new camouflage of deception entitled "Civil Union", the population of humanity shall decrease dramatically. For neither two females nor two males can conjured a child just between themselves for this would be an impossible task to defeat.

For God made both male and female and expressed to them that they need to be fruitful and multiply. The Bible also noted that during the time of the flood of Noah, he needed to take in two of every beast, fowls, creatures, and all living things; each of a male and a female. If the non-religious partisans who believe in evolution or some other means of creation of the universe, also can not disprove that the only way of reproduction is only possible, by either a human or an animal, is through the opposite sex, which means a male and a female type of organisms.

Even if the "same-sex" are able to live together, they will not be able to produce a child without a third-party intervention. With this bill being active and approved by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii, having a third-party intervention will now cause the so-called couple to commit adultery, which adultery according to the Black's Law Dictionary state, "Adultery is a voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than the person's spouse". In addition to that, adultery is still considered a crime even though it is rarely prosecuted to the full extent.

I here stand now against this bill, HB444\_SD1 – Civil Union, and declare my opposition against the bill to you, the leaders of the Legislature of the State of Hawaii.

Thank you

*Ivan K Kapaona*



To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009


Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

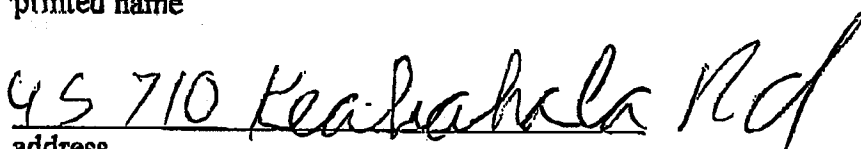
I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

  
signature

  
printed name

  
address

\_\_\_\_\_  
(optional) phone and/or email address

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

*please pass this bill now. It will eventually pass anyway*

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Name: *Dwight Takamine*

Signature: *[Handwritten Signature]*

Address: *717 Kaimukou Street  
Honolulu HI 96826*

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair- Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Re: HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

To Be Heard: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

Date: February 22, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I wish to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent QMark Research study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a large majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Carl P Bendis  
signature

CARL P BENDIS  
printed name

1925 KALAKAUA AVE  
address

808 941-5041  
(optional) phone and/or email address

**TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL  
AUDITORIUM-HB 444, HD1**

**CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS:**

**IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

The  
collec  
tive

**HB 444**

1998 vote spoke loud and strong about this issue of Civil Unions (Same Sex Marriages). Your vote will make the difference between a divided community or not. Let the collective will of the people stand and not the will of elected officials! Please, don't allow HB444 to pass out of your committee.

**Thank you,**

**Franklin Souza**

**928484 Palailai Street**

**Kapolei, Hi 96707 808-672-4008**

Tracy Ryan  
1658 Liholiho St #205  
Honolulu, HI 96822

## TESTIMONY

To the Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: HB 444 hd 1 to be heard Tuesday, February 24, at 9 AM in the Capitol Auditorium

Dear Senators:

I support the passage of HB 444 hd 1 that would create a new legal status of civil unions to enable couples to have access to a standardized body of laws governing various aspects of family and probate issues without having to obtain marriage licenses.

Much is being made about the 1998 constitutional amendment that set aside a pre existing Hawaii Supreme Court ruling that same sex couples were qualified to receive marriage licenses issued by the Department of Health. This amendment did not ban same sex marriage or anything of the kind. It simply gave to the legislature a power (to define marriage as the legal union of one man and one woman), that the court had ruled it did not have prior to passage of the amendment.

In establishing the authority of the marriage laws as the province of a legislative body responsive to the public will the amendment clearly gives instruction that should public opinion change the legislature should change with it. Public opinion in 2009 is not the same thing as public opinion at any other time, including 1998. The recent vote in California indicated almost half the population of the largest state in the country was willing to issue marriage licenses to same sex couples. The less controversial issue of civil unions would almost certainly have passed there as it should here in Hawaii based on the current views of the majority.

Same sex marriage is legal in Hawaii under basic contract law. This has been the case for thirty years since we abolished our sodomy laws. All civil unions legislation changes is to allow these married couples, who cannot obtain a piece of paper called a marriage license, to have their relationship disputes, estates, child custody issues, and other potential legal matters, resolved by a standardized code of family law.



Tracy Ryan

[tracyar@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:tracyar@hawaiiantel.net)

(808) 534-1846

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 444

Aloha Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee members:

Love is love. Please give gays and lesbians that share the same love each of you have with your spouses the benefits and protections of marriage. For a state that champions the spirit of aloha, inclusiveness, and 'ohana, this bill represents a natural progression towards that end. In moving forward, all that's threatened is the perpetuation of division, exclusion, and inferiority.

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Martin Luther King Jr.

Thank you for your sober consideration of this momentous issue.

Napali Souza

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**From:** David Lane [alohaguy@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:41 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** SUPPORT HB 444

"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness." - President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 2009

With these words, President Obama affirms that ALL Hawaiians deserve equal rights, protections, and benefits. HB 444 assures that all Hawaiians with non-discrimination and fairness. My family STRONGLY supports HB 444. Please pass HB 444.

David Lane  
4160 Omao Road  
Kona, HI 96756

---

**From:** ms24824@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:29 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil unions

I support civilunions because it's the right thing to do. There was a time in this state that filipinos, japanese, chinese were looked upon as 2nd class citizens. There was a time in this nation when blacks were enslaved and women were not allowed to vote. We could barely even talk back to our husbands without repercussions. I have seen in my lifetime partners die of aids without their life partner at their sides due to the inequity of today's laws. Let's finally be able to say that in hawaii, the most beautiful of states, that there are no second class citizens, not homosexuals, nor disabled, nor black, white or any race. Let's show the rest of the us the type of loving and accepting society that obama came from and be a model for the rest of the world and a leader in a new way of thinking.

Joanne Short

Ewa Beach HI

Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile



---

**From:** William Feltz [WFELTZ@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:33 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** William Feltz; feltzb@eastwestcenter.org  
**Subject:** Strong support for Civil Unions

February 22, 2009

RE: Strong support for HB444 HD1  
Hearing: Tues., Feb. 24, 9:00 a.m.  
Judiciary and Government Operations Committee (Sorry, I am not able to attend to deliver testimony in person.)

Dear Senator Bunda and Committee members,

I want to encourage you to take a strong stand in support civil rights in Hawaii, in particular, to strongly support of Civil Unions. As one who was in a long-term and devoted relationship, I experienced the hand of discrimination, most painful when my partner was in sickness and death.

For me as a 43-year resident of Hawaii, it will be dream come true to see the Hawaii Legislature add its voice to the growing number of pioneering states, and to see the younger generation of Hawaii's youth not burdened with this particular issue. As with other triumphs over "traditional" modes of legal discrimination, one day we will all be embarrassed to look back, and we'll wonder why it took so long.

Please don't worry about the clamor from those who protest out of sincere (but mistaken) religious conviction, as this is a clear example of separation of church and state. In the end, you'll be so comfortable with and proud of your stand.

Mahalo for your support. Imua!

Aloha, Bill Feltz  
666-604 Prospect St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

---

**From:** Mary [maw808@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:30 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* HB 444 HD1, related to civil unions

Aloha, members of the Judiciary committee,

Thank you for setting a public hearing on Tuesday to consider this legislation. I'm writing to support this measure. In some ways, your favorable vote will honor the legacy of former Supreme Court Justice Steven Levinson who wrote brilliantly in *Baehr v. Lewin* some 14 years ago that no bona fide public interest in Hawaii supported the denial of civil rights to the LGBT community. After a full hearing to determine whether ANY legitimate state interest was served by excluding the gay community from the panoply of rights and responsibilities that apply to others, Judge Kevin Chang concluded that none was. And, writing as one who's appeared in front of him, Judge Chang is no flaming liberal.

In other ways, this legislation simply doesn't go far enough.

Focusing on the positive, extending equal rights and responsibilities to the LGBT community is overdue. Civil rights are not negotiable. Period. I still cannot understand how honoring civil rights in any way threatens the majority heterosexual population or its religious institutions. I wonder at the amount of tax-free money from religious institutions that flows into a state when it considers equality issues. Even if I could conclude that such partisan politicking WAS consistent with their 501(c)(3) promise to NOT invade the political arena--and I cannot--I wonder that their congregants' money is not being spent to educate their children and to feed the poor. How, for example, does the LDS leadership justify dumping some 15 million tax-free dollars into a misinformation campaign to defeat Proposition 8 in California??? Thankfully, this conspicuous misuse of tax-p;tithe funds is finally receiving overdue judicial and IRS scrutiny. However, I digress.

All state "marriages" are, or should be construed as, "civil unions" under the law. The state has (or should have) no stake in the religious ceremonies that may attend a civil union. If religious institutions wish to bless or otherwise honor the civil unions of their congregants, then certainly they may. When the flimsy curtain distinguishing between civil unions and marriages is drawn aside, the ugly underbelly of discrimination and intolerance is exposed.

History will regard you kindly for your favorable vote. The sky is NOT falling, and will not fall, when you vote to protect a legally-vulnerable segment of our community. Really.

Respectfully,

Mary A, Wilkowski, Esq.  
304C Iolani Avenue  
Honolulu 96813  
536-5444

<http://www.VetiverSystemsHawaii.blogspot.com>

<http://www.VetiverSystems.com>

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808-536-5444

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---

**From:** Iokepa Iokepa [iokepa\_iokepa@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:21 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Re: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Joseph Pong, and I would like to submit the following:

I am writing to you as a concerned resident of the State of Hawaii. Recently, there was an article in the Honolulu Advertiser which stated that there are enough of a majority of state legislators to pass the civil union bill. My concern is that the residents of Hawaii have already voted on a similar measure a number of years ago -- specifically same sex marriages. The overwhelming majority of residents -- 70 to 80% chose NOT to have same sex marriages here in Hawaii.

Understandably, the civil union bill and same sex marriage are not exactly the same thing, however the goal of the homosexual community is to pass the civil union bill and then eventually push for the passage of same sex marriage here in Hawaii.

Please note that we the people of Hawaii do NOT want civil unions or same sex marriages in the state of Hawaii.

In fairness to the residents of Hawaii, I would strongly advice putting the civil union bill up for a vote by the people of Hawaii and allow them to decide if this is something that we the people of the State of Hawaii would wish to vote for or against.

As it stands now, the legislators are taking it on themselves to decide for the residents of Hawaii what they believe is best. Remember you are elected to represent the people and not your interest or your party's interest. I would ask that you reconsider pushing this civil union bill through without first consulting the people of the State of Hawaii. Let us vote and decide for ourselves whether or not this is a bill that we would wish to have passed.

I am very disappointed in the direction that the Democratic party here in Hawaii has chosen for this beautiful state. The United States of America was once a great and mighty nation founded on Biblical principles that have stood the test of time. Sadly, the civil union and same sex marriage agenda completely ignores these Biblical principles. Here are some Bible verses from the NIV (New International Version) that you are more than welcome to reference on your own to verify the accuracy of what is stated:

Romans 1:26 & 27:

\* Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

\* In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Please respect the will of the people and do not take it upon yourselves to push through a bill that is not supported by the majority of Hawaii residents.

---

**From:** Gerald W Ashton [gerald@designresponsemaui.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:03 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1

Gerald W Ashton, AIA  
Partner  
Design Response Inc

**Re: HB 444 HD1**

**Testimony: Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.)**

**Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee.**

Honorable Senators;

We believe that Constitutional rights guaranteeing equality demands support for this bill. The time has come to make Hawai'i a shining example of these Constitutional freedoms which will finally recognize those who have been denied these basic rights, and give ALL the opportunity to have the same securities that others have had since the Bill of Rights was in place.

For the last 37 years, my partner and I have been denied equality that otherwise would be ours if the Constitution was fully enforced and followed. We have been part of Maui's community for over 15 years, and have watched thousands of visitors enjoy the right to join in a life partnership with no restrictions. Now is the time to give all people of Hawai'i the same equality.

Please do the right thing, Senators, and give all of Hawai'i's citizens equal rights.

Respectfully submitted;

Gerald W Ashton  
Chief Executive Officer  
Design Response Inc.

Gerald W Ashton AIA  
[gerald@designresponsemaui.com](mailto:gerald@designresponsemaui.com)

---

**From:** Tony Radmilovich [radmilovich@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:05 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444

"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness." - President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 2009

In accord with this statement I support this bill!

Tony Radmilovich

---

**From:** emynent [emynent@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:09 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in favor of HB 444 HD1  
**Attachments:** stat9863.jpg

Sunday, February 22, 2009

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Re: Civil Unions Bill (HB444 HD1)  
Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 9 a.m.

To Whom It May Concern::

I am a retired Christian minister. My wife and I are the blessed parents of two grown daughters, both of whom are gay. We have always been extremely uncomfortable with the divisive position of those who oppose gay unions. Many Christians feel such unions stand directly against their doctrines regarding homosexuality, but they are mistaken. In their efforts to maintain the purity of their beliefs, Christians have made this mistake of exclusion throughout history, often with unspeakably tragic results.

As a locally born-and-raised part-Hawaiian, I have, like many others, been witness to the insidiousness of this kind of discriminating exclusivity, whether cultural, religious, economic, racial, or legal. Under any banner, and for any reason, the exclusion of American citizens from rights enjoyed by others is simply unconstitutional.

One of the great blessings of democracy, especially as defined by Americans, is its protection of and provision for its minorities, no matter who they are. This has sometimes caused tremendous challenges and huge upheavals. Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation is only one example. Sometimes, as in the case of slavery, a large part of the population may be decidedly wrong. It is for these instances that the wisdom of the Constitution provides a clear and shining light for these who's civil, social, and personal rights might be ignored and diminished by a prejudiced, un-evolved majority.

We have watched over the years as our state government has struggled with this issue of same-sex civil unions. We applaud our legislators for allowing this issue to be re-examined and re-considered. In a community with so many minorities and such deep roots in the values of family, fairness, and Aloha, it is especially beholden to us to provide a safe, legal place for gay couples to live and pursue their happiness.

Sincerely,

Mark and Diane Yasuhara

---

**From:** shawn de Mille [surfpakalas@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:21 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** surfpakalas@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Richard Paton De Mille  
Bill Number and Title: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Gov't Opeerations  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium  
Subject Line: Strong Opposition to HB 44 HD1

to whom it may concern,

I do not see any difference in this bill than the Same Sex Bill that was already defeated. **Please do not pass this bill (HB 44 HD1).**

I foresee problems in public schools for example, where a man or woman, who prefers a same sex partner, would have access to gym locker rooms where young students are changing clothes or showering. It would then be necessary to pre-screen teachers sexual preferences, which is against the Constitution of the United States. Right now we don't have men supervising women's locker rooms or women supervising men's locker rooms. With same sex preferences this would create sexual predators and more sexual offenders in the long run. This is only one example of why this bill will not work.

Respectively submitted,

Richard Paton De Mille

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**From:** Helena Cence [helena@cence.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:08 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1

**I totally support full civil unions that give same-sex couples the same legal rights and privileges that are afforded to married couples. It is all about showing respect and tolerance to everybody in our community.**  
**Helena Cence**

Helena Cence (R) CRS CIPS  
Vice President  
Coldwell Banker Pacific Properties  
4211 Waiialae Ave Suite 9000, Honolulu, HI 96816  
284-5362 Cell  
[helena@cence.net](mailto:helena@cence.net)  
[www.cence.net](http://www.cence.net)



---

**From:** Anika Glass [anika.nui@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:24 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Denny Coffman; Rep. Cindy Evans; Josh Green  
**Subject:** In Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions

to the Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee:

I am testifying in support of HB411 HD1, Civil Unions.

I have known the personal pain and unwarranted humiliation of those who are denied basic rights that should be equal for all Americans. Passing the Civil Unions measure will move Hawai'i in the right direction towards full individual freedom.

Anika Glass  
68-1863 Ua Noe ST  
Waikoloa, HI 96738

---

**From:** Thomas Dickey [tardend@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:38 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Please Support HB444 for Civil Unions

JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY in SUPPORT of HB444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

February 24, 2009

THOMAS A. DICKEY  
2929 ALA ILIMA STREET, APT 301  
HONOLULU, HI 96818

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

Please pass HB444, a bill to create civil unions for same sex committed couples.

It is time to recognize our gay brothers and sisters as full members of our family and grant them the same rights and responsibilities we extend to committed opposite sex relationships.

Such legislation will not weaken heterosexual unions, but will strengthen our society by reaffirming our common ties and mutual respect.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**NAME Evelyn E. Souza**  
**ADDRESS 92848 Palailai Street**  
**PHONE 808-255-8297**

**ATTENTION:Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**

**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM**

**I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

I remain in strong opposition to HB444; just as I was 10 years ago. The issue of CIVIL UNIONS in the State of Hawaii has reared its divisive head once again and causes this community (known for the Aloha spirit and tolerance of many things) to become more vocal about the same issue. Sadly, it's been called another name as if we wouldn't recognize its "face" or intent. The majority of the people spoke then through their overwhelming vote to not allow Same Sex Marriages (aka CIVIL UNIONS) in this State and still believes in the traditional marriages of a husband and a wife. Issues of the children of these unions not having their children receive the same benefits as other children in a traditional marriage is ridiculous and lends of unfounded hysteria. I am a voting resident of Hawaii, as are my neighbors, family and friends, and ask that you represent the will of the people. In this trying times of sacrifice and doing without because of our failing economy, I ask that you spend more time on these economical matters and be MINDFUL of the spoken will of the people through the 1998 vote of the people and demonstration of unity.

**I urge you to vote against HB 444.**

---

**From:** Linda Staton [writtenword@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:54 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit

To whom it may concern:

I am today testifying on behalf of those who choose to be free in our country. I believe that America stands for freedom for all and therefore rightfully due the same liberty as all of us who live in our democratic country. Please use your vote to recognize the people who choose alternative lifestyles such as civil partnerships so that they may have the same protection under the law and same-sex married citizens.

Linda Staton  
[writtenword@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:writtenword@hawaii.rr.com)

---

**From:** Yttapeel@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:58 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I Patricia Lee Simpson strongly Oppose HB 444 HD1.

**Name of person submitting opposition:** Patricia Lee Simpson

**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24th 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00 AM

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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(<http://pr.atwola.com/promoclk/100126575x1218822736x1201267884/aol?redir=http:%2F%2Fwww.freecreditreport.com%2Fpm%2Fdefault.aspx%3Fsc%3D668072%26hmpgID%3D62%26bcd%3DfebemailfooterNO62>)

To: Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine  
Members of the Judiciary And Government Operations Committee

From : Debi Hartmann

RE: Support for HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 9:00 am

I speak in favor of HB 444. As one of the old war horses of the 1996, 1998 marriage battle, I have never fully left the topic of same-sex marriage, civil union, domestic partnership, or reciprocal beneficiary. I have studied it as an undergraduate, and as a master's thesis and doctoral dissertation. With that in mind I would like to address three different aspects of HB444 that is before you today.

1) Civil Unions is NOT the same thing as marriage. Let me explain briefly, marriage has reciprocity in 49 other states and throughout the world. A civil union on the other hand has reciprocity in six other states and six other countries. Marriage, being portable allows for all rights and benefits to be portable as well, civil union not being portable, all rights protections and benefits are lost. Why does one move from one state to another perhaps it is a professional move or the need to care for an elderly parent. Even more importantly, let us not forget that marriage carries with it numerous federal benefits that a couple in a civil union as well as their children will never benefit from. To put civil unions in the same category is to say that a raisin and a grape are the same simply because they came from the same branch.

2) The amendment of 1998 was not an ending to this discourse the intent was to allow the discourse to continue. The language is clear, "The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples." This language does not speak to a prohibition of civil union. The language, "shall have the power to reserve" was used to ensure a continuation of rather than an illumination of further consideration for a legal relationship with rights and privileges for same-sex couples. I was with the Senate as they carefully crafted this language and its intent.

3) In 2006 I took the time to analyze the HRS §572-C Reciprocal Beneficiary Statute and was more than disconcerted. I discovered that it did not cover many areas of law that I had thought to be included. I retrieved from my files a copy of HB118HD1SD1 and review the bill to determine what had happened. To my shock and subsequent regret I discovered that out of the 146 laws of protection and rights only 83 or 56% were actually included in the final statute. And of those 83, 11 were removed by court decision so the final tally is 49% of the initial HB118HD1SD1 RB Bill became HRS §572-C. This information caused me to undertake a more extensive review of the laws of Hawaii and discovered the following:

|                        |     |          |
|------------------------|-----|----------|
| Reciprocal Beneficiary | 83  | Statutes |
| Marriage               | 191 | Statutes |
| Spouse                 | 505 | Statutes |
| Children               | 633 | Statutes |
| Family                 | 452 | Statutes |

I discovered that when marriage is entered into 191 marriage laws, 505 spousal laws, 633 children's laws, and 452 family laws apply as they are all connected due to statutory language. That is a total of 1781 laws that protect, support, and privilege legalized relationships that are committed to one another called, "marriage". BUT, when you write a letter to enter into a RB you get the 83 RB laws and a few spousal laws, a compliment of children's laws that totals 177 laws. The male and female who have the right to a legal marriage are in pursuit of happiness to better their lives, their families and the lives of their neighbors and community. These two people have the full backing of the state and so do their children. The children are an area of my greatest concern for me. The same-sex couple who enters into a RB has little to no support until they get sick or die, in life the law tells them that you, your partner and your children are on your own, the state and community are not there for you.

I have been an advocate for children in Hawaii for some 25 years; as legislative vice president of the state PTSA to Chair of the State Board of Education. Today I hope to continue that effort by speaking in support of HB444 HD1.

Too many of Hawaii's children have been without protections, supports, and fundamental basic rights in their family life. The statutory responsibility is to value our families, all our families and all our children; I thank you for making that change happen now.

---

**From:** rjamasol@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:47 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Rudolph Amasol

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1 I ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. I am one of the seventy percent who voted to keep traditional marriage in Hawaii and I still believe that marriage is between one man and one woman. I ask that you represent the will of the people. Please vote against HB 444.

---

**From:** donna moore [cacklinhens@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:11 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:  
Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee.

My name is Donna Moore and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration with liberty and justice for all.

Mahalo,

Donna Moore

59-331 Pupukea Road

Haleiwa, Hi 96712



---

**From:** ROBERT AFUSO [robertafuso@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:18 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD 1

TESTIFIER: ROBERT AFUSO  
BILL NUMBER AND TITLE: HB 444 HD 1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS  
COMMITTEE: SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE  
HEARING DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009  
HEARING TIME: 9:00 AM  
HEARING LOCATION: AUDITORIUM

MY NAME IS ROBERT AFUSO AND I WANT TO URGE THIS COMMITTEE TO STOP THIS HB 444 HD 1 FROM PROGRESSING ANY FURTHER.

THE MAJORITY OF US HERE IN THE STATE OF HAWAII AND IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DO NOT WANT THE MINORITY ELITE INTELLECTUAL LIBERAL RULING CLASS, WHO APPOINT ACTIVIST JUDGES THAT ARE TURNING THIS ONCE GREAT COUNTRY INTO A TARGET OF HATE FOR THE ISLAMIC TERRORIST OF THE WORLD AND PASS LAWS THAT PROTECT PORNOGRAPHY, CRIMINALS FROM COMPLETING THEIR SENTENCES FOR FEAR OF OVERCROWDING, ALLOWING THE PERVERTED LEFT TO RAMROD THEIR SICK AND FILTHY BELIEFS AND PRACTICES DOWN OUR CHILDRENS THROATS IN THEIR SEX EDUCATION IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOMS.

THESE MINORITY ELITE LEFT ACTIVISTS HAVE THE LIBERAL MEDIA TO PUSH THEIR AGENDA THROUGH TIME AND TIME AGAIN. THEY ARE NOW WORKING TO STOP ANY AND ALL OPPOSITION TO THEIR VIEWS BY PUSHING FOR A SO CALLED "FAIRNESS DOCTRINE" AGAINST TALK RADIO.

WAKE UP YOU FOOLS. ARE YOU GOING TO ALLOW YOURSELVES TO BE INTIMIDATED BY THE CONSTANT BARRAGE OF ONE-SIDED LIBERAL GARBAGE BEING RAMMED OVER THE AIRWAVES BY THE LIBERAL LEFT.

DO WHAT IS RIGHT FOR THIS NATION. DON'T VOTE FOR YOUR PARTY VOTE FOR YOUR FAMILY. WE ALREADY HAVE A RECIPROCAL BENEFICIARY LAW IN PLACE.

WE DO NOT WANT TO BE TOLD SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE THAT WE MUST NOT TEACH OR PREACH CERTAIN SCRIPTURES THAT WE MIGHT HAVE IN OUR RELIGIOUS BOOKS. AND BE FORCED TO HIRE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SUBSCRIBE TO OUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS IN OUR PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES, ETC.

IF PEOPLE WANT TO PRACTICE WHATEVER THEY FEEL IS RIGHT IN THEIR OWN HOMES AND NOT IN PUBLIC THAT IS FINE WITH ME.

BUT DO NOT FORCE ME TO ACCEPT YOUR PRACTICES IN PUBLIC.

THE MAJORITY RULE HAS GOT TO PREVAIL IN ALL OUR SOCIAL LAWS.

ROBERT AFUSO

---

**From:** Gayle Sale [saletravel01@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:37 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** WE OPPOSE HB444

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

WE OPPOSE HB444!

We are registered voters!

David Mellem  
Kailani Weiss  
Graham Weiss  
Kuupua Kuamoo  
Kawika Kuamoo  
Gayle Sale

Mahalo.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:38 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** avlis13@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Robert N. Silva  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 45-193 Wena St Kaneohe HI  
Phone: 808-236-7026  
E-mail: [avlis13@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:avlis13@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I believe that a marriage is between a MAN and a WOMAN and no other method.  
Why is this bill being routed when 70% of the people of Hawaii oppose it? Don't make sense.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:43 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** tutujms@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jettie M. Silva  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 45-193 Wena St Kaneohe HI  
Phone: 808-236-7026  
E-mail: [tutujms@aol.com](mailto:tutujms@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I believe that a marriage is between a MAN and a WOMAN. Seventy percent of the people of Hawaii believes so. I always believed the our legislators listens to and executes the will of the people. Not so in this case.

---

**From:** Jerri Patton [kaahumanu@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:22 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil Unions

Massachusetts has had civil unions for five year and they seem to be doing well. Civil unions will help our tourist trade. I vote for civil unions.

---

**From:** Phillip Lasaine [lasaine808@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:09 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* HB444

To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Re: HB 444

The 1998 constitutional amendment was all about "protecting marriage". OK marriage is protected. On the other hand, bill 444 is about protecting the dignity of a very small and highly maligned minority. The people opposing civil unions are not interested in protecting marriage; they are interested in legalizing discrimination against gays.

This is Hawaii, we are better than that.

Bill 444 is a fair compromise and long overdue. Clearly this debate will not end until there is justice and equality for all people. Now is the time. Pass the bill and move on to more important things.

On second thought, is there anything more important than treating all people equally and fairly?

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**From:** Christine David [christineedavid@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:56 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony in support of HB 444 HD 1

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

My name is Christine David and I am a mathematics teacher at Punahou School.

I am writing in support of HB 444 HD 1 for the hearing on Feb. 24th at 9 a.m.

I'm married and have one daughter, age 10. If I wanted to marry my husband in the 1950's, I wouldn't have been able to in many states since interracial marriages were banned. My husband is half Chinese. The US Supreme Court ruled in 1967 that race-based legal restrictions on marriage were unconstitutional (Loving v. Virginia). I imagine that if the people were allowed to vote on interracial marriage restrictions in 1967, many states would still ban such marriages. I am thankful that we live in a country where our representatives will stand up for the silent (or not so silent) minority.

I am quite certain that in my daughter's lifetime, we will see civil rights for gay couples advance to the point of equality. I also believe that our generation will look back and feel foolish for being so discriminatory toward a group of people that are born a certain way. If you believe scientists, then a gay person has no more control over their sexual preference than they do over the color of their eyes. I understand that religious groups have difficulties with gay marriage. They have the right to define marriage how they wish or how it is outlined in their doctrine. This bill does NOT ask for marriage rights for gay couples. Our gay friends and neighbors just want to enjoy some of the same rights and privileges that we enjoy. Is that too much to ask? Let's have Hawaii be a beacon of hope for others in our wonderful country. And to those who might vote "no"--I believe they're voting on the wrong side of history.

Thank you for your consideration on HB 444.

Sincerely,  
Christine David  
1180 Mokuhano St.  
Honolulu, HI  
# 394-0086 (h)  
# 782-2401 (c)

---

**From:** Eduardo Hernandez [mreduardo@nyc.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:55 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB 444- civil unions

To: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair Judiciary and  
Operations Committee.

Governmental

Senator Dwight Takamine, Co-chair Judiciary and Governmental Operations  
Committee.

Members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Eduardo Hernandez, Hawai`i resident from 1999-2008

Re: **HB 444 - Civil Unions - Testimony in SUPPORT**

Aloha and Good Morning Senators. Mahalo for your consideration in scheduling and hearing HB 444. This is important public policy legislation that is called for in the Hawai`i Constitution and is endorsed by President Obama, the Hawai`i House of Representatives, and a diverse coalition of family, faith, business, law and labor interests, as well as the civil rights community, including the Japanese American Citizen's League.

First, please consider the Constitution of the State of Hawai`i, which you are duty bound to uphold. Article 1, section 3 states:

**EQUALITY OF RIGHTS**

Section 3. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the State on account of sex. The legislature shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate



legislation, the provisions of this section. [L 1972, SB No 1408-72 and election Nov 7, 1972; ren Const Con 1978 and election Nov 7, 1978]

Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the State on account of sex. Yet currently, there are rights denied to thousands of people across the State, because they are not allowed to marry the person they love and want to protect as family.

Civil Unions is exactly the type of alternate legal structure that is permitted by the Constitution to be in compliance with this clause, as well as the 1998 voter-approved amendment which states simply:

#### MARRIAGE

Section 23. The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples. [Add HB 117 (1997) and election Nov 3, 1998]

Note that the amendment **NEVER mentions any prohibition** for equivalent alternate legal structures (i.e civil unions), which had already existed for nearly a decade in 1998. Thus, it is **FALSE** to say that this issue has already been decided by the people. **The people were silent on civil unions in 1998.** Please see the amendment for clarity on this point.

Meanwhile, in 2009, in the post 9/11 and new economy world we live in, we know that real dangers to families are things like global terrorism and an unregulated financial industry. **Civil unions and same-sex marriage actually are part of effective public policy** and that is why this bill has the support of business, labor, education, family, health and other interests, not only across Hawai`i, but around the world as well.

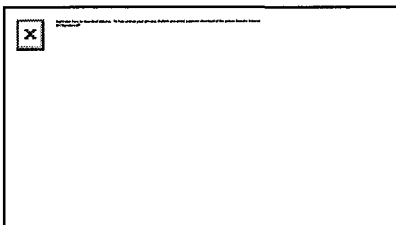
HB 444 represents public policy that will position Hawai`i to be among the best places to live, visit and work in the world. Equality is good for our economy and right now it is imperative to act for the good of our economy. We must put aside any personal differences we may have with our neighbors, and help families have equal access to health care and insurance, parenting rights such as single-family adoption, and tax benefits including the ability to file jointly. So too should there be equal protection in the area of dissolution, for which there is no provision for lesbian and gay families. Consider that in some cases the onus of divorce, can be just the barrier that causes couples to seek counseling and strengthen themselves to grow as a family. Gay families are currently prohibited by law from accessing divorce court.

There is no grassroots support to "simply fix the Reciprocal Beneficiaries statute," as the Lt. Governor and opponents misleadingly suggest. Civil unions is the compromise legislation that has wide public support and that is why this bill is before you today and no R.B. bill is even in the pipeline.

Everyone is entitled to their faith, but our laws must treat all people equally. Our society is based on civil law and the equal rights of all citizens. Please stand with President Obama and in support of the Constitution by voting to pass HB 444 - civil unions out of this committee today.

Thank you for this opportunity to **testify in support of civil unions.**

Eduardo Hernandez



## Post Script:

I was elected to the Ka`imuki Neighborhood Board in 2005. In 2007, I became the Chair of this community organization. That year, Ka`imuki, Waikiki, and Kalihi Valley Neighborhood Boards adopted resolutions in support of Civil unions and Family Equality. These resolutions remain in force to this day.

February 22, 2009

Testimony for HB 444 RE: Civil Unions  
Hawaii State Senate Judiciary and Government Operation Committee

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Ken Plonsky and I am here to express my strong support for HB444 - Civil Unions. I believe in equal rights for all.

From the bottom of my heart, I am asking for your support of HB444 (Civil Unions Bill). This is a very important bill. It is about civil rights, social justice, fairness, and doing the right thing. It is about our community's respect for the lives and beliefs of others. Civil unions convey those rights and duties without changing the definition or character of traditional marriage. Civil unions are not marriage. They will extend a basic social and legal right to a new group of individuals without altering or diminishing what we now think of as marriage. Hawai'i has a history of recognizing personal and cultural differences. It has been a guiding principle of our community to respect individuals' differences. In matters of religion, culture and lifestyle, Hawai'i has stood as one of the most welcoming and tolerant places in our nation. Please do not let this bill be stopped in committee. It is time for Civil Unions (CU) to become law.

Civil unions are not the same as marriage. There have been a number of state courts that have stated that. The New Jersey Commission on Civil Unions came to the conclusion after an extensive study that civil unions are not equal to marriage.

Reciprocal Beneficiaries (RB) does not give the same rights as marriage. RB only gives a small percent of the rights of marriage. There are a number of areas; e.g. family law that are not covered by RB. It does not make sense to have RB cover those areas. CU would cover rights that same gender couples need but are not needed by everyone who is covered by RB.

I am a person of faith. My strong support for civil unions was inspired by several social justice sermons given by my minister. There are many faith communities that believe that Civil Unions (CU) is the right, fair and just thing to do. This bill does not force civil unions on any faith community that disagrees. That is their religious freedom. The CU bill will allow those faith communities that want civil unions to use their religious freedom.

Over the years some Churches have been against civil rights. Some have used the bible to defend their position. Some churches were for slavery, segregation, not letting women vote, and not allowing interracial marriages. Those Churches do not believe in those views today but those scripture passages still exist. Some churches' view points have changed over the years. This usually happened after civil rights were allowed.

On the White House Web site: "President Obama supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples.". In his inauguration speech, he said "All are equal, all are free and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness".

Times have not stood still. Civil unions are now supported by the majority of the public, the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives, former Governor Cayetano, many young people and others. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. Denying rights hurts all families. It is time for Civil Unions.

I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,  
Ken Plonsky  
1778 Ala Moana Blvd apt 2208  
Honolulu, Hi 96815  
Kenplonsky@aol.com

---

**From:** Bett Bidleman [bbidleman@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:23 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions:

I am writing in support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions, to be heard before the Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee on Feb. 24 at 9 a.m. This bill is a sensible approach to meeting the needs of homosexual couples to legalize their union.

I am heterosexual and am embarrassed by the behavior of other heterosexuals who attempt to ostracize those with other sexual orientations. Not aloha at all! Please pass this bill!

Bett Bidleman  
13-1264 Malama St.  
Pahoa, HI 96778  
[bett@bidleman.net](mailto:bett@bidleman.net)  
930-4566

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:05 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** sylpartridge@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Sylvia Partridge  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 3800 Kamehameha Rd. #22 Princeville, HI 96722  
Phone: 808-826-4020  
E-mail: [sylpartridge@yahoo.com](mailto:sylpartridge@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:  
Please support equal rights for same sex couples.  
Thank you!

---

**From:** dennis tynan [dmtynan@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:55 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** in support of civil unions (hb444)

Dear Committee:

I am writing today to express my strong support for HB444.

I know this issue has encountered considerable opposition and the amount of testimony you will be receiving related to it I can imagine will be quite substantial, so I will keep my letter mercifully short!

:)

I am a gay man who moved to the Aloha State almost six years ago from Texas, where I was teaching high school social studies.

One of the main reasons I decided to move was that the State of Hawaii had employment protections based on sexual orientation, and I was increasingly growing uncomfortable living and working in a state where I could be fired if/when my principal found out I was gay.

Now, this seems hard to believe that an American would have to endure this kind of situation, but it actually still exists in Texas and other states.

Hawaii's people, however, have enacted protections for people like me and I see civil unions as the next logical step in guaranteeing all people equal protection of the laws.

Finally, I know there will be much opposition to this bill based on all sorts of religious grounds. And so I would remind you of what Jesus himself said when asked what is the essence of his message: "Love your God with all your soul and love your neighbor as yourself."

Please, please, please look deep into your hearts on this issue and...  
vote not only on the side of legal equality and fairness  
but also the side of neighborly Christian love for all people.

Mahalo for reading my short but heartfelt testimony in support of HB444.

Dennis M. Tynan  
84-688 Ala Mahiku St.  
Unit #167-C  
Makaha, HI 96792

---

**From:** Jo [jqueja1018@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:01 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony; JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: JoAnn A. Queja  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

**Good morning,**

**This is JoAnn A. Queja. I live on Kahualena Street in Waipahu.**

**I'm writing to let you know that I strongly oppose all bills related to Civil Unions (HB 444, SB 458, HB 878) including Death with Dignity Bill (HB-806, HB-587).**

**Mahalo for your time.**

---

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**From:** Randall Nunes [rnunes@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:44 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil Unions, Testimony  
**Attachments:** Randall Nunes.vcf

To All Concerned,

I humbly submit that we should all consider what is morally right in the issue of Civil Unions as opposed to the rights of those involved in the union of same genders. Let us now know that it is not a question decided by the majority, but one that is settled and grounded in moral values. Forgive me if you think I'am wrong for opposing the Union of same genders. I try to live my life based on all the knowledge and moral teachings of my parents, community, and our GOD.

Please put this bill to rest!

Truely in CHRIST  
Randy Nunes  
Warriors in CHRIST  
ph: 455-5197

**From:** Lillian Murphy [lillianmurphy@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:41 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support Civil Unions HB444 HD1

Please support Civil Unions. Why should people be denied civil rights when they are taxpayers?

Thank you,

Lillian Murphy; P O. Box 1755; Kailua Kona, HI 96745-1755

***If you don't have road rage, you're probably causing it!***



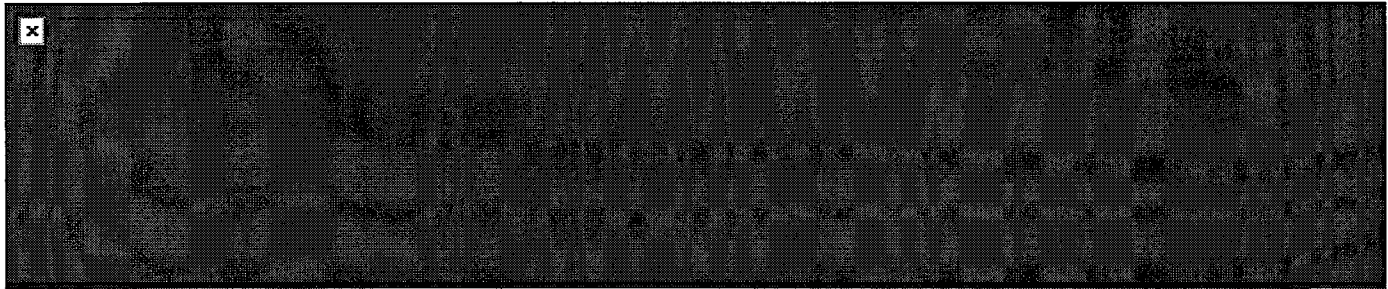
*Blasphemy is a Victimless Crime.*



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To: lillianmurphy@hotmail.com  
From: dpism@hawaii.rr.com  
Subject: Democratic Party News Alert  
Date: Sun, 22 Feb 2009 00:54:33 -1000

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Aloha Lillian Murphy,

We need your help. Your action now can make a difference.

Read below to learn how you can support Civil Unions, Job Security and Publicly Financed Elections.

In 2008, you helped change America by electing Barack Obama. His vision upheld one America rising above wedge politics and fear - as he said on Jan. 20, 2009: "to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our politics."

Locally, you can help change Hawaii - by testifying on these important issues. Up for public hearing in the Senate this Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 9:00 AM is Civil Unions, HB444 HD1.

Democratic Party

State Chair:  
Brian Schatz

County Chair:  
John Buckstead

District 6 Chair:  
Pat Stolfa

Precinct 8 President  
Tony Radmibovic

Upcoming Events  
Young Democrats  
Hawaii General

CIVIL UNIONS:

"President Obama supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples." - The White House

In Hawaii, Civil Unions HB444 HD1 will establish equal rights for same-gender couples under Hawaii law. It will NOT change marriage law. It is written to protect rights of all families, and to guarantee freedom for Hawaii's diverse religious communities. It is fair. It passed the House, but now needs your support in the Senate to succeed.

The Senate Judiciary Committee public hearing on HB444 will be Tuesday Feb. 24, at 9:00 AM in the Auditorium at the State Capitol (415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu).

To Testify in Support of HB 444 HD1, Civil Unions:

Submit testimony by 9 a.m. Monday morning - a day before the hearing. We recommend you send it immediately with a cover indicating:

- Your name, with position/title and organization (if applicable)
- The measure number (HB 444 HD1)
- Date and time of the hearing (Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.)
- The committee name: Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations Committee.

Testimony can be submitted in one of the following ways:

- E-mail: Less than 5 pages in length, e-mail to JGOTestimony@Capitolhawaii.gov
- Web: Less than 4MB in size at <http://www.capitolhawaii.gov/emailtestimony>
- In Person: One copy to Committee Clerk, Room 219, in the State Capitol
- Fax: Less than 5 pages in length, transmit to Senate Sergeant-At-Arms Office at 586-6659 (Oahu) or 1-800-586-6659 (Neighbor Islands) at least 24 hours prior to the hearing.

"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness." - President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 2009

JOB SECURITY:

HB 396 establishes job security for your job when management of the business you work for is sold. This bill is important for our economy at a time people need to be confident they won't lose work. It protects families who depend on a steady job. It sets rules against unfair union-busting practices that force employees - who may have worked the same job 10, 20, or 30 years - to reapply for their same job when the company is sold, sometimes at reduced pay and benefits.

"We believe that Hawaii's families need to be financially secure with good paying jobs" - Democratic Party of Hawaii Platform.

HD386 SD2 to Establish Job Security is referred to the House Committee on Finance. A Hearing has not yet been scheduled. To monitor the status of this bill, go to: [http://www.capitolhawaii.gov/session2009/lists/measure\\_indiv.aspx?billtype=HB&billnumber=396](http://www.capitolhawaii.gov/session2009/lists/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=HB&billnumber=396)

Meeting  
Tuesday, 3/

Progressive  
Democrats Of Hav  
General Meeting  
Thursday, 3/

Hawaiian Affairs  
Caucus Meeting  
Tuesday, 3/

Sec Meeting  
Saturday, 3/

Kupuna Caucus  
Meeting  
Wednesday, 3/

Gbt Caucus Meet  
Saturday, 3/

Member Login

PUBLICLY FINANCED ELECTIONS:

The legislature recently established a pilot project to test publicly funded elections for Hawaii County Council elections. It could be a model for local elections statewide. Its purpose is to reduce the excessive influence of money in politics - and return the power of elections to voters.

HB 345 threatens to rollback the pilot until 2014. With such a long delay, it might die before ever being tried. The bill was referred to the House Finance Committee. To oppose the bill, track bill status at:

[http://www.capitolhawaii.gov/session2009/lists/measure\\_indiv.aspx?billtype=HB&billnumber=345](http://www.capitolhawaii.gov/session2009/lists/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=HB&billnumber=345)

"a democratic government derives its power from the consent of its citizens and participation in the political process is essential to the continuity of democracy" - Democratic Party of Hawaii resolution 08-13, In Support of Public Funding for Elections

Mahab,

Rachel Orange & Douglas Pyle  
Co-Chairs, Legislation Committee of the  
Democratic Party of Hawaii

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"The abiding values of the Democratic Party are liberty, social justice, compassion and respect for the dignity and worth of the individual. These principles must always be protected." - Democratic Party of Hawaii Platform.

This email was sent to you by the Democratic Party of Hawaii Legislation Committee to keep you informed and to give you the opportunity to get involved.

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**From:** Chris Corr [ccorr9@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:19 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions

**Dear Members of Hawaii Senate Judiciary Committee,**

**Please allow House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions that would grant partners in civil unions the same benefits, protections and responsibilities as married couples under state law to pass. By also recognizing civil unions, domestic partnerships and same-sex marriages performed in other states, Hawaii would help end discrimination and hate toward the LGBT community.**

**Please be the leader of peace, tolerance and love for all that Hawaii has long been know for and make House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions a law.**

**I strongly support this bill and again encourage you to pass House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions.**

**Thank you.**

**Sincerely,**

**Christine Corrigan  
15 hermann street  
san francisco ca, 94102**

---

**From:** Gary Parrish [parrishfamily1@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:13 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Fw: "Civil Unions"

Dear State Legislature,

I would like to let you hear the voice of your constituency, and the voice of the majority of peoples in the State of Hawaii. We do not believe that "Civil Union", which is no difference whatsoever from the traditional marriage contract, is a good thing for the families and peoples of Hawaii. Please consider the volume and strong convictions of us who oppose this disregard for the voice of the people who voted on this matter over ten years ago.

Thank you,  
Gary Parrish  
Kihei, Maui

To: Senate Judiciary  
Gov't Operations

From: Deanna M. Schafer, Owner  
"I Do" Weddings

Date: February 22, 2009

Subject: In support of HB444  
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 24, 2009

I'm the owner of "I Do" Weddings, a wedding coordination business located on Kauai. I'm also an ordained and State licensed wedding officiant. I support HB 444 that extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. I support this Bill for two reasons:

1) It is good for business. Hawaii's destination wedding business will get a much-needed boost. By taking the lead on an issue that is rapidly gaining public support we will attract a whole new group of visitors.

2) It is the right thing to do. During my lifetime I have seen the end racial segregation, the granting of equal pay for women and the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, ethnic origin, and disability. It is now time to address the discrimination that exists toward same-sex couples. It is not only only morally right, but will create more family stability.

I urge you to show leadership on this most important civil rights issue and pass House Bill 444. The extension of rights and responsibilities to committed same-sex couples is the right thing to do as a matter of justice and good public policy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deanna M. Schafer  
"I Do" Weddings, 2/22/09  
P.O. Box 1634  
Hanalei, HI 96714

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**From:** rhc [rhc@aloha.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:02 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Randall Kang

Bill number and Title: HB 444 HD 1

Comittee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Date: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009

Time: 9 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

I am strongly apposed to this bill. I know that it will be harmful to our children and families in Hawaii. Most importantly, if this bill is passed, it will work against the Biblical principles on which our country and government were built. We cannot afford to offend God. And even if we could, why would we want to?



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**From:** robie lovinger [rezumes@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:58 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* Our Testimony - HB 444 HD1 for 022409 Hearing by the Senate Judiciary and Govt Ops

February 23, 2009

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this esteemed group of leaders in Hawaii. Our names are Louise Esselstyn, M.Div. and Robie Lovinger, PHR. Among our many roles, we are Hawaiian taxpayers, contributing community residents, and aunties who reside in lovely Makakilo. We would like to express our full support for House Bill 444 HD1- Civil Unions and to request your support of this important legislation in Hawaii. We support this legislation because we continue to face illegal discrimination under the laws of Hawaii in 2009, which essentially consider us to be 2nd class citizens, unworthy of equality in our beloved Hawaii home state.

We emphatically believe that all Americans should be treated respectfully and equally under the laws of Hawaii and the entire United States, as required by our amazing Constitution of the United States of America. HB 444 HD1 extends the same rights, protections, benefits, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. This legislation is extremely important in our own life together. Our hope is to live long enough to enjoy the benefits of Civil Unions in our Hawaii home.

We are mature and responsible American citizens and have been law-abiding and tax paying residents of O'ahu since 1985. We are not young in years, as we have a combined experience level of 109 years. In 1993 on O'ahu, we became life partners and have been in a committed relationship for the past 16 years. As leaders in our community, we are valued and respected. We are both professional women who work hard every single day, to contribute to the civil rights, employment, safety, and security of every citizen in our state.

We have consistently progressed through life with grace, dignity, education, and accomplishment. We are blessed by each of our large families; we have also been a blessing to them and to our large extended Ohana. We are patriotic Americans who pay our taxes without complaint, knowing that it is our contribution to the American way of life. We are Aunties, who deeply believe in God and in goodness. Our own prayer is to be acknowledged as valued members of the State of Hawaii citizenry, who are worthy of legal recognition of our commitment to each other.

We were among the very first to become Reciprocal Beneficiaries in the 90's. However, the revisions to the original legislation diluted the intent of that law, making it nearly meaningless in our lives. At its best, it never came close to providing us with the types of protections and responsibilities we had envisioned.

Long ago, our parents taught us the values of honesty and integrity. However, without legal recognition as a couple, we are forced to live a lie. For example, consider the Census, questionnaires, surveys, and legal documents. We are not each "single"; yet we are forced to be such because we are also not "married". As we were raised to be truthful, this is an especially uncomfortable consequence of not having the recognition accorded those of a Civil Union. Do you think this is fair and just?

On a financial note, there are significant consequences we bear, as a result of us not having legal recognition as a couple. We are unable to obtain employer sponsored health insurance for each other, a benefit that opposite sex married couples take for granted. Additionally, we pay considerably more in taxes every year, both to the State of Hawaii and to the US Federal Government, because we are legally prohibited from filing our taxes jointly. Funds that could be used to pay down our mortgage or to purchase long term insurance for our quickly approaching "golden years" are instead used for our increased tax burden and for higher medical premiums. We are forced to cover up the reality and truth of who we are, when we must bear significant costs of preparing updated legal documents to protect our assets and each other, unlike our opposite sex married friends and family. Is this fair and equitable?

We must tell you that the unequal treatment that our family experiences is completely unfair and unjust. How would you feel if you or one of your family members was treated in this manner? Civil unions are supported by the majority of the

public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. According to the White House Web site, President Obama "supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples."

Granting equal rights to same-sex couples in no way impacts the rights of opposite sex couples or religious communities. Religious communities will always be free to define marriage according to their specific traditions. Granting same-sex couples equal rights strengthens families. Families with legal protections are less likely to be a burden on society.

On a personal note, how does unequal rights and no legal recognition impact us and our family members on both an emotional and concrete level? We feel like second class citizens who are definitely devalued in America and in the State of Hawaii. We feel invisible at times, and discarded at other times. Is this fair and equitable treatment in America in 2009?

Equality is a simple concept; sadly equality has been out of reach for so many and for such a long time. With your leadership and wisdom to do the just thing, we look forward to being among the very first to celebrate our Civil Union in Hawaii. We depend on your sense of justice and support of civil rights for us as a loving and committed couple and as tax-paying voters, for your support of HB 444. Please remember our story as you carefully consider our life, as it is directly impacted by your support for HB 444.

Finally, we deeply appreciate your careful consideration of the worthiness of HB 444. HD1 It is wrong to deny us equitable civil rights and to continue to treat us as 2nd class citizens in Hawaii. We truly are one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Please call us at 808-722-0746 if you would like further elaboration regarding our support for HB 444 HD1. Our prayer for you is to have the courage, wisdom, and leadership skills to make the right ethical decision to support equality for all Americans, and to support HB 444 HD1.

Mahalo.

Appreciatively,

H. Louise Esselstyn and G.F. Robie Lovinger  
92-1085 Kakoo Place, Kapolei, HI 96707  
Phone (808) 722-0746

G.F. Robie Lovinger  
808-722-0746-personal cell

---

**From:** Laurie Burgess [laurie@hawaiianagents.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:57 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**NAME** Laurie Burgess  
**ADDRESS** 92-1270 Uahanai St, Kapolei, HI 96707  
**PHONE** 808-672-3330

**ATTENTION:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

**RE:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Hearing:** TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

**I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

**We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.**

**Please vote against HB 444.**

*Laurie Burgess*

**FROM: Laurie Burgess**

><{{{\*>WWJD<\*>}}><  
Laurie Burgess  
Hawaiian Agents, Inc  
(808) 682-7377 (ph)  
(808) 682-3620 (fx)  
[laurie@hawaiianagents.com](mailto:laurie@hawaiianagents.com)  
"God is good...all the time"

---

**From:** Amy Shiroma [ashiroma@lava.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:26 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

**NAME** Amy L. Shiroma  
**ADDRESS** 95-1055 Ka'apeha Street, #150, Mililani, HI 96789  
**PHONE** 808-626-4226

**ATTENTION:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

**RE:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Hearing:** TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Hawaii law already does allow domestic partnerships for gay couples with rights such as family and bereavement leave, probate rights and hospital visitation. This already shows our hearts for the people and the care for them as individuals. However, we are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage.

Please consider what the long term big picture effect the move to legalize civil unions would have on our state, culture and values as a whole. Please seek to research the impact that such rulings have had on values and behaviors culturally in other states that have legalized same sex union. There is no doubt that such a ruling would open the door for our educational institutions, workplaces and government establishments to accept the perverse and dark actions, behaviors and practices that would somehow be linked to the act of a civil union.

Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world.

I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

**Please vote against HB 444.**

**FROM: Amy L. Shiroma**

---

**From:** Glenn Yamaguchi [grjsyama@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 1:27 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Glenn T. Yamaguchi  
91-815 Oaniani St.  
Kapolei, HI 96707  
(808) 674-8918

**ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**

**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM**

Dear Senators,

I am writing in order to voice my strong opposition to HB 444 HDV1 Civil Unions.

A number of years ago I visited for the first time the offices in the legislature when the issue of same sex marriage confronted the people of Hawaii. At that time I greatly appreciated the willingness of your esteemed colleagues to see and hear me out as a resident born and raised in Hawaii. The end result was a proposition brought before the people of Hawaii to vote directly on the traditional view of marriage. The people of Hawaii then overwhelmingly ratified that sentiment. Therefore it saddens and frustrates me that this attempt to circumvent the laws and established voice of the people in Hawaii is being forced upon us again.

At the same time, I am not unsympathetic to the needs or rights of the gay community. I have family currently living a gay lifestyle. I have personal friends who have lived a gay lifestyle. I value them and their right to live in whatever way they choose. I was glad the Reciprocal Rights bill passed has afforded them the legal protection or sanction which honors those rights with their partners.

But HB 444 provides a real threat to my family and so many families I know. We are greatly concerned for our children and for future generations. If HB 444 passes and gay rights groups press the issue, my children will then be subject to attempts to teach, affirm, or indoctrinate, a definition of marriage or family by groups or governmental agencies (for example the DOE) at odds with the traditional view of marriage because of this law. This goes against the strongly held views of both my wife and me, and all our attempts to raise our children.

I can see no other purpose of this bill than to circumvent the established law of Hawaii. In this day and age where so many of us are doing our best to raise children and find common ground in strengthening our communities this seems to be an unnecessary assault on the foundations of marriage and society. It is not in the interest of the people of Hawaii to legislate this kind of social experimentation not found across the globe. Therefore I implore you on the established voice of the people of Hawaii and the future of our keiki, to reject HB 444 toward the establishment of Civil Unions in Hawaii.

Thank you for doing your best to serve the people of Hawaii.

Respectfully yours,

Glenn Yamaguchi  
Senior Pastor, New Hope Kapolei

---

**From:** Robert H. Wilson [mcprobw@clearwire.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:00 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Senate Judiciary Committee -- Civil Unions HB 444 HD1

Honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I present below a few thoughts for consideration at Tuesday's 9:00 a.m. hearing on HB 444.

If I understand my history correctly, our Founding Fathers believed that taxation without representation was tyranny and that democracy meant the few could not impose their will on the many. Though I would hesitate to call our present situation in Hawaii tyranny, it seems quite clear that Senate Bill 444 does not represent the views of the majority.

Some years ago, Hawaii's Supreme Court tried to change existing laws by, in effect, redefining marriage. At the time, the legislature became upset at the judicial overstepping its bounds by rewriting their legislation, rather than simply interpreting it for application. The consequence was new legislation which specifically defined marriage as between a man and a woman. In a similar manner, the legislature now seems to be overstepping *its* bounds by introducing legislation which the people don't want. Yes, in name civil unions are not the same as marriage, but who will deny that the intent behind HB 444 HD1 is to blur and eventually eliminate the distinction?

I adjure you to serve as *representatives* of the people, and I urge you to uphold our state motto, *Ua Mau Ke Ea O Ka Aina I Ka Pono*. Interestingly, this phrase was used by King Kamehameha III on July 31, 1843, the day sovereignty was restored to Hawaii by proclamation of Queen Victoria following a five-month-long rogue British occupation. From the steps of Kawaiaha'o Church, her proclamation was read and King Kamehameha III proclaimed, "*Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono*." Indeed, the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness, not in well intentioned but misguided notions of "fairness." Remember your charge.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Wilson

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**From:** Emi Game [emigam4@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:03 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Mike Gabbard  
**Subject:** I STRONGLY OPPOSE > HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Testimony STRONGLY OPPOSING HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**To:** Hawaii State Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009; 9:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Auditorium

**Submitted by:** Elaine Chu

I, along with fellow citizens, have tried, to the best of our abilities and capabilities, to be active and productive participants in the critical political issues that have confronted us these past few decades. But now it seems we're getting closer and closer to a time when we can no longer criticize government leaders of other countries -- leaders who do not truly respect and/or listen to the people they are called to govern, and who dictate according to their own values, morality and benefit. We will have no right to criticize because our own government leaders who we have voted into office and financially support, and who should technically be our "employees," are now making a mockery of the majority of their constituents' earnest efforts to participate in government. The government leaders of this state are manipulating and changing, against the will of the people, a Constitutional Law decided upon by the people.

The time and effort that thousands spent participating in the last Constitutional Convention and casting votes to preserve traditional marriage apparently meant/means nothing, for it seems that our "employees" feel they have the power to go against the will of the majority so that they can fulfill their own beliefs and agendas and that of a minority.

It seems our voices via our votes were not and are not important enough to be heard. It is heartbreaking to believe, as I and others now do, that making a request of you to preserve what is already in our Constitution and to please not add any language that would include or change anything other than what is intended in our Constitution -- the preservation of traditional marriage between a man and a woman -- will eventually be to no avail.

So I ask you, is this what the "power of our vote" means.....that we give you power to decide, not only what's best for the people, but also what's morally right? Do the votes you receive from your constituents give you the right to manipulate and change laws in the Constitution of the State of Hawaii because you feel that these laws are no longer relevant or morally or politically correct?

This letter is being written from a vantage point of helplessness and a feeling that my vote meant/means nothing and that our present government leaders and an aggressive political minority wish to be, and more and more are, in control of the lives and future of the people of our state.

Sincerely,





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**From:** Siva Afi [siva\_afi808@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:04 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Sonny Salavea

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

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**From:** Oteila Salavea [oteila@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:11 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Oteila Salavea  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

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**From:** Keila Salavea [keila917@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:20 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Keila Salavea

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

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**From:** Michael Haggerty [mhaggerty9@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:18 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of House Bill 444 HD 1

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Official:

I submitted the following email to all five members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

Please do all you can to help pass House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions  
-- the bill to legalize civil unions among same-sex partners.

The time has come for the beautiful state of Hawaii to make a bold statement about the importance of tolerance and fundamental civil rights.

I am a strong supporter of this bill, as is my spouse, Ricardo Villa. Ricardo and I were married in California in August and have postponed our honeymoon. We plan to honeymoon in Hawaii, and look forward to visiting a state that will welcome us and be genuinely respectful of our rights.

I thank you ahead of time for your support of House Bill 444 HD.

Sincerely,

Michael Haggerty

--

Michael Haggerty  
1255 N Los Robles Ave Apt 2  
Pasadena CA 91104

---

**From:** Lee Gettys [leegettys@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:54 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Lee Gettys in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Committee on Judiciary and  
Government Operations  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
Place: Auditorium  
Re: Testimony of Lee Gettys  
in Strong Support of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

David 'Lee' Gettys, Jr.  
94-527 LUMIAINA ST APT E-201  
WAIPAHU, HI 96797-5230  
[leegettys@mac.com](mailto:leegettys@mac.com)

---

**From:** rhc [rhc@aloha.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:01 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to HD 444 HD 1

Testifier: Heather Kang

Bill number and Title: HB 444 HD 1

Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Date: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009

Time: 9 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

I am strongly apposed to this bill. I know that it will be harmful to our children and families in Hawaii. Most importantly, if this bill is passed, it will work against the Biblical principles on which our country and government were built. We cannot afford to offend God. And even if we could, why would we want to?

---

**From:** Dina Shek [dinasf@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:59 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** I support HB 444 - Civil Unions in Hawaii

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice-Chair

From: Dina Shek

Re: Support for HB 444 - Civil Unions

Hrg. Date: February 24, 2009 at 9am

Dear Senators,

I strongly support civil unions in Hawaii and I hope that you will vote yes on HB444 HD1. It is time for Hawaii to take this important step to provide equal rights for all of Hawaii's citizens. Thank you for your careful consideration for this important issue that affects all of us.

Sincerely,

Dina Shek, Esq.  
737 Olokele Avenue, #803  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
808-734-6316



---

**From:** Russell Sutcliffe [twitchdoctor@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:02 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions

**TO: Hawaii Senate Judiciary Committee, Senate Sergeant-At-Arms Office**

**FROM: Russell Sutcliffe, 210 Sudbrook Lane, Pikesville, MD 21208**

**RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions**

Dear Senator Taniguchi and other members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

I am writing on behalf of House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions.

Although I am not a resident of Hawaii, yet, my partner of 16 years and I have been working with a real estate agent in Honolulu for the past two years, preparing to move to Oahu. We visit frequently to narrow down the neighborhoods we would consider moving to.

We were first attracted to Hawaii for the marvelous scenery and outdoor adventures; We fell in love with the state because of the 'ohana spirit shared by so many Hawaiian residents.

We are an upper-middle income couple with graduate degrees in the fields of education and technology. Our plan is to relocate to Hawaii as government contractors and teach at the university in the evenings. We have even considered starting up an educational software business.

I am certain that we would be productive citizens of the state of Hawaii and ambassadors of good will for like-minded colleagues. But we have been hesitant to take that last step of moving to your wonderful state without assurances that as gay members of the community, we would not only have legal protections for our liberties, but acceptance as 'ohana.

For these reasons, I strongly support House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions.

Sincerely,

Russell Sutcliffe

---

**From:** Liann Ebesugawa [lebesugawa@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:02 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of HB 444  
**Attachments:** Testimony HB 444.doc

VIA EMAIL: [JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
Place: Auditorium  
Re: Testimony of **Liann Ebesugawa** in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

I was born and raised in Hawaii. Historically, Hawaii has been a community reflective of tolerance, inclusivity and fundamental fairness. I believe that it is patently unfair that certain members of our community are denied the rights of others merely based on who they chose to love. Thus, it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Liann Ebesugawa  
3633 Maunalei Avenue  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

---

**From:** aa harada [aaharada@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:46 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; aaharada@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** HB 444

Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am a resident of Mililani, Hawaii, and a citizen of the United States of America. I oppose the rights of civil unions for equal benefits as a marriage with one man and one woman.

This is an important bill and I do not feel that I was given a voice in this important decision. Hawaii voted to state that marriage was between one woman and one man. I do not agree that civil union should be given the same benefits as a marriage as we as voters of Hawaii and the United States claimed that God as given us instructions for marriage between ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN.

I believe there will be devastating consequences if this bill is passes. One, God has given us a rule and we must not disobey that rule of a union between one woman and one man. As we extend the rights, won't this be also costly to many businesses to pay for more health insurance, and economic effect on a decision. If this bill is passess, other civil union couples will come to Hawaii because of the benefit and it will cause even more burden on our community. This is an affect to our families and children as they will become more confused. Who is their mother , who is their father?? The order that is in our community will be messed up. There will be more confused children, teen agers, adults.....adults that will lead our communities.

Please hear me. I know this is one letter out of many but I oppose the bill and hope my representative and senator will vote to hear my voice too.

Hawaii is a beautiful state that is enjoyed by many families for vacations, retirement locations. If our small state allows civil union benefits, we may loose that family/ohana feeding...Many civil union couple will come here for the benefits and what will become of us . Our family is important with a man and a woman as the head and in union in marriage. Divorce has been getting higher. Let's not create more chaos in our wonderful Aloha State.

Sincerely,

Ann M.A. Harada

P.S. May God bless this state of Hawaii.....this country United States of America

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To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, **“extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.”**

In 1998 the voters of the State of Hawaii chose to amend our Constitution by a large margin of victory to specifically define marriage as a union between couples of the opposite sex. HB444 has only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. Our constitution does not allow for this even if you simply change the name. The legislature should not attempt to override the popular vote and the State Constitution. Is that even legal? I thought the Constitution and its Amendments were the highest authority in our state. Overriding the Constitution will set a dangerous precedent. I urge you all to vote NO on HB444.

Ua mau ke ea oka aina ika pono. Remember that we exist today because many continued to live in that way that our forefathers were taught. This land continues to provide for us because many still live in a manner that our Great God expects. If we continue to entertain those who would neglect God, we will bring upon our prosperity, great sorrow.

Please do not let these bills pass, nor any like unto it.

Save traditional family values.

Stephen Crowell  
Hauula, Hawaii

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:35 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** khroofer@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Dayton Ho  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [khroofer@yahoo.com](mailto:khroofer@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:  
My family and I strongly disagree with this measure.

Testimony  
HB444 – Civil unions  
February 24, 2009  
Netra Halperin, MA

I strongly support HB444

My name is Netra Halperin. I hold a Master's degree in psychology and have worked as a social worker on Maui for nine years. In 1994 I was employed by Maui Youth and Family Services. We were dealing with many youth who, because of the stigma of being gay were at risk for suicide, substance abuse, assault, becoming run-aways, and eventually homelessness. Because of this problem, myself and several colleagues founded the Maui Lesbian Gay Teen Education Project. We worked with teen-agers, parents and schools in an attempt to de-stigmatize the sexual feelings and relationships of these young people. As a psychotherapist I know that it is usually the repression and subsequent unnatural expression of feelings that are considered unacceptable by society that creates sexually deviant behavior such as child abuse or sexual assault, not the original feelings themselves.

In psychology we know that, as Kinsey's research pointed out, human sexuality exists on a continuum between homosexual and heterosexual. Society has decided that only strictly heterosexual feelings and behavior are acceptable. This narrow definition of tolerable behavior has created much suffering, hiding, sneaking and has, in many professional's view, created the sexual problems and sexual abuse that is epidemic in our society.

Trying to mold and control peoples sexuality by stigma and laws doesn't work - it only creates shame or hiding or distortions. Only by acknowledging the reality that there have always been, and will always be members of our ohana that form homosexual relationships, and giving these people the same rights that we accord heterosexual relationships will we stop much unnecessary suffering and truly live as god intended.

---

**From:** Debra Hiramatsu [debra\_hiramatsu@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444

I oppose this bill.

Debra Hiramatsu  
91-1147 Kumuiki St.  
Kapolei, HI. 96707

February 22, 2009

To Members of the State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, **“extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.”**

In 1998 the voters of the State of Hawaii chose to amend our Constitution by a large margin of victory to specifically define marriage as a union between couples of the opposite sex. HB444 has only changed the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. Our constitution does not allow for this even if you simply change the name. The legislature should not attempt to override the popular vote and the State Constitution. I feel that the Constitution and its Amendments are the highest authority in our state. Overriding the Constitution would set a dangerous precedent. I urge you all to vote NO on HB444.

Sincerely,

Teresa Dombroski  
1808 Elima Place  
Kihei, HI 96753



---

**From:** Gayla Traylor [gatraylo@ksbe.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:13 PM  
**To:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions  
**Importance:** High

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members  
From: Gayla S. Traylor, 46-324 Ha`iku Road, #113, Kane`ohe HI 96744  
Re: Measure Number HB 444 HD1

I am writing to urge you to use your vote on HB 444 HD1 to vigorously oppose civil unions as you meet this Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. The people of Hawai`i have spoken clearly about this in 1998, affirming that a clear majority of Hawai`i residents believe that marriage should remain between one man and one woman. We do not need this new law to re-open divisive and controversial battle already settled by the people.

You are aware that we already have a reciprocal beneficiary law, passed in 1997. HB 444 HD1 is unnecessary to protect rights, and Civil unions will simply be a tool to re-define marriage.

Data is irrefutable: children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and a dad. We must think of our keiki, and not indulge in selfish catering to the desires of a small sector of adults by rewriting our most basic marriage laws.

I am trusting that you will be pono, do the right thing, and oppose this with your voice and your vote. Mahalo for your consideration of your constituencies.

Mahalo.

---

**From:** leann uno [blondieuno777@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:03 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition To HB444HD1 Relating to civil unions

James Timothy Uno

HB444HD1 Relating to civil unions

Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

9:00 am

State Capitol auditorium

Strong opposition to HB444HD1 Relating to civil unions

TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HOUSE BILL, HB444HD1

I AM IN THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII, YOUR  
CONSTITUANTS.

VOTE THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE, DO NOT SUCCUMB TO SPECIAL  
INTEREST GROUPS THAT WOULD TRY TO MUSCLE THEIR WAY  
INTO HAWAII WITH THEIR BELIEF SYSTEM, THAT IS CONTRARY  
TO THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. THE PEOPLE THAT VOTED YOU IN  
OFFICE.

HEARING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @9AM

You can contact me at:

Eileen Dillon

[eileendillon04@yahoo.com](mailto:eileendillon04@yahoo.com)

(808) 531-5355

---

**From:** KLT [Tamagawak001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:08 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1  
**Attachments:** ShadesOfBlue.jpg

**TESTIFIER:KEITH TAMAGAWA**

**BILL NUMBER AND TITLE: HB 444 HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

**COMMITTEE:SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNEMNT OPERATIONS**

**HEARING DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009**

**HEARING LOCATION: STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM**

**SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

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**From:** Will Haines [wili\_wili@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:19 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium of the State Capitol

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

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

I am writing to submit testimony in favor of HB444, in support of civil unions for same-sex couples in Hawaii. I was born and raised in Hawaii, and have lived my whole life here, and HB444 is consistent with my moral values. Current laws DO NOT provide committed same-sex couples with the same rights as married heterosexual couples. This is discriminatory, and polls have shown consistently that this goes against the values of the majority of both Hawaii residents and Americans overall.

Tonight I heard a radio advertisement opposing HB444 that really bothered me. The ad warned that civil unions are the same thing as marriage under a different name, and cited the 1998 vote, in which a majority of Hawaii residents voted against allowing same-sex marriage. This is an unethical manipulation of the facts, and it surprises me that this ad was allowed to air. Civil unions are not marriage! Polls have shown that an overwhelming majority (73%) of Hawaii residents support equal rights for committed same sex couples and their families. **Over and over again, polls show that while the majority of people might oppose gay marriage, this same majority of people SUPPORT civil unions. If civil unions were equivalent to marriage, we would not see this vast difference in attitudes towards the two.**

People who oppose same-sex marriage do so almost entirely for religious reasons, because there is widespread confusion between the religious and civil institutions of marriage. Those who oppose HB444 have fed that confusion, and taken advantage of it, trying to equate civil unions to religious marriage. The truth is, those who oppose gay marriage on religious grounds have nothing to fear from same-sex civil unions, because these are by definition secular partnerships, not religious ones. The bottom line is that this is simply a matter of granting equal rights to those who deserve them, and I urge you to do the right thing and support HB444, rather than allow deceptive propoganda to result in regressive policy.

Respectfully submitted,

William Haines  
Honolulu, HI

---

**From:** Suzanne King [sking@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:37 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** suzannek@cbpacific.com  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444

February 21, 2009

**To:** Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

**From:** Suzanne Kalikolehua King  
Treasurer, Na 'Ohana O Na Hui Wa'a (Canoe Paddling Association)

**Re:** HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

**To Be Heard:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

**VIA:** Email to [JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Good afternoon Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to come before you to testify in support of HB 444.

My name is Suzanne Kalikolehua King. I was born and raised here in Hawaii and am a member of a well established local family. I graduated from Punahou School just one year before our current President of the United States. And I am a very proud citizen of Hawaii who has been inspired by President Obama, or Barry as I knew him, to become involved in shaping the future of my community and our country.

While I have voted in every election since I turned 18, I have never considered myself active in politics or have ever testified in support of legislation until this year. But I am here today because HB 444 is important legislation that impacts me personally and my family.

You see, I'm gay. And I'm proud to say that in just two weeks, my partner, Tambry Young, and I will have been together for 28 years and we have a beautiful 9 year old daughter, Shylar. Here's one reason why it's important to me that you pass HB 444.

We all know how critical it is to have health insurance. Well just this year, I was able to add Tambry, a small business owner, to my company's group health plan. We save about \$150 per month and the benefits provided are significantly better than the individual plan that Tambry was previously on. But it wasn't easy for me to get this coverage. First I had to get the courage to approach my employer and ask if they would allow it. While I feel strongly that we should have these rights afforded to us, you see I tried asking before with another employer back in the late 90's and was told, "we probably could do it but, you know, it's going to affect everyone else's rates if we do that, is that what you want?" Well I am not one to impose my lifestyle on others so needless to say, I backed off. But times are different now and every penny matters so that's why I took a chance and asked again. And I am so grateful that my company said yes this time!

I guess my point to all of you is, why did I have to ask? And more importantly, what if they, too, said no? We need HB 444 so that basic rights, like access to our partner's health insurance, are our legal right and not something that we have to take a chance on getting. There are some who would like you to believe that Reciprocal Beneficiaries provide these basic rights to us but that is just not true. Civil Unions would ensure that we receive access to all the benefits, rights and responsibilities that our families deserve and need. We are not asking for marriage, we are asking for Civil Unions.

Earlier I had mentioned that I come from a well established local family. Well we are also a very private family so coming here before you today and sharing my story is not easy to do. But I realize *it's time* that I start standing up for myself and my family; that it's *okay* for me to do that; and that it's the *right thing* to do.

President Obama, my classmate and our nation's 44th President, supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges EQUAL to those of married couples. That's exactly what HB 444 does. He has also said, "Too often, the issue of LGBT rights is exploited by those seeking to divide us. But at its core, this issue is about who we are as Americans. It's about whether this nation is going to live up to its founding promise of equality by treating all its citizens with dignity and respect."<sup>1</sup>

I humbly ask that you follow President Obama's lead and pass HB 444 so that all of our same-sex families in Hawaii can begin to achieve the dignity and respect that we deserve.

Mahalo,

*Suzanne*

Suzanne K. King

2343 Kula Kolea Drive, Honolulu, HI 96819

Email: [sking@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:sking@hawaii.rr.com)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/civil\\_rights/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/civil_rights/). Support for the LGBT Community, *Barack Obama, June 1, 2007*

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chairman Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My husband and I urge you to support HB 444 HD1. We are not gay and we don't have any gay children. We simply believe that gays and lesbians are entitled to the same rights as everyone else. As people of faith we feel the responsibility to speak out on this as a matter of social justice.

**Society is strengthened** when two people are committed to caring for each other. We are happy when our sons and daughters "find someone and settle down". We recognize commitment as a positive thing and we reward this behavior by sanctioning into law. These bonds of commitment weave together a society that is strong. Children are protected. It is weakens our society to deny same gender couples the protection of law regarding their committed relationships. It is in society's best interest to extend Civil-Union legislation to all its citizens regardless of gender.

A Civil-Union is a **civil contract**. It is a way of providing equal rights for same gender couples. It leaves the religious issue out of it. Churches are still free to marry or not marry people. We think this bill is a good **compromise position** for those opposed to marriage, but who still want to extend equal rights to same gender couples. It is important to leave religion out of your decision because how are you going to decide whose religion to use? Progressive churches tend to be in favor of civil-unions. Conservative churches tend to be opposed. Your only choice is to make your decision based on the Constitution you swore to uphold.

This is a Civil-Rights issue. All Americans are entitled to equal rights. It is unfair to deny benefits to same gender couples. Historically we have denied rights to blacks and women. It is embarrassing now to look back at our treatment of them. But over time we recognized our prejudice and unfair treatment of them and **we changed the law to reflect our new understanding**. Now is another such time. By enacting this law you can help move us forward in the long human struggle for liberty and justice for all our citizens.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. William and Mrs. Judith Hepfer



TO: Senator Brian T Taniguchi, Chariman

Sen Dwight T Takamine, Vice Chairman

Sen Robert Bunda

Sen Mike Gabbard

Sen Clarence Nishihara

Sen Sam Slom

TESTIFIER: JAMES T YAMADA

ADDRESS: 98-1265 Kulawai St

HEARING: TUES, FEB 24, 2009@9AM

BILL: HB444 HD1, CIVIL UNIONS

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am submitting this written testimony in opposition to House Bill 444 HD1, relating to Civil Unions.

I am an electrical contractor and own A-1 A-Lectrician, Inc. I am also a pastor connected with First Assembly of God and ministering at Hawaii Cedar Church. In fact, our company did the electrical work for this outstanding State Capitol Bldg over 10 years ago.

I want to state unequivocally, I love the gays. Our church has a few, our company has employed them, my kids have gay friends. I also love the drug addicts and the alcoholics. I have been ministering for nearly 14 years in the Salvation Army, Adult Rehabilitation Center. I have also ministered in the Teen Challenge program for 6 years before they closed here. These were weekly visits. While ministering in these programs, I have encountered gays, drug addicts, and alcoholics. I love them all. I was not prejudiced against any group.

One might wonder why someone who owns and manages a large business would spend time, weekly with drug addicts, alcoholics, and people coming out of prison going into the Salvation Army, just to get out of prison. It is because my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ loves them and died for them, paying the ultimate price for them: His life. He commanded me to love them and to GO to reach out to them and to tell them there is a better way.

I believe what Abraham Lincoln said that all men are created equal. However, the key issue is not equality as the gays may state it. President Lincoln did not say, nor would he say today that all lifestyles are equal. While each person has the freedom to choose his lifestyle, and I would love them,

regardless of that choice, I believe there are certain lifestyles that are destructive to the people living them, destructive to the family, the community, the State and the Nations.

I believe God created the family unit at the beginning of creation when He told Adam and Eve to "be fruitful and increase in numbers." I believe that since God created the atom, the universe, the trees, the animals, the fish, and man... that he knows the best way to a fulfilled and joyful life. I believe the family unit: a man and a woman joined together to become one; raising children and grand children and growing up together...standing together no matter what is the best way for the community, the State, and the Nation.

While everyone has the freedom to choose his own lifestyle, and I would still love them no matter what lifestyle they chose, I draw the line when those people try to make a law that legislates and legitimizes their chosen lifestyles. I would be against the crystal meth user who said: "I want equal rights and for my lifestyle." I would be against the alcoholic that said I want equal rights for my lifestyle: "I don't think anyone should tell me I cannot drive while intoxicated. Who are you to say I cannot handle my alcohol. As long as I am not hurting anyone, you have no case against me. If I hurt someone, then charge me accordingly."

We all know that to change a culture, you go into the schools to reach the kids. I have seen what has happened in other nations and states where the gays rights people have legitimized their lifestyle. They have already gone into the universities across the nation to preach their lifestyle. They eventually may reach the high schools and elementary schools to teach that their lifestyle is a better way. I am against them reaching my grandchildren and their children with a lifestyle that leads to heartbreak.

While I respect their choice of lifestyles, I am strongly against this bill which legitimizes that lifestyle. I would be just as strongly against a bill that legitimizes a lifestyle of drugs and alcohol.

Respectfully Submitted

James T Yamada

Wray Jose  
2469 East Manoa Road  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822  
Phone (808) 488-0830  
Email: [wjose@lava.net](mailto:wjose@lava.net)

Date: February 22, 2009

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Sirs,

I urge your support for HB444, relating to Civil Unions.

**Issue #1:** Doesn't this bill circumvent the will of a majority of Hawaii's voters by offering what is another version of same-sex marriage?

This is a civil rights issue, even a human rights issue. Human rights should never be held hostage to the tyranny of the majority. The rights enshrined in our constitution were intended to protect the minority against the ill-considered and despotic whims of an unenlightened majority.

**Issue #2:** Is this really a matter of civil rights?

As long as the State of Hawaii recognizes the right of opposite-gender couples to enter into civil unions, the failure to permit same gender couples to do the same constitutes a denial of equal rights. While the right of people of the same gender to enter into civil unions is not enumerated in the Constitution, Amendment IX of the Bill of Rights does provide that "The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." Thus, the Legislature of the State of Hawaii may reasonably recognize a right of same gender couples to enter into civil unions.

**Issue #2:** Does recognition of a right of same-gender couples to enter into civil unions weaken traditional marriages and threaten families?

If same-gender couples are permitted to enter into civil unions, traditional marriages will not disappear. Nor is there a threat to families. Indeed, there will be even more families than now exist.

One hundred and forty-six years ago Abraham Lincoln reminded Americans that our nation was "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." He said so in the midst of a terrible civil war fought to give the nation "a new birth of freedom." Surely we can extend that freedom, for which so many gave their lives, to those who wish nothing more than to share their lives together in civil unions. I respectfully urge passage of HB444.

Sincerely,  
Wray Jose

TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
COMMITTEE

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009

9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

Aloha, my name is Chris McDonald, and I am writing to express my opposition to HB 444. I do not support civil unions for homosexuals. This legislation is in direct conflict with my sincerely held religious beliefs. More importantly, it is in direct conflict to the establishment of marriage between one man and one woman by God in Genesis 2:24. Please vote against HB 444 and uphold traditional marriage values. Thank you for taking the time to read my input.

Respectfully,

Chris McDonald

---

**From:** Connie Ma [conniema2000@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:51 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** RE: HR 444  
**Attachments:** faint\_grain.jpg

---

**MY DEAR SENATORS OF HAWAII:**

**I am a registered voter and an active citizen in Honolulu. It is most important to Vote against HB 444 HD1.**

**Do not send it to the floor for vote just trash it.**

**I pray if you are a believer in the one and only GOD.**

**Then I bring your attention to , Leviticus: Chapter 18 in the Holy Bible; verse 22, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination." (KJ). I challenge all of you to read the complete Chapter of Leviticus 18.**

**I believe that it is time to put this issue in the trash once and for all and stop wasting your time and the tax payers monies on an issue that has already been turned down by a solid majority of the voters.**

***This will be remembered at election time by myself and others.***

**Please! I ask all of you again to read; "LEVITICUS: Chapter 18.**

**If you need a Bible Gideons will be happy to provide you one; (808-341-4397).**

**YES! I OPPOSE HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions and pray you do likewise.**

**I am praying for all of you to make the right decision. God Bless!**

**Testimony Of:**

**Connie Ma  
1441 Victoria st.  
Honolulu Hawaii 96822**

**I OPPOSE HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions.**

---

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**From:** Kit Wynkoop [kitnhawaii@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444 Testimony

Aloha Kakou,

Thank you for hearing this important bill. I support HB 444 and the Civil Unions it creates.

I urge you as members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee to pass this bill and courageously stand up for equality in Hawai'i. All people are equal under the law and should therefore enjoy the same rights and protections provided by our constitution, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Counter to our state's constitution, committed same sex couples and their families are denied the basic rights and protections afforded married couples, including health care rights, property and housing rights, taxation and other benefits. Civil Unions promote stable, healthy, and loving relationships. Civil Unions will help to protect all of our families and help all people living in families to be covered by family laws.

Discrimination has no place in our state. We are fortunate to live where many different peoples and cultures exist side by side. Our state creed is "Live and let live." We must and can work together to continue to make Hawai'i a unique and wonderful home.

I ask you to pass HB 444 creating Civil Unions and to promote the equality of all Hawai'i's citizens.

Thank you,

Kit Wynkoop

All Concerning (HB444, HD1),

Marriage is a treasure and gift given by God that only profits male, female and society as a whole. I have been married for 5 years and now have 2 children with my wife. The natural design of male and females who have been given the ability to procreate is paramount to the continuation of mankind. As morality wanes across our nation, we have come to a point that will cause our nation to be brought humbly before God, and turn from our wicked ways or watch a catastrophic shift, which will rapidly bring down this nation faster than any other countries military could ever do. We have spent so much time focused on issues we thought were so broad in and more so out of our nation that we have fail to see toxic lasciviousness quietly building within our own neighborhoods. At first thought of more as a fad we are now seeing the ramifications these homosexual desires are bringing forth. The family structure is being destroyed and replace by a counterfeit posing auspiciously as the naturally intended design.

If (HB 444, HD1) is passed, understand the responsibility you have to the future generations that will struggle with. No study has shown that homosexuality is not a natural born affection by either male nor female it is a choice, which violates the conscious on each individual who partakes in it. The issue is not just the act of homosexuality it is the heart of man, meaning each one of us has the capacity to horrible and wretched things and none are guiltless. When we compare ourselves to the standards God has set in place, being His Ten Commandments we see that none of us measure up. A lie is a lie, fib, white lie etc..., they all makes you a liar, to steal regardless of value makes you a thief, Jesus said to look with lust or sexual desire is the same as committing the act of Adultery in your heart. So we see when we do the comparison honestly I'm a lying, thieving, adulterer at heart and I'm guilty before God in need of a savior just as you would be. The next question would now be now that I've admitted my guilt before God and His standard is Heaven or Hell where would I go...honestly? God came in the flesh as a man in Jesus Christ taking on ALL the sins of ALL those who would repent (turn from their sin) and put their faith in Jesus Christ.

It's like standing before the judge guilty of heinous crimes, no time or good works can offset your actions because they have already taken place. So the judge just as the judge is about to slam the gavel and sentence you to life in prison someone you don't even know enters in the court room and tells the judge they have given everything they have so that you're fine could be paid and the justice would be satisfied and you could go free. Now ask yourself how you would feel toward the individual who did this.

February 20, 2009

To pass this law is to condone the lustful acts which are single handedly driving this nation to its downfall. We must not allow this to take place, do not be a part of what will if allowed becomes this nation's demise.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kerry D. Taylor



---

**From:** SHAWN COLOTARIO [colotario@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:38 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* Testimony against HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee  
HB 444  
Hearing 2/24/09, 9:00am

Thank you for answering the call to represent the community, the people of Hawaii. Public service is not easy for many, as it means not voting as you wish, but as we wish. And as you thanked us for our votes of confidence on that election night not so long ago, now is the time we put that trust and confidence to the test.

I respectfully ask that you vote against house bill 444 for the simple reason that it is not what's right. And we know it's not right because we are all here today as the result of a union between a man and a woman, not a union between man and man, not a union between woman and woman, and not because of what is being proposed as a civil union.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marsha Colotario

---

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**From:** Cal Chinen [calchinen@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:35 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**  
**ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**  
**Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM**  
Name: Rev. Calvin T. Chinen, Sr. Pastor, Moanalua Gardens Missionary Church  
Address: 1401 Mahiole St, Honolulu, HI 96819

### **I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Let me begin with the fact that God loves all people and recognizes that all have sinned and fallen short his glory. This includes yours truly. Furthermore, he commands us to love all people and this includes those who have chosen to live homosexual lifestyles. We love and are open to those who practice as such.

I also recognize that many homosexuals have received much unwarranted prejudice and rejection because of Christians. I am deeply sorry for these actions. Nonetheless, I must strongly oppose HB 444 HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions and ask the Senate Judiciary Committee to table this bill. The matter of equal rights has been sufficiently addressed under the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act. Those areas that are not covered can easily be arranged under this act.

The people of Hawaii voted to preserve Marriage to be kept between a man and woman. Even though Civil Unions are being touted as different from marriage, it is essentially the same thing. To pass this bill on Civil Unions will be a great mishandling of the trust of the people. It is essentially a bill which carries out the viewpoint of a particular group of people without the input of the larger population. This is especially difficult given the vote of 1998. If viewpoint of the general population has changed, then let this matter be brought once again to the people of Hawaii. Please do not plunder and mishandle the trust of the people you have promised to serve. No matter how strong your views may be, it must be brought and tested before all the people of Hawaii. This is simply a matter of trust and integrity.

The ramifications of Civil Unions will be devastating upon our larger community. If it is passed, then homosexual relationships will be accepted as normative and therefore need to be recognized as such by all segments of our society. Our children will have to be educated in that fashion in every aspect of public education and elsewhere. It will force all of us, our children and grandchildren to accept this lifestyle as normative whether we agree with it or not.

I do not wish to sound like one who is seeking to condemn you for that is the last thing that I want to do. Instead, I simply desire to point out to you that the Scriptures clearly point out in both the Old Testament and the New Testament that the essence of the family is the marriage covenant between a man and a woman. Romans chapter 1 clearly points out that to do otherwise will usher in greater violence and abuse into the larger community because the blessings and protection of God will also decrease. I know that many others have shared this with you all and I will not belabor this point.

Members of the Judiciary Committee, this matter of Civil Unions has been suddenly thrust upon us and has brought much heartache and division within the larger community. It has brought a spirit of contention and distraction upon the Legislature at a time when Hawaii is facing great economic turmoil and challenge. Furthermore, it is apparent that there is great suspicion and mistrust in the manner in which this bill has been handled by the House and now in the Senate. To pass this bill in the manner in which it has been handled will be a great travesty. Please table this bill so that we can deal with the more pressing economic issues upon us. If you do not, then greater turmoil will be set upon our community not unlike the 1990's. It may even be worse.

I urge you on behalf of the people of Hawai'i please oppose HB 444 HD 1.

Aloha Ke Akua,

Pastor Calvin T. Chinen  
Moanalua Gardens Missionary Church

February 20, 2009

Testifier: Cheryl Toyofuku

Bill Number: HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

**RE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO CIVIL UNION BILL HB 444 HD1**

Senator Taniguchi and the Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

Thank you for your service to Hawaii as legislators. I am seeking your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. I am a citizen of this beloved state, the proud mother of a beautiful daughter and precious four year old granddaughter. I am also a Registered Nurse, graduating from the University of Hawaii with a Bachelors of Science in Nursing in 1978. Providing health services and consultation to the people of Hawaii in a variety of ways has been both challenging and rewarding.

As a parent, grandparent and health care professional, I am deeply concerned with the legislative process, especially as it pertains to the present issues surrounding HB 444. In 1998, the people of Hawaii already voted that the marriage institution must be protected and remain between one man and one woman. We have spoken and this issue has already been settled by the people of Hawaii. To usurp the people's voice through the passage of a Civil Unions bill is a travesty that our legislators will be accounted for. The foundation of the traditional nuclear family should not be undermined as there is substantial evidence that our children develop best in a home with a father and mother role model.

I am deeply concerned over the blatant ignoring of the majority of our residents. Favoring a group of minority with special privileges will overlook the rights of the majority of the people of Hawaii who have already voted for Traditional Marriage. The 1997 Reciprocal Beneficiary Act was instituted to protect a number of rights for same sex partners (i.e. standing to sue for wrongful death, authority to make health care decisions, etc.) This is not a civil rights or equality issue. The careful reading of HB444 makes it is clear to me that this bill will be setting the stage for "marriage" to same-sex couples. The goal will be to establish same sex marriage... just under a different name for now to make everyone think it's not about "marriage", but "equality" or "civil rights". Consider "domestic partnerships" or "civil unions" in other states such as California, New Jersey, and Vermont where same-sex advocates are now demanding legislative imposition for same-sex "marriage". Similar demands are being made in Maine, Washington and New Hampshire where bills were introduced as "domestic partnerships" or "civil unions".

As a Registered Nurse, I am also concerned with the potential increase in diseases to our already burdened health care system. For example, according to the Hawaii State Department of Health website, "As of December 31, 2007, a total of 3,011 AIDS cases were reported by health providers. Men who have sex with men (MSM) account for the majority of AIDS cases (73%), followed by injection drug use (IDU) (8%), MSM/IDU (7%), and heterosexual contact (6%)." Other similar STD statistics are listed on the website.

The negative impact on health care providers is also a grave concern. Enacting Civil Unions in our state will open the door to additional law suits when a healthcare provider decides, based on personal conscience, not to provide elective services to a same-sex couple. Such was the artificial insemination case in August 2008, when the California Supreme Court ruled "that patient demand for nonessential care trumps the freedom of conscience of physicians and their ability to practice medicine in accordance with their religious or moral beliefs."

Historical research confirms the negative consequences of Civil Unions and governmental elevation of same-sex relationships. State-sanctioned Civil Unions will have devastating implications on adoption, parental and family rights, health care provider rights and individual religious rights. I believe that you will continue to hear the voice of Hawaii's people in the coming weeks if HB 444 proceeds to legitimize the destruction of our most basic belief of traditional marriage in a family unit. I respectfully request that you preserve Hawaii's desire to protect traditional marriage, therefore please oppose HB 444.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this very critical issue.

---

**From:** rbadayos@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:24 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

FROM: Roland Badayos

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00a.m.

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,  
Roland Badayos

---

**From:** rbadayos@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:24 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

FROM: Robin Badayos

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00a.m.

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,  
Robin Badayos

---

**From:** Kenneth Thourson [kthourson@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:19 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing February 24,2009 9AM HB 444

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for considering my testimony concerning HB 444. I want to voice my opposition to this bill which it seems would grant all the benefits of marriage to civil unions.

First of all, I think we would all acknowledge that a family, a man, woman, and their children are the fundamental building block of society and this family unit cuts across all cultures, religions and time. The family is more basic than civil government. As such government would be wise to do whatever it could to support and strengthen the family. However, in our nation the opposite seems to be true and our country is already reaping the consequences of not protecting marriage with problems that range from the breakdown of discipline in the class rooms, to drug abuse, psychological problems, and serious crimes. As a physician, I regularly see the consequences of our lack of concern about marriage in the damaged lives of the children of Hawaii, our next generation of leaders. HB 444 would only serve to weaken marriage by making Civil Unions equal to marriage.

About 10 years ago the people of Hawaii voted overwhelmingly that marriage was a relationship between one man and one woman. It seems to me that HB 444 totally ignores this expression of the peoples view of marriage that occurred at that vote. It now seems that the tactic of incrementalism is being used to try to bring same sex marriage to the State of Hawaii.

**I urge you to support the institution of marriage and the clearly expressed will of the voters of Hawaii and Oppose HB 444**

Thank you,

Kenneth Thourson



---

**From:** Rene Anela [rbadayos@mail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:17 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

**TO:** SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Rene Badayos

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00a.m.

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,  
Rene Badayos

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**From:** Kyle Kihara [kylereene2244@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:09 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Kyle Kihara  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am in strong opposition to HB444 HD1. I have already voted against this issue at the polls. Thank You.

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**From:** dkmiyashiro@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 10:56 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Dear Sir/Madam:

Testifier: Karlyn Miyashiro

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

I would like to state that this is blatantly same sex marriage attempting to be disguised. The argument of Rights for beneficiaries are a mute point as the Reciprocal Beneficiary and Domestic Partnership rulings take away this argument. The people have spoken and the mind set of the people of Hawaii has not changed! I am for equal rights, however, the argument should be towards the entities that deny this benefit to same sex couples and not the basis of the definition of marriage to determinesho should receive benefits. The definition of marriage should not be compromised as the future generation of Hawaii depends on your better judgment.

My belief does play apart in my voicing this testimony, however, if the factor of religion is taken out of the picture...the process of evolution or Darwin's theory was to evolve, pro-create and move into the future with generations to come, couples of the same sex do not have the ability to pro-create, thus the definition of a man and a woman and the sanctity of this union, "traditional marriage" should remain and not be "revised", "changed" to suit a sector of people for their own gain or convenience.

Please consider the future of Hawaii and deal with the reality and issues that will arise further should you vote for this. Please vote "NO" on HB 444 HD1.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Karlyn Miyashiro  
A Concerned Citizen of Hawaii

---

**From:** Carol Cheng [ccc808@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:22 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB44HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Measure Number HB444 HD1

Testimony for State Judiciary Committee Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear State Judiciary Committee,

I strongly oppose HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions. HB444 HD1 states that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil union".

This statement by itself makes "marriage" and "civil Union" virtually identical and indistinguishable from each other.

The people of Hawaii clearly stated their position in the Constitutional Amendment in 1998 that marriage should be reserved for one man and one woman. HB444 HD1 by its own definition is marriage under the name of "civil union", and is therefore attempting to redefine marriage to include same sex couples under the disguise of Civil Union which is against the majority will of the people of Hawaii.

Marriage (one man/one woman) and family are the foundation of our society and the integrity of this institution must be maintained if we are to leave a lasting legacy of strength for our children.

I respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,

Carol Cheng

[ccc808@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:ccc808@hawaii.rr.com)

**To: Senate Judiciary Committee**

**HEARING: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 Am – State Capitol Auditorium**

**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating To Civil Unions**

**Aloha Chair Brian Taniguchi and Committee Members,**

**As a Citizen and Voter of this fine state of Hawaii, I want to state, that I am in STRONG OPPOSITON TO HB 444, HD1.**

**1998 was the year that, WE THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII VOTED AND STATED THAT MARRIAGE in HAWAII is between ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN.**

**This House Bill 444 is an attempt to legalize gay marriage simply by a different name. Since same sex couples in Hawaii already receives benefits as traditional married couples; this bill is a TOJIAN HORSE by calling this bill an equal rights bill for same sex couples.**

**By passing this bill, it will change our way of life in Hawaii forever. We will lose our culture that is known to us, especially to those who grew up in Hawaii. This bill will also FORCE the present and future children of Hawaii in accepting the gay life style as NORMAL. As a Citizen and Voter, I feel very insulted by the House passing this bill so quickly, and NOT having a fair hearing from the majority of the PEOPLE OF HAWAII.**

**Senator Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Memebers, please respect the majority of voters, who voted in 1998 to settle the issue or definition of Marriage in Hawaii.**

**PLEASE VOTE AGAINST HOUSE BILL 444 HD1 AND PRESERVE THE FUTURE OF HAWAII.**

**MAHALO,**

**Roy Y. Nakamura**

---

**From:** Stephen Nagle [stephen.f.p.n@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:22 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Personal testimony

Stephen Nagle  
HB 44 HD1  
February 24th at 9 a.m.  
Senate Judiciary and Government Operation Committee

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Stephen Nagle, and I am here to express my Strong support for House Bill 444- Civil Unions

Let me start this off with saying that you are all doing a Great job representing all the people in our state, and not just in your local jurisdiction.

This bill if enacted will grant the members of the GLBT community the right to enter into Civil Unions.

If this bill passes it will be an awesome step for true equality for all people in this wonderful state in which we live.

For years, many of us who have been in long term relationships have been denied the basic right of a civil union and all that it represents to us and our families.

Many of us are Mothers and Fathers and we have loving children, we are people who live and work in our communities and are well respected among our peers. Most don't see us because there is nothing to see. We are just like everyone else, except for the ability to enter into a civil union.

This is a very basic American right.

As I see it, Civil Unions are not a religious ceremony, neither my partner nor I belong to any Judaic Christian religion, nor do we believe in them. And even though the concept of the separation of church and state is a great ideal, the line is being crossed everyday.

One of the main ideals of the constitution is to protect the Minority from the majority. This is not just a political platform it is a bipartisan truth.

Everyday religious organizations engage in politics by either preaching them in their churches or by donating HUGE sums of money to lobbyists or action groups on a national level. Sunday's spectacle is a Prime example. They have even hired Lawyers to sue anyone who makes claims about this but if the government even begins to think about investigating them in tax fraud laws, they yell very loudly about the Ideal of separation and claim the government is attacking them.

Meanwhile they keep on slandering innocent people and projecting false views of the reality of the world by imposing their narrow minded fears on rest of the world and use their money to keep people down and block other Minorities from equal rights.

These various organizations claim that Marriage has been around and I am quoting from a letter from the Hawaii family forum that, " Marriage is not an American invention it has existed as an intuition since the beginning of civilization". It has Not, at least not what they are calling marriage, the ceremony that they are referring to was started around 600 AD and was solely to keep track of royal blood lines for everyone else it was to keep track of who owned land. And this type of Marriage wasn't available to the Common person till around 500 years ago and even then it was done for social status. And even in the last hundred years the face of the "traditional family" has gone from larger extended clan to the concept of the nuclear family.

And I know that it is not easy to hear one quiet voice in a crowd of several thousand screaming people, but let's not loose track of the issue, this is NOT marriage. It is Civil Unions, Civil unions are Non-religious, and it needs to stay that way.

Let us not see here today the right wing conservative Christians destroy the first amendment with their "sword of truth"

With what I saw last Sunday, here on our sacred capitol grounds was Children being taught to hate, children being taught bigotry and intolerance, by these so called Christians that is what they are teaching their children. This is the exact same southern Christian fervor that we saw in the 50s and 60s they just changed the names from nigger to faggot. Both are equally hurtful. and they are afraid that someday in the future that all children might learn about tolerance and love for ALL, I thought that protective services is supposed to protect children from that type of abuse..

With what I saw last Sunday I can tell you that neither I nor my child would EVER think of joining such an intolerant group of people. Nor will we.

The point is that we are being denied equal rights on a state and Federal level by religious groups. And this must never happen in America. No one group should ever hold sway over any minorities. The last I knew this was a democracy and NOT a theocracy.

The bible that these people so love to use as a weapon mentions 2 times and obscurely a glancing reference, depending on your translation to Homosexual behavior once in Leviticus, which if you REALLY Do believe in this you will suffer that same fate if you eat shell fish or pork, yes that would be the bacon on that bacon cheese burger, and in the book of John and that is under scrutiny by many bible scholars as it seemed to appear about 1000 years ago 600 after the conference of Ephesus. When the gospels were laid down, the so called end of the age of miracles

HOWEVER, it mentions charity for the less fortunate and to love others equally over 2000 times. Just think of all the children that they could have fed, with money that these people are spending on engaging in politics. Of The Millions of dollars that could have been used to house the homeless and to build rehabs, TRUE charity.

What we have seen here is just plain hatred, and yes unfortunately, ignorance. Let us not let the state of Hawaii be known as the state of intolerance and bigotry, the state that killed the American constitution. Instead let us be known for honesty and tolerance for ALL people. Let us be another shining beacon of justice and liberty for all. An example of true American Ideals, to show the rest of the world what freedom really means.

I ask that you Support HB444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo Nui,

Stephen Nagle

67-243B Kahaone loop,

Waialua, HI 96791



---

**From:** noe none [lil\_localgal\_55@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:29 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

**TO:** SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Jon Amano

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00a.m.

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,  
Jon Amano

---

**From:** wesjanejessmich yamada [yamadas@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:11 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1  
**Attachments:** fs\_civil-unions-are-not-enough.pdf; ATT00001.txt; ATT00002

## **Testimony on HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**From: Wesley Yamada**

### **Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 A.M., State Capitol Auditorium**

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I would like to testify that I am Strongly Opposed to HB444. The supporters of HB444 say that civil unions are no threat to "traditional marriage" and that this is about "equal rights," not the definition of Marriage. Yet, this Bill states that "Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions." In other words a civil union is equal to marriage in all aspects except it is called a civil union and not marriage. So, in essence, "civil unions" are just same-sex marriage, and 70% of the voters have already voted against same-sex marriage in 1998. This is why the people of Hawaii are upset! Not because we are all "bigots," "intolerant," "Haters," but because the Will of the majority of the voters is being violated by this Bill.

I urge you to listen to All the testimonies before you make a decision on this bill, and to vote as your constituents, (whom you are empowered to represent) have spoken on this issue.

The supporters of HB444 say this is all about Equality and not about "changing the definition of Marriage"....yet even a homosexual website, LAMBDA LEGAL ...says that civil unions are "not enough", and that the only way Equality can be accomplished is when "marriage" equals "same-sex marriage."

## Testimony

Testifying: Social Justice Council of First Unitarian Church of Honolulu  
2500 Pali Highway  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
Email to: uusocialjusticehnl@live.com

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009 at 9 am Capitol Auditorium

Bill: Supporting HB 444 HD1

---

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Committee:

I am Nancy Moser, Secretary of the Social Justice Council of the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu.

Our church urges you to support House Bill 444 to establish civil unions, as a matter of fundamental human rights of equality, of conscience, and of freedom.

The Social Justice Council is delegated by our congregation to ask for your support by this resolution, first adopted by our congregation in 1991 and reaffirmed continually since then.

“Resolution on Freedom of Religion as pertaining to the  
**RIGHT OF SAME GENDER MARRIAGES**

WHEREAS: The First Unitarian Church of Honolulu covenants to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person as well as his or her right of conscience; and

WHEREAS: The First Unitarian Church of Honolulu (as well as other churches) offers congregational and ministerial support for services uniting couples in marriage without discrimination on the basis of gender, including and without prejudice against same gender couples; and

WHEREAS: the right of a couple (regardless of gender) to live in a state of marriage is a fundamental right of conscience deserving to be honored and celebrated for its profound spiritual and religious significance to the participants; and

WHEREAS: the right of this church to celebrate and participate in honoring such marriages, by authorizing its ministers to conduct, celebrate and officially witness such taking in marriage, is a fundamental religious right; and

WHEREAS: same-gender marriages currently go unrecognized by government, and are actively undermined by such disregard as well as by laws, restrictions and practices that, for example, deny property rights of married couples to same-gender couples, deny rights of mutual responsibility (such as family insurance rights, visitation rights or rights to make medical decisions for same-gender spouses, etc.), and many other rights necessary to sustain a family couple;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the congregation of The First Unitarian Church of Honolulu encourages the state of Hawaii to license and legally recognize marriages without discrimination on the basis of gender, including and without prejudice against same-gender marriages; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that this congregation supports equal recognition and provision of laws, services, privileges, rights, etc. by cities, counties, and the United States Government due all marriages and married couples, without discrimination on the basis of gender.

Passed: 2 June 1991

Reaffirmed: 12/02/07”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 444 HD1.

---

**From:** Harmony Crystal-Lee [harmonyb83@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:19 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

**TO:** SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Harmony Badayos

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00a.m.

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,  
Harmony Badayos

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**From:** rbadayos@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of HB 444 HD1- Relating to Civil Union

Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Union

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

FROM: Raymond Badayos

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00a.m.

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

In 1998, 70% of the people in Hawaii voted against same sex marriage.

Please honor the traditional marriage of a man and woman.

Very Respectful,  
Raymond Badayos

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**From:** Karen DiCostanzo, HRTL [hrtl@juno.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:50 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444 HD1

**Testifier:** Karen DiCostanzo  
**Contact information:** PO Box 340, Kailua, HI 96734, 808-628-8414  
**Submitted to:** Hawai'i Senate Judiciary Committee  
**Committee hearing:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)  
**Measure Number:** HB 444 HD1  
**Position:** Opposed  
**Will not testify orally**

The civil union bill, HB 444 HD1, which legalizes same-sex civil unions, explicitly requires the state to consider these unions as equivalent to marriage in every respect, and recognizes same-sex marriages from elsewhere, has been introduced a step toward radically redefining and ultimately abolishing traditional marriage in Hawai'i. That is why I strongly oppose this bill and urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to oppose it as well.

Proponents of these bills reject the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Instead, the sole criterion for marriage becomes "the presence of "love" and "mutual commitment". But once marriage is no longer confined to one man and one woman, it is impossible to exclude virtually any relationship between any number of partners of either sex or even non-human "partners".

A growing body of research indicates that gay relationships are radically different than those of married straight couples. While a significant percentage of heterosexual couples remain married for up to 20 years or longer, the vast majority of homosexual relationships are short-lived and transitory.

A study in the Netherlands, a country which has legalized homosexual marriage, found the average duration of a homosexual relationship to be just 18 months. The same study found that "committed" homosexual couples have an average of eight sexual partners each year outside of their "committed" relationship, while 75% of married couples remain completely faithful to each other.

Civil union and same-sex marriage supporters support their position by claiming the law as it currently stands unfairly discriminates against them, denying them their civil rights. However, defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman does not deny homosexuals the basic civil rights accorded every citizen. Nowhere in the Bill of Rights or in any legislation are homosexuals excluded from the rights enjoyed by all, including the right to marry.

None of us has the *unrestricted* right to marry any person we choose, however. We are not permitted to wed children or close blood relatives. We cannot take multiple spouses or marry the spouses of others. Marriages are regulated for a reason so that they form stable building blocks for societies. Such restrictions are based upon the wisdom accumulated for millennia by cultures around the world. This wisdom includes preserving traditional marriage between one man and one woman.

Discrimination occurs when someone is *unjustly* denied a benefit or opportunity. Hawai'i has already made provision for benefits through its reciprocal beneficiaries law. With regard to alleged discrimination on the basis of sexual preference, this matter was addressed by the Minnesota Supreme Court in *Baker v. Nelson*, when it rejected the argument that denying a same-sex couple the right to marry was the equivalent of racial

discrimination. The court found: "In common sense and constitutional sense, there is a clear distinction between a marital restriction based merely upon race and one based upon the fundamental difference in sex."

When gay activists and their supporters claim "discrimination" they avoid the question of whether homosexual relationships merit being granted equality with traditional marriage. What if every carpenter defined his own standard of measurement? One man and one woman joined together in holy matrimony is the time-tested "yardstick" for marriage. We cannot alter the definition of marriage without disastrous consequences to society any more than one can arbitrarily change the definition of a yardstick without disastrous consequences to a building.

Homosexual marriages and civil unions cheapen and degrade traditional marriage, ultimately destroying it--and along with it nuclear families, which are the building blocks of orderly, stable societies. Traditional marriages and families are the best way to raise healthy children, maintain healthy communities, and preserve healthy societies. The destructive effects of passing a civil union bill may not be immediately apparent, but the cumulative damage is inescapable. That is why I strongly oppose HB 444 HD 1 and ask the Senate Judiciary Committee to do the same.



## Testimony in support of HB444 HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions)

To: Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee.  
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice-chair  
Members: Senator Robert Bunda, Senator Mike Gabbard, Senator Sam Slom

From: Jo-Ann Adams, Esq., Member of the Waikiki Neighborhood Board, Member of the State Central Committee, Legislative Committee and Affirmative Action Committee, Secretary of the GLBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, National Delegate to the Democratic National Convention

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB444 HD1 as a private citizen.

HB444 is about civil rights. It is not a religious matter.

Hawai'i Constitution Article 1, section 3, states: "Equality of rights under the law, shall not be denied or abridged by the state on account of sex." Yet we deny same-sex couples the fundamental right to protect their primary relationship and their families equally. HB444 corrects this inequity by providing those rights to same-sex couples.

Those who oppose HB444 claim they want to protect traditional marriage, but HB444 makes no references to the marriage chapter. It creates a separate legal institution. HB444 specifically states that no officiant will be required to perform civil unions. If the churches opt to continue discriminating against same-sex couples, they are free to do so.

However, not all churches want to discriminate against same-sex couples. If you review the list of testifiers, The Interfaith Alliance of Hawaii and many individual churches support HB444. Therefore, the opposition represents only some of the churches of some of the religions here in Hawaii.

The opposition refers to scripture as if there is only one scripture and one religion. In so doing, the opposition has transformed the debate about HB444. The HB444 debate is no longer about civil rights: it is now about protecting all religions in Hawaii from oppression by a few, because here in Hawaii we are blessed with a diversity of religions. If you pass HB444, each church can decide whether or not they want to perform civil unions. Those churches who want to maintain the status quo will be free to do so. Churches who want to treat same-sex couples and their families equally will be free to do so.

In November 2007 QMark polled 501 people throughout Hawaii. Seventy-three percent (73%) agreed with the statement that "Committed couples and their families, regardless of their sexual orientation, should have the same rights. That's the bottom line – we should treat people equally."

HB444 allows the State to grant a license so that same-sex couples can get equal legal protection from the State for their primary relationships and their families in the form of a "civil union". This is about civil rights – not religion. The opposition's attempt to transform it into a religious issue shows that we need HB444 not only to protect same-sex couples and their families, but to protect all religions from the tyranny of a few.

---

**From:** val bigornia [visionhawaii@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 1:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier : Lyndie Bigornia  
Bill Number & Title: HB 444 HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00am  
Hearing location: Auditorium

Dear Sirs,

Greetings from our home. I am writing today to kindly and respectfully express our concern about HB 444.

It is very much apparent that this bill is not about equality and civil rights. Gay couples here in Hawaii are well provided and protected of their rights as couples.

It is a public knowledge to all of us that in 1997, the Reciprocal Beneficiary Acts HRS 572C (RBA) became a law. This law allows two persons who are legally prohibited from marrying one another under state law to register their reciprocal beneficiary relationship by filing a notarized declaration with the state director of health. The RBA affords reciprocal beneficiaries certain rights that previously were reserved to spouses, for example, standing to sue for wrongful death and other tort claims, rights to an elective share upon death, authority to make health care decisions, rights to worker' compensation benefits, rights to receive payments of wages on the death of an employee, and rights to family leave under state law. (Shiela A. Albin, Associate General Counsel 12/9/97)

Therefore, insisting that we who oppose HB 444 are not for equality & civil rights is a lie. We do not hate homosexuals and are sympathetic to their plight. We pray that they will find happiness and good will. We also pray and humbly request them to respect the democratic procedures and the sovereign will of the people of the State of Hawaii.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between between one man one woman. The Civil Union Bill 444 is just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits - without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartners status test. The people of Hawaii have put these issues behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have been settled by the people.

Finally, I am writing this testimony to emphasize that Marriage is bigger than just one couple. Marriage is not the invention of government. It is a pre-legal institution and has existed since the beginning of civilization in every known society.

Society can be no more stable than the strengths of its individual family units. Sexual behavior is directly linked to survival of nations. (Dr James Dobson, author of countless best seeling books on family & marriages, wrote to support that facts mentioned above, by referring to) J.D. Unwin, a British social anthropologist who spent seven years studying the births and deaths of 80 civilizations. He reported from his exhaustive research

that every known culture in the world's history has followed the same sexual pattern: during its early days of existence, premarital, homosexual, and extramarital relationships were strictly prohibited. Great creative energy was associated with this inhibition of sexual expression, causing the culture to prosper. Much later in life of the society, its people began to rebel against the strict prohibitions, demanding the freedom to release their internal passions. As the mores and morality weakened, the social energy abated, eventually resulting in the decay or destruction of the civilization.

Dr. Unwin stated that the energy which holds a society together is sexual in nature. When a man is devoted to one woman & one family, he is motivated to build, save, protect, plan, and prosper on their behalf. However, when his sexual interests are dispersed and generalized, his effort is invested in the gratification of sensual desires. Dr. Unwin concluded: "Any human society is free either to display great energy, or to enjoy sexual freedom; the evidence is that they cannot do both for more than one generation."

"The weakening of America's financial position in the world and the difficulties its families and children are experiencing can be traced to our departure from traditional values and Biblical concepts of morality." (Dr. James Dobson)

As a commoner and citizen of the State of Hawaii, I testify today, that there is a God who stabilized the universe and the boundaries of human behaviors. Because He is the God who rules the affairs of nation and the God I fear, I humbly appeal to you today to protect the institution of traditional marriage for the sake of our children and the children of our grandchildren to come.

Most Respectfully,

Lyndie Bigornia  
(808) 454-2026

---

**From:** Joel Weaver [weaver.joel@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:00 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testimony of Joel S Weaver

**TO:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO)

**Re:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing Date: 9:00 am Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Dear members of the Senate JGO Committee—

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 444 Relating to the establishment of Civil Unions.

Yours is a solemn charge: serve the people's will. And the people's will has been explicitly stated on this issue when in 1998 a clear majority voted to retain the "one man-one woman" definition of marriage that has held for millennia.

This is not an issue of equality, as even those in favor of the bill will acknowledge that the legal rights purportedly denied them are already available to same-sex couples through Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. No, be assured that the aim of this bill is to redefine marriage to include not only same-sex couples but also any other behavior-based group that desires civil approval of their lifestyle choice. Can those practicing currently unacceptable sex-based behavior such as pedophilia or bestiality be far behind in their demand for "equal rights" and for their right to "marry" the ones with whom they practice their preferred actions?

The legislative endorsement of sex-partner civil unions is one step from legislative endorsement of sex-partner marriage. Please do not shred the definition of marriage to include any people who practice sexually-based behavior who express their desire to call themselves "married".

Again, you have a solemn responsibility to serve your constituents and the generations to come in the decisions you make. Please vote NO on HB444 HD1, as it seeks to establish a ruinous precedent in granting special legal protection and benefits based on sexual preferences and behaviors.

Thank you,

Joel Weaver

3466 Pinao Street  
Honolulu, HI 96822

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:57 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** wongd027@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Dennis Wong  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 540 Lagoon Drive Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Phone: 808-206-5269  
E-mail: [wongd027@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:wongd027@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

To: The State Judiciary Committee

RE: Measure Number HB 444 HD1

Date and Time of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM

As a resident and a registered voter of the State of Hawaii, I would like to voice my opposition to HB 444 HD1 (Civil Unions). I have been married for 25 years and I regard marriage between a man and woman to be sacred and special, not to be taken lightly. I do not approve of legalizing homogeneous partnerships because I believe doing so would deteriorate our children's welfare, decay our educational system, diminish the sanctity of marriage, adversely impact our local economy, and lead us one step closer to legalizing gay marriages.

Many attempts have been made to legalize homogenous marriages or partnerships. These attempts have widely been defeated or opposed, both locally and in the mainland. In 1998, the overwhelmingly large majority of residents of the State of Hawaii opposed same sex marriages and partnerships. This message should have rang loud and clear. Civil Unions often have expressed their constitutional right to legalize gay marriages or partnerships. I feel that adoption of their initiative is wrong and not in the best interest of the large majority of the people. The constitution upholds the majority of the people, not the minority.

Thank you for letting me express my view and if you should have nay questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Dennis Wong

**Danette Kong Poole**

1258 Koko Head Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
ph: (808) 497-3644

February 21, 2009

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

**Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before your committee.

In 1954, it was against the law for my father, a Southern Baptist minister from Hawaii, to marry my mother in her home state of Mississippi. They had to go to another state, Kentucky, to be married, or I might not even exist to testify before you today.

I am also an ordained Southern Baptist minister, born and reared here in the Islands, and an active member of a local Baptist church. I share this testimony in full support of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions).

While I have great belief in the Constitutional rights of all our American citizens to be treated equally under the law, I also believe theologically that Christians are instructed -- we are mandated by our Lord -- to treat others as we would want to be treated, a perspective which we consider the Golden Rule.

As a hospital chaplain in the 1980s and 1990s, I worked with many gay AIDS patients and their surviving partners. I had the privilege of witnessing the shared bond between these partners, which oftentimes surpassed the commitment between heterosexual couples. Through the years I have come to know many gay partners who exhibit model relationships and parenting skills. They contribute much to our society and community.

Recently, as my brother-in-law lay near death at the Queen's Medical Center, I sat with his partner of 10 years in the ICU. His devotion and attentiveness to my brother-in-law were heroic and inspiring. Their relationship has not put any mean dents into the institution of marriage, nor has it negatively affected the fabric of our society. It is high time that our Aloha State recognizes the validity of their relationship and provides them with the benefits they deserve.

I also have a lesbian sister who chooses not to legalize a union with her partner. That is her preference -- but I ask you to allow her decision to be one of personal choice, and not legal dictate. Please allow her to be treated fairly in her quest for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and vote in favor of HB 444 hd1.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Danette Kong Poole  
1258 Koko Head Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96816

---

**From:** splash48@hotmail.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:41 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSOSITION TO HB444 HD1

**Bill # & Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
**Committee:** To Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
**Hearing Time:** 9:00 am  
**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

My name is Sandra Ishikawa-Long and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions. **Please DO NOT SUPPORT this bill.**

Thank you,  
Sandra C. Ishikawa-Long



**EMAILING FOR THE GREATER GOOD**

[Join me](#)

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**From:** April Lee [april@kre2.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:56 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of Civil Unions HB 333 HD1

From: Reverend April Lee  
RE: HB 444 HD1  
Hearing: Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.  
Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

Honorable Senators,

There is no more important choice in life than the free choice of one's mate. Of all the areas where we show our immaturity and superstitious limitations of our religious leanings, it is this subject. The Christian Church incorporated the ancient Jewish sex codes into Roman and Canon Law which formed the basis of the domestic law of medieval Europe. Have we not progressed beyond this? Paul's condemnation of women praying with their hats off, nor speaking in church, and his acceptance of slavery as a normal social practice has proved that St. Paul's views are not final. As The Shakers in *Towards a Quaker View of Sex* intelligently studied the situation found; a man loving another man is not classed as a crime in legal text books; namely 1. not an offence against the State, 2. not an offence against property nor 3. an offence against persons. Female homosexuality is probably as common, but we as a public are not repulsed by seeing two women together. Nonetheless, **all** couples are deserving of all that their sacrifice, commitment and dedication to one another have earned them—equality in rights and benefits.

Christians, like myself, feel that this passage in 1 Romans used to condemn same sex marriage should be rejected as immoral and outside the will of God, much as other biblical passages are immoral by today's ethical standards and should be ignored -- including those passages that regulated human slavery, required some hookers to be burned alive, advocated genocide, required victims of rape to marry their rapist, recognized the torture of prisoners, and required the execution of non-virgin brides.

The Hebrew Scriptures (a.k.a. Old Testament) describe seven different marriage/family forms that were practiced in ancient Israel, in addition to the standard "*one man-one woman*" format .

- Marriage in North America has evolved in different ways over the past 16 decades:
  - Polygamous marriages were introduced in the 1840s and partly phased out in 1890. Many tens of thousands of couples still practice polygyny, mainly in the state of Utah and the Canadian province of British Columbia. They are almost never prosecuted.
  - Marriages by African-American slaves were banned in some U.S. states, and only permitted after the conclusion of the civil war.
  - Inter-racial marriages were considered a criminal act in some states until 1958.
  - Same-sex marriages were unavailable until 2003-JUN-10 when they became legal in Ontario, and 2003-MAY-2 British Columbia, Canada. The *Massachusetts Supreme Court* granted same sex couples the right to marry starting 2004-MAY-20.
- Same Sex Marriages became available across Canada on 2005-JUL-20.

These four changes were painful experiences for many North Americans at the time. However, people were able to take the first three changes in stride.

Members and leaders of some conservative Christian churches believe that they have few or no members or staff who are homosexuals. *Evangelicals Concerned*, a group which believes that there is no conflict between Biblical faith and a committed, monogamous homosexual relationship, believe the opposite: that gays and



lesbians are as common within conservative churches as within the general population. *Justice & Respect* agrees

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There is really no way to collect accurate statistics on the prevalence of homosexuality within churches. Both members and employees would be reluctant to reveal their orientation because they would fear being expelled as a member or fired as an employee if they came out of "the closet". One interesting statistic comes from *Love & Action*, an Evangelical agency that ministers to persons with AIDS. They visited about a dozen Christian colleges during 1990 and offered confidential counseling to those who were struggling with homosexual feelings. About 4% of students signed up. They estimate the total number of such students to be at least 8%. Presumably they felt that only half of the gays and lesbians volunteered for counseling because of fear of being exposed and a lack of trust in the agency. Or perhaps they had come to terms with their sexual orientation and saw no reason to be counseled. These data would indicate that the prevalence of homosexual orientation might be significantly higher in Christian colleges than in the general population.

In the national bestseller, *Genome*, by Matt Ridley, the idea of genes being the cause of homosexuality is little-known outside of a small group of evolutionary biologists. "But it has profoundly shaken the philosophical foundations of biology." Pg 121. "Yet it is plainly present in the modern population at a significant level. Perhaps four percent of men are definitively gay." "There is no room for doubt that homosexuality is highly heritable." To punish a person for their genetic disposition for homosexuality, would be akin to punishing the person who has Huntington's Disease-another inherited condition.

Domestic partnership laws are about allowing couples who love each other and to take care of each other. They currently must live without the security of having full family health insurance without being recognized as a family. One of the parents in the family has been categorically excluded from eligibility for the plan. Society strongly condemns the sexual tastes of these people when 'society's members' expect their individual tastes in matters of diet, philosophy and the right to make their own moral choices without victimization. This has led to much needless suffering and human failure. I urge you to prove that you are above hypocrisy and would not have the authority of your legislative body weakened. The insincerity of a moral code may well be a cause of the widespread contempt of the younger generation for society's rules and prohibitions. The only moral code that is justifiable is the Golden Rule. Uphold that foundation of civilization and respect for the law, human dignity and the rights of individual choice in matters of taste by approving HB 444 HD1 allowing civil unions. I sincerely thank you for considering my deeply-held views.

Reverend April Lee

PO Box 384569

Waikoloa, HI 96738

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**From:** HONOLULU BUZZ [buzzhonolulu@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:15 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1 Hearing on February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM

**February 20, 2009**

**Re: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**To: All Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:**

**Hearing: Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 9:00 AM**

**My name is Joseph O'Brien. I have been a resident of Hawaii for most of my life. I intend to be a resident for the remainder of my life. We here in Hawaii now have a historic opportunity to show the rest of the country what we are made of, regarding the struggle for a more fair society. There are thousands of gay couples living together, sharing responsibilities, sharing their living quarters, housing expenses and child rearing responsibilities and much more. We deal with health issues, partners with health issues, parents with health issues, unemployment issues, the unfairness of a tax system which does not treat gay families with the same respect as other families. It hurts deeply to hear some people talk about being opposed to civil unions because gays people are perceived as being not having "family values". I am gay and let me tell you about my family and how I value them. And how they value me.**

**I took care of my elderly mother for several years after she had a stroke and she needed a lot of assistance. I cooked for her, did her laundry, took her to doctor's appointments, kept her company and much more. Yes, she loved her gay son just as much as her straight children. Anyone who implies that gay people somehow don't have good "family values" is likely somebody who hasn't had much experience getting to know gay people.**

**Please never forget that gay people have families too. My mother and siblings love me and care about equal treatment for me. They know that allowing gay couples to have civil unions will not hurt families. They know that denying gay members of the family the equality they deserve is what truly hurts the family.**

**There is no evidence that in the states or the countries where gay couples have been given marriage rights or civil unions that it has ever hurt the institution of marriage in any way at all.**

**Please understand that our relationships are just as important to us as your own relationships are to you. In Canada, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands, heterosexual couples still marry as they did before, unaffected by the fact that their gay friends and**

**relatives can now enjoy the civil rights that go with marriage.**

**We are not seeking the right to have a religious ceremony, though some of us might choose that. We are seeking the right to a civil marriage because it involves our civil rights as citizens. Denying gay couples that right amounts to second class citizenship, at least regarding relationship rights.**

**Please do the fair thing and support Civil Unions for gay couples.**

**People who do not believe in marriage equality are mobilizing and launching a tremendous pressure campaign to get you to deny gay couples civil unions rights. Please do not give in to such narrow minded thinking. I ask you to take the "fairness and justice" road, not the "unequal and unfair" road. Civil rights should never be granted or denied on the basis of what is "popular". Civil rights must be affirmed on the basis of justice and on doing that which is fair. If 70% of people believe in denying fellow citizens equality and justice, that only indicates popularity. It does not indicate fairness. Nor does it advance justice.**

**Thank you,**

**Joseph O'Brien**

**Honolulu Hawaii**

---

**From:** Tamby R Young [tambyr@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:09 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

**Importance:** High

February 22, 2009

**To:** Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

**From:** Tamby R. Young, Native Hawaiian  
Small Business Owner, Tidy Up Gang, LLC  
Current President, Na 'Ohana O Na Hui Wa'a (Canoe Paddling Association)  
Head Coach, Maryknoll High School Varsity Paddling Team

**Re:** HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

**To Be Heard:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

**VIA:** Email to [JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

I would like to thank the Chair, Vice Chair, and all committee members for allowing me to provide testimony today on HB 444. This legislation is a courageous initiative that will continue to bring fairness, equality, and a richer quality of life to all individuals in Hawaii.

Same-sex partners, like married couples, choose a person to become their spouse for many of the same reasons. Love, companionship, interests, social and/or spiritual beliefs are just a few of those reasons. However, the most important commonality between same-sex couples and married couples is the desire to live a happy, fulfilling and productive life with the spouse they have chosen. It is this commonality that justifies the need for HB 444.

My name is Tamby Young and my partner of nearly 28 years, Suzanne King, and I made a commitment, as many married couples do, to love, honor and cherish each other 'til death do we part. We are both born and raised here, are raising our 9 year old daughter, own a home in the neighborhood I grew up in, run a small business with 6 employees, and are active members in community organizations.

We contribute to the economy and pay taxes, as married couples do. We care for our elderly parents and nurture the young in our extended families, as married couples do. We collectively pool our resources together to make our family stronger and better able to meet the demands of the future, like married couples do. We are just like many other married couples trying to live a happy, fulfilling and productive life with one exception, we do not have the equal benefits, rights, protections and responsibilities as married couples do.

HB 444 provides a mechanism that gives same-sex couples like Suzanne and I, the ability to reach and sustain a strong family unit by providing us with the same rights, benefits, responsibilities and protections that married couples have.

Therefore, I respectfully ask for your support of HB 444.

*Tambry*

Tambry R. Young

2343 Kula Kolea Drive, Honolulu, HI 96819

Email: [tambry@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:tambry@hawaii.rr.com)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 1:39 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** pgring@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Pamela Gring-Fee  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 2801-M Lai Rd. Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808 739-3877  
E-mail: [pgring@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:pgring@hawaiiantel.net)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to voice my support for HB444, establishing a law that will allow civil unions. What has driven me to submit testimony is the advertising posted by those opposing this bill. I think they believe in discrimination. I also believe that they are falsely claiming that 70 percent of Hawaii residents oppose civil unions. I highly doubt that a strongly democratic state such as Hawaii would have a majority of residents that oppose civil unions. Many of our residents are not vocal, but are quiet and progressive. Are those opposing this bill primarily republican? I wonder...

I myself enjoy a traditional marriage. We have three children. I certainly do not expect every person in the state to be the same as me. I do not feel threatened by those choosing same sex partners or civil unions. Civil unions are the right thing to do to give all couples equal rights.

Sincerely,

Pamela R. Gring-Fee  
2801-M Lai Rd.  
Honolulu, HI 96816

---

**From:** Joseph Glade [gladejd@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:11 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Joseph D. Glade  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members,

We ask for your wisdom and consideration to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. This vote sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this decisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be aware that being in an island community such as ours, we are all family and are held together by common values and virtues, which truly resemble an aloha spirit. I am confident the majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage between one man and one woman.

We should strive to set an example for our children, in that their can only be one true marriage, between man and woman. I fear for the time when it will be required to teach of this in schools as a bad example for our children. To prevent this, I am asking you to please vote NO on HB 444 for our citizens. I am a resident of Hawaii, and have a child as well, and do not think this bill is the way to go.

Thank You,

Joseph Glade

Relating to HB 444

Testifying in Support

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Shawn Steiman and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

Love is a quality that our society greatly cherishes. We consecrate that emotion and experience by recognizing the union of two people of different genders. Those unions then attain many privileges and rights in our society. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities to any couple in a civil union, independent of the gender of the individuals.

We live in a society that promises that you can be whatever you want when you grow up. Our society has been strengthened by the very concept of "The American Dream." We purport that each individual is equal to all others, independent of race, religion, gender, or creed.

Yet, we deny same-gender couples equality of love, equality of respect and freedom of choice. By passing this bill, we change all of that. With the mere acceptance of this legislation, we proudly state that two people in love are honored by our society. They aren't granted any special rights, privileges or benefits. They are only granted what other couples have been given by our civil society for centuries.

I ask that you support HB 444. Be part of legislation that makes our state a better place for everyone. Be a part of change that will move our society towards one of greater love and respect between all members of our society.

Thank you for your time and the consideration of this bill,

Shawn Steiman  
1418 Mokuna Pl  
Honolulu, HI  
96816



---

**From:** Becka Groves [oceanbutterflylove77@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:26 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** "NO" to Bill #444

Dear Honorable chair Taniguchi and members of the Judiciary and government operations committee, I Rebecca Groves, oppose this bill (#444 Civil Union Marriages)  
Thank You for allowing me to testify. Sincerely, Rebecca Groves

**Danielle Gentzler**  
**84-687 Ala Mahiku Dr. 122A**  
**Waianae, HI 96792**  
**2/23/09**

**To: Senate Judiciary Committee**  
**Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair**

**RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444**

**Thank you so much for serving us and our community. As a voting member of the community, we'd like to express our concerns and desires regarding HB 444. It's our understanding and belief that there are a number of laws that protect civil unions and this bill is unnecessary and unwanted by the majority of the people of Hawaii. People should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors, especially when we already have laws that protect people in general. We strongly suggest that you oppose HB 444.**

**Praying for you,**  
**Danielle Gentzler**

FROM: DORENE M. TAKEUCHI (print name)

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

Dorene M. Takeuchi

---

**From:** Willy Ginoza [kapalama@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:39 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Public Hearing Testimony HB 444

For Senate Judiciary Committe  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00am  
Measure number HB 444

I'm writing you to express my deep concern regarding Civil Union bill (HB444).

Marriage is, by definition, between a man and a woman and does not and should not be changed for a select group. The marriage statute does not discriminate against homosexuals (or anyone else). Every homosexual has the right to marry under the marriage license so long as the marriage partner does not constitute a violation of the restrictions against marrying brothers or sisters, parents, relatives of a certain degree of closeness, persons under age, persons of the same sex or persons already validly married to someone else.

More importantly, why do we want to even have rights/privileges to people based on who they are in relationship with? It is because for thousands of years, cultures across the globe have recognized the "special" relationship of a husband and a wife and its impact as the building block of society. That building block is the marital bond. Relationships outside the marital bond doesn't provide the same "building block" foundation society needs to thrive. Marriage is not an American invention. It has existed as an institution since the beginning of civilization, and thus transcends our modern laws.

The people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage. In 1998 we sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. In addition, Hawaii already has the 1997 Reciprocal Beneficiary Act. This act achieved the goal of providing benefits without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sex-partner status test.

**The people of Hawaii have put these issues behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already been settled by the people--many of whom (including my family members, coworkers, and myself) didn't think that we had to tell our representatives again to oppose this bill.**

**I respectfully ask that you follow the will of the Hawaii people and preserve the meaning of marriage and family by opposing Civil Union Bill (HB444). The people of this state and, ultimately the country, need you to do this.**

Thank you for your time and consideration in this vital matter.

Sincerely,

**HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**  
**HB 444 HD1 - RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**  
9 AM - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009

**TESTIMONY BY JANICE PECHAUER**  
Past President, Save Traditional Marriage '98

My name is Janice Pechauer, Past President of Save Traditional Marriage '98, the coalition formed to pass the Constitutional Amendment preserving traditional marriage.

HB 444 HD1 – Relating to Civil Unions subverts the will of Hawaii's citizens. After many years of Legislative wrangling and Judicial intrusion, the Legislature finally allowed the people to decide the issue of homosexual "marriage." The wording of the 1998 Constitutional Amendment ballot measure was convoluted and purposely designed to confuse, but Hawaii's citizens were not deceived.

Winning by a margin of 70%, including a majority vote in every House District and Precinct, they voted overwhelmingly for marriage between one man and one woman. As a trade off, Legislators passed a reciprocal beneficiary law.

Now, apparently, many in the Legislature do not consider those actions final and believe the 30% minority view should prevail. In 2003, 2004, 2007 and now here again in 2009, we have another Legislative effort to allow homosexuals to marry through a sleight of hand "civil union" designation. Passage of HB 444 HD1 would eliminate any legal distinction between homosexual civil union marriages and traditional marriage. Except for the marriage license, a civil union would be treated in the same way as a traditional marriage. Supporters have admitted their next goal is to exert pressure to legalize same-sex marriage. HB 878 confirms that intent, as it would redefine marriage in State documents from a relationship between a man and a woman to a relationship between *two people*.

Some of our House members stated that Hawaii's people have changed their minds. However, there is no corroborating evidence to substantiate that claim. The few churches, labor leaders, and community groups, such as the league of Women Voters, who testified before the House Judiciary Committee, are the same ones who supported homosexual "marriage" in '98.

When I lead the grassroots effort to preserve traditional marriage I spoke before forty-two different groups, and a common concern was a fear of homosexual sex being taught in schools. This fear is not unfounded, considering what was happening in our schools then and what has transpired in several states since then.

For example, then I was told that an Ewa high school sex education teacher told students that they needed to try both lifestyles before deciding what they were. At McKinley H.S. homosexuals were invited to speak to students in sex education classes, and in some private

PAGE TWO: JANICE PECHAUER TESTIMONY

preschools, the books "Heather has Two Mommies" and "Daddy's Wedding" were in the classrooms - much to the shock of parents.

Indoctrinating students exists across the country. On March 25, 2000 the Massachusetts Depart. of Education sponsored a workshop for high school students. A description of it can be found at <http://www.massnews.com/maygsa.htm>. Please be advised that the contents are extremely graphic.

The statewide conference, called "Teach-Out," was sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. Homosexual activists from across the country were also there. One of their goals was to expand homosexual teaching into the lower grades. Parents who allowed their children to attend believed they would learn about AIDS. Instead, teenagers and children as young as 12 were taught how to perform homosexual sex.

More recently a federal judge in Massachusetts, where homosexual "marriages" were judicially imposed upon its citizens, ruled that homosexual issues must be taught and parents have no opt out options.

If you pass HB 444 HD1 parents in Hawaii should be even more concerned and ever more vigilant with what their children will be taught in school, as the pressure is already there to teach homosexual sex to children. Is this really the environment you want for your children and grandchildren?

The people of Hawaii strongly expressed their views that marriage is an institution to be protected. Creating counterfeit parallels to marriage, such as civil unions, diminishes the institution of marriage.

The right of the people to govern themselves must be honored. Please vote no on HB 444 HD1. Mahalo.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:57 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** cnightingdale@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Rufina Nightingdale  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [cnightingdale@yahoo.com](mailto:cnightingdale@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**  
STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444

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**From:** nishizawm001@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:57 AM  
**To:** Rep. Blake Oshiro; Sen. Donna Mercado Kim; JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Throughout the 1990's, our community engaged in an emotional, decade-long debate over the legalization of same-sex marriage. The Legislature, for its part, had amended HRS§572-1 to clarify that marriage "shall be only between a man and a woman[.]" The Legislature also passed a Reciprocal Beneficiary law where it expressly found that "the people of Hawaii choose to preserve the tradition of marriage as a unique social institution based upon the committed union of one man and one woman. "

**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

We strongly oppose House Bill 444 and would appreciate your help in opposing this bill.

**Testifier:** Michelle and Guy Nishizawa, Aiea

**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Hearing Location:** Auditorium



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**From:** David Wilson [wilsond052@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:50 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** regarding bil hb444 civil unions

To all senators,

I would like to voice my opposition to bill HB444 Civil Unions. Contrary to the expressed opinion of some a majority of the population disagree that civil unions or gay marriage should be legal. this should not be forced upon us. please oppose this bill  
Sincerly DAvisd M Wilson  
Ewa Beach, HI

---

**From:** monica adams [mzadams75@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF PASSAGE OF HB 444 UNAMENDED

February 22, 2009

**TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 444 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

To: JUD Chair, Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu  
JUD Vice-Chair, Rep. Ken Ito  
Judiciary Committee Clerk

FR: Monica Adams M.A.

Director of Development-Hawaii State Nonprofit Health and Human Services Organization Hilo, HI 96720

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF PASSAGE OF HB 444 UNAMENDED

Honorable Chair Karamatsu, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the JUD Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a testimony **IN STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions. I believe that it is in the best interest of the State of Hawaii to pass HB 444, which would allow members of the same sex the ability to extend legal rights and benefits to their domestic partners outside the domain of "marriage". **Please support this bill** as it is a matter of championing civil rights.

I work on a daily basis with people who suffer from indignities related to basic human rights that are and continue to be denied to tax paying, law abiding citizens of this state. Tolerating inequality for these people is something that must cease. Honoring equality for people who contribute to this state with their skills, talents, and money is your responsibility for **it is these people whom you represent**. You are all representatives of the diverse peoples of Hawaii. The only factors that unify all of us in Hawaii are that we are different from each other yet we contribute to the well-being of our state and its citizens. Please honor **everyone** in our state, and the constituents for whom you were chosen to represent and to serve by supporting HB 444.

Thank you,

Monica Adams MA

Director of Development for a Hawaii Based grassroots nonprofit in Hilo

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**From:** Tim Greseth [tim@hope-central.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:59 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Tim Greseth  
**Subject:** Why I am strongly opposed to HB444 HD1 Civil Unions

I am strongly opposed to this bill for many reasons.

First, it is NOT the will of the people you were elected to represent. The secrecy and "back door" actions behind the advancement of this bill are very clear to anyone who cares to look. Even the name "Civil Unions" was devised to mollify the uneducated and to sneak Same Sex Marriage in the back door. Once again, a vocal (and well-financed) minority dictates to the vast majority. Is this what the legislative process has become? It is a shame! For 25 years I have taught, coached, and volunteered with our keikis and yet I now feel powerless to protect our young people. YOU were elected to protect us. YOU were elected to watch out for our keikis! What happened to you? Where is your morality?

If this bill passes I will be forced to pull my two children out of public schools, which MY taxes support, and put them in private schools - all to protect them from being taught ideologies that I am opposed to. In times of tough economic times it's one more financial burden on the good people of Hawaii.

There are so many other reasons why I oppose this bill, but I feel I am wasting my breath. I don't believe that my words will touch your heart or change your mind. I don't know what will bring you to your senses. If you pass this bill you will have to live with the fact that you initiated the destruction of the ohana in Hawaii. One day you will regret your near-sided actions. Having said that...I will continue to pray for you. I pray that God will give you wisdom. It's not too late for you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Greseth

---

**From:** Tyler and Christen Imig [tandchawaii@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:51 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Tyler Imig

Testimony for: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium) Measure Number: HB 444 HD1

Dear Senators,

As a member of the community I would like to ask that you vote against HB 444 HD1. I am a strong proponent of traditional marriage between a man and a woman. The passage of this bill would allow for compromise of my value of traditional marriage. Research shows that society and the family unit do best when there is a father and a mother. Please stand for what is right for the people of Hawaii and vote against HB 444.

Sincerely,  
Tyler Imig

**SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**  
**HB 444 – HD 1 February 24, 2009**

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**My Name is Sandra Farmer-Wiley** and I am here in support of **HB 444 – HD 1**. As an African-American woman / mother / lesbian I know how hard it is to make sure that there are people with Legislative power and a sense that they are there to secure Rights for the powerless. I want to feel secure in knowing that you will be defending my Civil Rights. Among those Rights is to be able to be secure in this relationship I have been in, with the same woman, for the last 32 years.

We raised an adult daughter together, who died suddenly, of a cardiac arrhythmia, in September, 2008. While our Family is grieving we have had to put that to the side to fight, again, for our Civil Rights. Please be reminded, those who are unsure, that we are not asking for 'special Rights' but **Civil Rights**. Rights that should be, and are, Constitutionally guaranteed to all tax paying citizens and protected by our Government.

My Partner Jean & I are senior citizens of this State of Hawaii. We don't want to spend our winter years being fearful of not being allowed to care for each other in time of ill health. We want to know that we won't be separated, because we are not FAMILY, when we have reached an age that independence is fragile. Nursing Homes allow, only, heterosexual couples to remain together in the same room. **HB 444 – HD 1 will secure our status as Family and will bring Hawaii in line with the views of our current President.**

Again I am asking for your support of **HB 444 – HD 1** and to allow the whole Senate to vote on it.

We will respect and cherish the Rights and Responsibilities that come with a committed relationship under the laws surrounding a Civil Union.

Civil Unions is a way of protecting and strengthening Lesbian and Gay Relationships, Families and the Communities that we live in. Jean and I are part of a wonderful Faith community in a Hawaiian Christian Church on Maui. Our Church Ohana and Kahu are all very supportive both our family and us.

I realize that you are each under a great deal of pressure to say no to Civil Unions. A yes is the only **just** reply to that pressure.

**We are putting our trust, economic security and our very lives in your hands.**

**Can we count on your Yes votes?**

**Mahalo ke Akua, I believe that the answer is Yes.**

**Mahalo, both, for your time and attention,**

Sandra Farmer-Wiley  
2763 Kauhale Street, Kihei, HI. 96753,  
808-879-7129, [mztata@hawaiianisp.com](mailto:mztata@hawaiianisp.com)

TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009

9:00:00 AM

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 444 HD1-RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Lanson Hoopai, a fourteen year old student, and I am writing testimony in opposition to House Bill 444 HD1, which would legalize civil unions in Hawaii.

My reasons for opposing this bill are:

First, civil unions are, in my opinion as well as many others, a “back-door” opportunity to allow same-sex marriage into Hawaii. In 1998, 70% of the people of Hawaii voted in opposition to same sex marriage. At that time, we believed the idea was defeated. Now the idea is working its way through the government again, only this time, the decision is not for the people to make. I find this inconsistent with the definition of “democracy” which means “Government of the people especially by the rule of the majority”. Our representatives are supposed to represent and respect the people’s decision. I believe that the voice of the people of the State of Hawaii would be better heard if this bill were put to a vote, as it was in 1998. To do otherwise, I believe, would not honor the definition of democracy.

Secondly, marriage is not an American invention. Indeed, if one peers through recorded history, one can see that marriage has been recognized through the centuries, as a union between one man and one woman. Studies of previous civilizations reveal that when societies deviate from the standard of marriage as the foundation of its society, they inevitably deteriorate and eventually disintegrate.

Lastly, scientific data has shown that children grow up and do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and dad; Hawaii’s children must have healthy examples. Why must we rewrite our marriage laws to suit the wants of adults, and in the process, destroy the lives of other children?

I thank the admirable committee for allowing me to submit testimony on this matter, and respectfully ask that HB444 be opposed.

---

**From:** Jacquelyn Tryon [j.tryon@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:47 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Jacquelyn Esser in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

VIA EMAIL: [JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
Place: Auditorium  
Re: Testimony of Jacquelyn Esser in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in **strong support** of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquelyn Tryon Esser

Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1  
3523B Maluhia Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816  
808.259.1476

---

**From:** Keola Akana [keolabear@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:02 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony In Support of House Bill 444 HD1

Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee Hearing  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9 a.m.  
State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee. Mahalo for hearing House Bill 444 HD1 and for allowing us to provide testimony about this important civil rights legislation. My testimony is in support of HB 444 HD1. My name is Keola Akana, I am born and raised in Hawai`i, a State of Hawai`i employee with the Dept. of Labor. I am an HGEA steward with my office and on the Vestry, the Board of Directors in Episcopal Churches, of my church in Kaimuki. I am sharing this information about me to let you folks know that I am a local man, who is a Christian and believes in supporting equal rights for all Hawai`i's citizens including our gay and lesbian families. HB 444 HD1 seeks to provide the benefits and responsibilities to same gender couples that are offered to couples who can legally marry. This is a matter of equality and has nothing to do with marriage. Civil Unions will not affect folks who have already married. Government should not let misguided people of faith impose their beliefs on the lives of families because they are different from their family. We need to remember that we have a separation of church and state in our democratic society. Please do not think that I am opposed to everyone freely pursuing their faith tradition, I am a life long Christian. I am very involved in the life of my church. My minister, an ordained Episcopal priest along with our Bishop in the Diocese of Hawai`i, both married heterosexual men with children, believe in equal civil rights that Civil Unions offers gay and lesbian couples to strengthen their families. Please know that there are thousands of Christians as well as other people in many faith traditions in Hawai`i who support and celebrate the unions of gay and lesbian couples, who support the benefits and responsibilities that gay and lesbian families will be able to enjoy in entering Civil Unions. Besides people of faith supporting gay and lesbian families the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee should pass this because it is the correct thing to do. Gay and lesbian people are protected as a suspect class in employment, housing and public accommodation discrimination like other protected classes such as race, ancestry, religion, gender, etc. Providing equal rights to gay and lesbian citizens in our society by extending the benefits and responsibilities that are afforded to legally married couples is consistent with other legal protections in Hawai`i's State law. Please do the correct thing and pass House Bill 444, HD1. Mahalo.

Keola Akana  
Hawai`i Kai Resident

---

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February 22, 2009

Testimony for HB 444 RE: Civil Unions  
Hawaii State Senate Judiciary and Government Operation Committee

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Ken Plonsky and I am here to express my strong support for HB444 - Civil Unions. I believe in equal rights for all.

From the bottom of my heart, I am asking for your support of HB444 (Civil Unions Bill). This is a very important bill. It is about civil rights, social justice, fairness, and doing the right thing. It is about our community's respect for the lives and beliefs of others. Civil unions convey those rights and duties without changing the definition or character of traditional marriage. Civil unions are not marriage. They will extend a basic social and legal right to a new group of individuals without altering or diminishing what we now think of as marriage. Hawai'i has a history of recognizing personal and cultural differences. It has been a guiding principle of our community to respect individuals' differences. In matters of religion, culture and lifestyle, Hawai'i has stood as one of the most welcoming and tolerant places in our nation. Please do not let this bill be stopped in committee. It is time for Civil Unions (CU) to become law.

Civil unions are not the same as marriage. There have been a number of state courts that have stated that. The New Jersey Commission on Civil Unions came to the conclusion after an extensive study that civil unions are not equal to marriage.

Reciprocal Beneficiaries (RB) does not give the same rights as marriage. RB only gives a small percent of the rights of marriage. There are a number of areas; e.g. family law that are not covered by RB. It does not make sense to have RB cover those areas. CU would cover rights that same gender couples need but are not needed by everyone who is covered by RB.

I am a person of faith. My strong support for civil unions was inspired by several social justice sermons given by my minister. There are many faith communities that believe that Civil Unions (CU) is the right, fair and just thing to do. This bill does not force civil unions on any faith community that disagrees. That is their religious freedom. The CU bill will allow those faith communities that want civil unions to use their religious freedom.

Over the years some Churches have been against civil rights. Some have used the bible to defend their position. Some churches were for slavery, segregation, not letting women vote, and not allowing interracial marriages. Those Churches do not believe in those views today but those scripture passages still exist. Some churches' view points have changed over the years. This usually happened after civil rights were allowed.

On the White House Web site: "President Obama supports full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples." In his inauguration speech, he said "All are equal, all are free and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness".

Times have not stood still. Civil unions are now supported by the majority of the public, the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives, former Governor Cayetano, many young people and others. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. Denying rights hurts all families. It is time for Civil Unions.

I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,  
Ken Plonsky  
1778 Ala Moana Blvd apt 2208  
Honolulu, Hi 96815  
Kenplonsky@aol.com

---

**From:** Ben Hill [brotherbenministries@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:13 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444 HD1

Dear House and Senate members, I am opposed to bill HB444 HD1. When Hawaii voted in 1998 we thought it was clear that the state preferred to maintain the traditional marriage position we have always had. Almost 70% of our people voted to make it clear that this was the will of the people. To keep this issue quiet and to kneak this issue through without providing the public with an opportunity to vote is tremendously disappointing and even underhanded. This is a very important issue and should have been given ample time for true debate. Please donot vote to pass the bill, it is wrong.

Benjamin B. Hill

--

Brother Ben Ministries  
PMB #220  
98-1277 Kaahumanu St.  
Aiea, Hawaii 96701  
(808) 721-4BEN (4236)  
[www.brotherben.org](http://www.brotherben.org)

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**From:** Rhoda Feinberg [rfeinberg-phd@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:33 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Rhoda Feinberg, HB No.444, HD1, Feb 24 at 9am Senate Judiciary and Government Operation Committee

**Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the State Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony to the Committee. Work commitments prevent me from giving testimony in person.**

**Please report out HB444 HD1, The Civil Union Bill, with a favorable recommendation.**

**For me, the issue of the Civil Union Bill is personal as well as political.**

**I've been a licensed psychologist in private practice for more than 30 years. I do therapy with couples and work on relationship issues. I have treated heterosexual and homosexual couples. The gender of the partners does not determine the quality of the marriage or the morals of the individuals in these relationships. We all know the statistics on the divorce rate--50% of first marriages end in the divorce with the rate rising with each subsequent marriage. In Massachusetts, where civil union is legal, the divorce rate stands at 2.4 per 1,200,000 and in Hawaii it is 4.2.**

**The clients I see are doctors, lawyers, financial advisors, entrepreneurs, teachers, bankers, etc. They are the ethical, professional, and driving force of our state. They contribute to our state's economy. They pay the bills in the form of excise tax, state income tax, and real estate tax. They support our government and as such pay your salaries.**

**Hawaii's gentle climate and its gentle respect for all people is part of the special quality of our state. We do not fear people who are different, we embrace them and incorporate them into the multi-colored and textured quilt of our society. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, color, religion, or sexual orientation.**

**To deny people of the same sex the right to have a union is to undermine and, in fact, destroy that which makes Hawaii the special place that it is.**

---

**From:** Robin Frank [robin.supercool@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:02 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony of Robin Frank in support of H.B. 444, HD1 relating to civil unions

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

**Hearing Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

**Place:** Auditorium

**Re:** Testimony of Robin Frank in Strong Support of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

I've cut pasted standard language that supporters of this bill have suggested because I support their work and beliefs and want to include all the verbiage that they deem appropriate. However, I want you to know that this issue is more important to me than just cutting and pasting as a personal favor to my friends and family.

Not allowing two people, who love each other and are willing to make a lifetime commitment to caring for each other, to make a legal union with the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexual couples is both unjust and disgusting. It is not any different than making "colored" people drink from different drinking

fountains, sit at the back of the bus or only marry other "colored" people. We ALL need and deserve freedom and equality. Thus, I urge you to vote yes!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Frank

previously living at 411-E Hualani Street, Kailua, HI 96734

currently living at 717 N Street, Davis, CA 95616

---

**From:** Harry "Junyah" Quemado [junyahpoi@hawaiiintel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:49 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Harry J Quemado

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

I strongly oppose HB 444. I support traditional marriage between a man and woman.

## SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

HB 444 – HD 1 February 24, 2009

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

My name is Jean Walker. Thank you for the opportunity to express my support and my thoughts regarding HB 444 – HD 1 Civil Unions.

My partner and I have been Maui residents since 1979 and in a committed relationship for almost 32 years. We have lived in our Kihei home for 24 years and have been active members of a Hawaiian church for 17 years. We are accepted as equals by our neighbors and our Ohana..

I supported our household for approximately three years when Sandy quit work to be the full time caregiver for our Aunt Vicky who died at age 96. Had my Union not provided Sandy's health insurance, it would have been more difficult; private insurance cost \$220.00 per month at that time.

Sandy and I are now the senior generation. We have supported one another through health issues, family crises and deaths. Most recently, the sudden death of our adult daughter Angela in September, 2008.

What happens if I die? My state pension and Social Security income cease, as would health benefits for Sandy and diminish her capability to pay the mortgage. Where is our legal protection?

I retired from the Judiciary with 21 years service. My recommendations to the Court had to be based on facts, fairness and the best interest of the family. Biases were not acceptable! I respectfully request that you base your vote on the same premise and extend equal benefits to same gender couples by supporting HB 444 – HD 1 with a YES vote.

Aloha no,

Jean Walker  
2763 Kauhale St.  
Kihei, Hawaii 96753

---

**From:** Ashliana Hawelu [ashliana1@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:55 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** in support of HB 444 HDI

Dear Senate Judiciary and Government Operations,

I am sending you my support letter for HB 444 HDI, the hearing is scheduled for February 24, 2009, at 9am.

I am requesting that you pass bill HB 444 HDI, simply because it will assist GLBTQ community members to continue to strive for a better/positive future, within a society that continues to discriminate, stigmatize and at times inflict violence against members of this community. As a transgender service provider, providing services to disadvantaged transgender in the downtown Chinatown area, I have witnessed first hand the challenges and struggles many of these members face daily simply because they're transgendered. Should this bill pass, I truly believe members of this community will be given the opportunity to function positively in society with less ostracism and more control over the possibilities available to them rather than resulting to drugs, alcohol and prostitution for survival.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter,

Ashliana Hawelu  
Executive Director  
Kulia Na Mamo





February 23, 2009

Senator Brian Taniguchi  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions - STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Senator Taniguchi:

The Aloha Bears come to you today to ask that you support House Bill 444 House Draft 1 the Civil Unions Bill. We represent over 100 members and more 1,500 supporters. We cover couples that have been together for more years than almost anyone here today, business owners and your average run of the mill member of the gay community.

This testimony is a first for the Aloha Bears as we are just a social club. We were formed in 1998 as a gay oriented social club that gives back to our community. Over the 11 years that we have been in existence we have raised over \$20,000 for local and national charities. Our biggest event is Bears in Toyland, an event that raises money and collects toys for children that may not have a toy to open on Christmas morning.

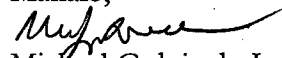
We hope that you all see the irony that we have to come here today to ask for you to extend to the gay community the same rights, privileges and responsibilities that you bestow on straight couples. The same couples that we work so hard to ensure that their children have a present to open on Christmas Day.


We have heard a lot about family this past month and you all need to know that by granting same-sex couples the rights in this Bill will only strengthen the family as an institution. All studies have shown that children raised by same-sex couples are just as well adjusted as their counterparts that are raised by straight couples.

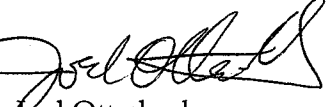
Since we are talking numbers we would like to point out that every legitimate poll shows that where the majority may oppose same-sex marriage the majority does support Civil Unions. The leader of the United States of America – President Barack Obama supports Civil Unions. He carried this state by a 3 to 1 margin.

Civil Unions is a matter of justice and equality for the gay and lesbian community. Please vote yes on the House Bill 444 House Draft 1.

Mahalo,

  
Michael Golojuch, Jr.  
President

  
Gary Bradley  
Vice-President

  
Joel Otterbach  
Secretary

**ALOHA BEARS – A SOCIAL CLUB**  
**92-954 MAKAKILO DR. SUITE 71, KAPOLEI, HI 96707**  
**ALOHABEAR@GMAIL.COM • WWW.ALOHABEARS.ORG**


February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

  
Angela Packer

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation

*Geraine Santiro*  
GERAINE SANTIRO

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



Edmund Keataluki Dr.

937-0591

HQR-5 Box 11100

Kaunoi HI. 96749

edmund@keataluki.com

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Star Kealalaha*  
HC @ Box 11100  
Keaua, HI 96749  
982-5870  
star@starkealalaha.com

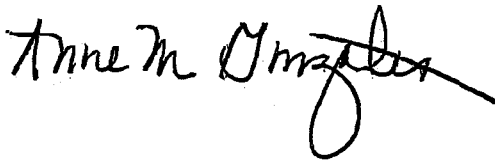
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

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With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne M. O'Connell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jose Gonzales". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "G".

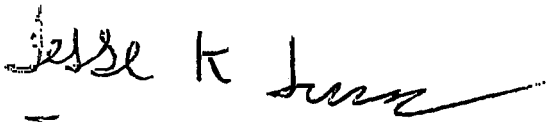
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

  
Jesse K. Lucas



February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly "AK" or similar, with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'KTK' or similar, written in a cursive style.

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*John R. Herring*

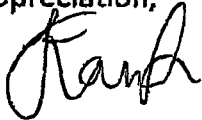
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rand", is written below the typed text "With Appreciation,".

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'DKA', is written below the typed text.

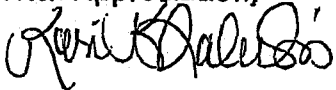
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerri Kalua". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the printed text "With Appreciation,".

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy Takahashi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Anthony Sakahachi*



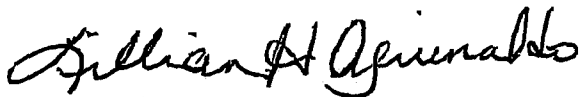
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William H. Green". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "W".

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation, <sup>mail</sup>  
Donnell Lewis  
Po Box 5541  
Hilo Hawaii 96720  
U.S.A. !  

---

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Physical  
15-1539 18th St.  
HPP, Keanu 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



Paul Buelmann  
PO Box 5535  
Hilo Hi 96720

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Robert Medema*

*HCR 2 - Box 6969 Keaua HI  
96749*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444.HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Raymond Mendes*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Ophelia Kennealy*  
Box 6909  
Hilo HI 96720

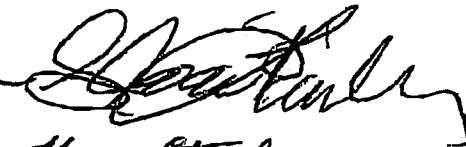

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1.

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Bloome Stanley   
Thorun Stanley   
P O Box 1887  
Keaau Hi 96749  
808-968-8843

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



2/22/09 P.O. BOX 1317

PAHOA, HI 96778

(808) 896-5500



February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Desiree Kalama*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

**SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Patricia (Cassidy)*

P.O. Box 744

KEEAU, HI 96749

## **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

**From: Wesley Yamada**

**Testimony on HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Committee**

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 A.M., State Capitol Auditorium**

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary  
Committee,

I would like to testify that I am Strongly Opposed to HB444. The supporters of HB444 say that civil unions are no threat to "traditional marriage" and that this is about "equal rights," not the definition of Marriage. Yet, this Bill states that "Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions." In other words a civil union is equal to marriage in all aspects except it is called a civil union and not marriage. So, in essence, "civil unions" are just same-sex marriage, and 70% of the voters have already voted against same-sex marriage in 1998. This is why the people of Hawaii are upset! Not because we are all "bigots," "intolerant," "Haters," but because the Will of the majority of the voters is being violated by this Bill.

I urge you to listen to All the testimonies before you make a decision on this bill, and to vote as your constituents, (whom you are empowered to represent) have spoken on this issue.

The supporters of HB444 say this is all about Equality and not about "changing the definition of Marriage"....yet even a homosexual website, LAMBDA LEGAL ...says that civil unions are "not enough", and that the only way Equality can be accomplished is when "marriage" equals "same-sex marriage".

The core of this bill is based on civil rights. Yet, there is still no scientific proof of a genetic "gay gene." After all these years, there is still no scientific proof that homosexuals can't help it, they are just born that way. The fact is, the homosexual lifestyle is a choice, not a genetic trait, like the color of our skin. Thousands of former "gay" people have successfully converted to heterosexual lifestyles. The biological fact is, no two males or no two females can create offspring naturally, without artificial insemination.  
<http://www.narth.com/menus/born.html>

Gay marriages will strengthen the institute of Marriage? Wrong! Studies in Sweden and Norway show just the opposite:  
<http://www.narth.com/docs/sweden.html>

There are many detrimental consequences of legalizing "civil unions" or same-sex marriages as discussed in the following web link:  
[http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects\\_of\\_ssm.html](http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html)

These are not unsubstantiated fears, but actual Facts that have happened:

Christian photographer in New Mexico sued, ordered to pay Lesbian couple \$7,000 in legal fees for refusing to service them.  
<http://www.cbn.com/CBNnews/357084.aspx>

Church sued for refusing civil union ceremony on its Private facilities  
<http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2007/aug/07082104.html>

Adoption agency sued for rejecting gay couple  
<http://www.proudparenting.com/node/215>

Parent Arrested for objections to homosexual curriculum in son's kindergarten class  
<http://www.massresistance.org/docs/parker/main.html>

For the sake of our children, please do not pass HB444, or any same-sex marriage bill, and go against what the majority of the people of Hawaii want..

Mahalo,

  
Wesley Yamada

**STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

FROM: Jane Yamada (print name)

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

**I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1**

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

**MAHALO!**

Jane Yamada

To: Sargeant -At- Arms

TESTIMONY of HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee  
State Capitol,  
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB444

February 21, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members:

My name is Lina Calderon, and I am in opposition to HB444.

If this bill is enacted will ruin the value of traditional marriage, which is created by God between a man and a woman.

Please let us value and keep the traditional marriage alive, which I believe is for a man and a woman

Lina Calderon  
1172 Paakamaa Street  
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782  
Phone # 455-3815

To: Sargeant -At- Arms

TESTIMONY of HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee  
State Capitol,  
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB444

February 22, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members:

I am Anita Domingo, and I am in opposition to HB444.

Please let us value and keep the traditional marriage alive, which I believe is for a man and a woman.

The passing of HB444 will weaken the morals of our generation and those of the next generation to follow.

Anita Domingo  
98-029 Lii Ipo Street  
Aeie, Hawaii 96701  
Phone # 488-2088

Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi (Chair) & Sen. Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair)

From: Sandra Franks, Educator

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 AM in the Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium

Re: **STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444, HD1 (Relating to Civil Unions)**

*To the Senate Judiciary Committee:*

I am writing in **STONG OPOSSITION to HB 444 HD1**. This bill is ultimately same sex marriage by another name of "civil unions". This type of bill breaks the core fabric of what the institute of marriage should be. Our government was founded on Godly principles and our forefathers established laws and standards of conduct according to God's Word; the Bible.

God has and should continue to be the core of marriage which is between a man (male) and woman (female). Homosexuality is stated as being an abomination to God. In the King James Version of the Bible in the book of Leviticus (18:22) it states "*Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.*" And in The Living Bible it states "*Homosexuality is absolutely forbidden, for it is an enormous sin.*"

We need to get back to morality and family values. If civil unions are allowed, there will be serious ramifications. Dr. James Dobson writes arguments against same-sex marriage in his book "*Marriage Under Fire*" stating the effects it will have on everyone including children and the family unit. Among the arguments is:

***Argument#3***

*An even greater objective of the homosexual movement is to end the state's compelling interest in marital relationships altogether. After marriages have been redefined, divorces will be obtained instantly, will not involve a court, and will take on the status of a driver's license or a hunting permit. With the family out of the way, all rights and privileges of marriage will accrue to gay and lesbian partners without the legal entanglements and commitments heretofore associated with it.*

***Argument#4***

*With the legalization of homosexual marriage, every public school in the nation will be required to teach that this perversion is the moral equivalent of traditional marriage between a man and a woman. Textbooks, even in conservative states, will have to depict man/man and woman/woman relationships, and stories written for children as young as elementary school, or even kindergarten, will have to give equal space to homosexuals.*

***Argument#5***

*From that point forward, courts will not be able to favor a traditional family involving one man and one woman over a homosexual couple in matters of adoption. Children will be placed in homes with parents representing only one sex on an equal basis with those*



*having a mom and a dad. The prospect of fatherless and motherless children will not be considered in the evaluation of eligibility. It will be the law.*

**Argument#6**

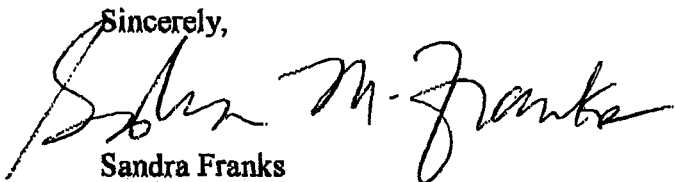
*Foster-care parents will be required to undergo "sensitivity training" to rid themselves of bias in favor of traditional marriage, and will have to affirm homosexuality in children and teens.*

What impact will legalizing same sex unions have on our state? Same-sex unions will cause a domino affect of so many other issues and problems, hence the arguments listed above.

Supporters of this bill argue that homosexuals are a minority group equal to the Blacks and are fighting for their "civil rights", just as Martin Luther King Jr did. As a History teacher, I have studied and taught about the Blacks and their struggles and experiences in their fight for equality and "civil rights". The Blacks were slaves and not even treated as human beings. Many were beaten, hung, raped, burned, ultimately murdered and treated as indispensable. The Civil Rights Movement paved the way for Blacks to have the right to vote. Homosexuals have every right to vote and were NEVER treated as the Blacks were. Having the right to participate in this legislative process is more than Blacks had. There can be no comparison of the two.

I urge and implore you to **VOTE AGAINST "Civil Unions" bill (HB 444 HD1)**. Remember God is the foundation of our nation and government.

Sincerely,



Sandra Franks  
Waialua, Hawaii

**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA**

LGBT Student Services Office

**TO:** Rep. Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

**FROM:** Camaron Miyamoto, Director  
LGBT Student Services  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**DATE:** February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

**RE:** **STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 relating to Civil Unions**

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify; my name is Camaron Miyamoto and I serve as a Director of Student Services at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa relating to Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity. While my statement does not represent the official opinion of the university, it reflects my personal and professional opinion as university faculty who witnesses the negative messages sent to the students of Hawai'i who are made to believe that they can not hope or dream of the civility of a civil union.

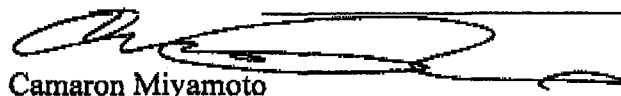
Now is the time for us to seriously take up our responsibilities as citizens and as public servants. We must:

- Safeguard the rights and responsibilities of couples and families
- Strengthen equality and economic justice
- Legislate with fairness for all families

Regardless of any personal beliefs or faith traditions, I implore you to adhere to the tenets of our law, the spirit of letting others live openly with their families and the need to truly value all citizens of our democracy.

Too many students and young people in Hawai'i feel that they must leave Hawai'i, their home, in order to be recognized as full citizens. Please don't add to this sense of isolation and intolerance. I ensure you that our future generations will look back at this issue as a simple civil rights issue. This is what I continue to hear from our students. Now is the time for compassion and family equality. Please show your support. Please vote in strong support on HB444.

Mahalo for your time.



Camaron Miyamoto

FROM: Priscilla Mitchell (print name)

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM  
FOR HB 444, HD1

IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

**ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.**

**I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.**

Thank you,

Priscilla Mitchell

**MICHAEL GOLOJUCH, JR.**  
**92-954 MAKAKILO DR. #71, KAPOLEI, HI 96707**  
**PHONE: 808-672-9050 FAX: 808-672-6347**

February 20, 2009

Testimony for the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee on:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol - Capitol Auditorium  
415 South Beretania Street

RE: House Bill 444 HD 1: Civil Unions - STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee :

When I first heard of House Bill 444 HD 1 the Civil Unions bill I have to admit I was against it. I was like why do we, the gay community, have to settle for second-class citizen treatment with Civil Unions and not get Marriage. But the more I thought about House Bill 444 HD 1 the more Civil Unions has grown on me.

Marriage has the history of being used for the granting of property rights, protection of bloodlines, creating alliances and protecting wealth. This was done through arranged marriages, where the couple that was going to be married had no say in the process. Marriage was and is for some to this day viewed as a business transaction nothing more nothing less. The worst part is that for centuries women were treated as property. Love and caring had nothing to do with it.

Now marriage is being used as a weapon, a tool to bash the gay community.

Now Civil Unions on the other hand has the history of being hard fought for by couples that love each other and desire to have the same rights that the government has chosen to bestow upon married couples. While it is true Civil Unions is not Marriage it also does not have the negative historical baggage that comes with marriage.

So if there are those that want that baggage more power to them.

I would ask that you make this bill totally inclusive and not just a "gay" bill. You need to make Civil Unions open to opposite-sex couples as well. So that straight couples that do not want to participate in the discriminatory act of getting married here in Hawaii can also enter into a Civil Union.

There are those that are going to be talking about the need to save traditional marriage, Civil Unions is not Marriage. Words have power in our legal system. This is a time that a name is not just a name.

**MICHAEL GOLOJUCH, JR.****2 OF 2**

The one question you need to ask each of these people clamoring to "save" traditional marriage is 'What have they done to "save" marriage except fight against loving couples that wish to get married?' I can tell you – NOTHING but fight against anything that would bring equality to the gay community. They were silent when television shows like "Who Wants To Marry a Millionaire" made a mockery out of marriage.

Why have they not set-up pre-marriage counseling to make sure that each couple is ready to enter into a marriage that will last a lifetime?

Maybe if the anti-gay poster boy Gabbard spent more time on his own family and less time on fighting against equality for the gay community just maybe Tulsi would still be married.

I ask that you pass House Bill 444 HD 1, it is not perfect and it is not marriage but it is a step in the right direction. If you have any reservations then please vote YES with reservations.

"Like Martin, I don't believe you can stand for freedom for one group of people and deny it to others", Coretta Scott King told this to black civil rights leaders angered by gays and lesbians comparing their struggle to their own. So do you in your official elected position stand for freedom or not?

Sincerely,



Michael Golojuch, Jr.  
Kapolei Resident

Date: February 20, 2009

To: House Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
 Senator Brain Taniguchi (Chair) Senator Dwight Takamine (Vice Chair)

Dear Senator Brain Taniguchi

Re: **OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI RELATIONS TO CIVIL UNIONS**

Dear Representatives of the Judiciary Committee & Government Operations

appeal to you as a citizen, a register voter and a community servant.

I am strongly opposed to the proposed Civil Unions HB 444 I come today in behalf of the families of Hawaii. We live in a democratic nation our government is for the people by the people. **The people have spoken in 1998, 70% of the people made their voice heard marriage in Hawaii must remain between a husband and wife.** Since the beginning of civilization in every society a man and a woman becomes an institution through marriage. This is only obvious being that only a male and a female can reproduce. Every other way is unnatural and unproductive and is a breeding ground for diseases. Men who have sex with men account for the majority of Hawaii's AIDS cases. The median age of homosexual men dying of AIDS is 39 the median age of lesbians at death is 45. The population at large the men median age of death is 75 and for women 79. Only one percent of homosexuals die of old age. This statistics speaks for it self.

In Hawaii we have a population of 1,283,388 in 1977 the Department of Health has a registry approximately 1,577 Reciprocal-beneficiary relationships. Obviously this a minority group that desires to change the very fabric of our traditional families. **In 1977 the Reciprocal Registry Act became law, this law allows two persons who are prohibited from marrying one another under state law to register beneficiary by filing a notarized declaration with the State Director of Health. Our beloved State of Hawaii has afforded gay couples their rights through reciprocal benefits. This reciprocal benefits is distasteful to the gay couples because it clearly states it is for those who are legally prohibited to marry and you and I know that is their ultimate goal according to their verbal and written testimonies they desire to be legally married. Be not deceived they have an agenda.**

I took the time to testify because I am very concern about our children. Once you allow this gay lifestyle to infiltrate our society our educational system **will be forced to teach our children that this is a normal.** We as parents are responsible to raise up our children in a way of morality, teaching them other wise would infringe on our rights as citizens of this great nation. In closing my testimony I would like to say **I am not a bigot nor am I ignorant which I was insulted with either do I have any bit of hatred in my heart towards any one who chooses to live this gay lifestyle. However I am concern that this lifestye will be forced upon my rights as a citizen by a law that 70% of the people have spoke "Marriage in Hawaii must remain between a man and a woman".**

Your decision will forever effect the fabric of our families. You have seen our heart and heard the voice of our Island people. **It's not about rights It is doing what is right since the beginning of civilization. Vote No for HB 444 HD 1.**

God Bless you, Jesus loves you and we are praying for you daily especially in this hour that our nation faces so many crises.

Virginia Domligan  
 41 Kam Hwy Suite 202

**submit for Hearing in the Judiciary Committee and Government Operations Feb. 24 at 9:AM**

2/20/2009

Fax 586-6659

To: Judiciary Chair Brian Taniguchi  
Judiciary Vice-Chair Dwight Takamine  
The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Tuesday, February 24, 9 am

**TESTIMONY SUPPORTING HB 444 – Civil Unions**

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rev. Sam Cox. I am a United Methodist minister, currently serving as the Visitation Pastor of the Kailua United Methodist Church. Previous to my retirement 10 years ago, I was the Executive Director of Hale Kipa Youth Services for homeless and runaway youth for 23 years. I would like to register my **strong support** for this bill that would extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. It is long overdue.

During my peak years at Hale Kipa, we provided shelter, protection and counseling for up to 1,500 runaway and homeless youth per year from every district in the islands. We had a disproportionate number of youth with same gender-orientation issues, many who had heart-breaking stories. Most were the result of family problems, with parents and other adults in their lives who could not accept their sexual orientation, rejecting and even throwing them out on the streets. These kids often experienced bullying and harassment at school. **Even their pastors and churches condemned them.** The youth themselves often had low self-esteem as the result of this rejection and homo-phobia in our society. The prospect of falling in love, finding a life partner and living a happy family life seemed out of reach for them.

We have come a long way over the past 33 years when I first began at Hale Kipa. Our social attitudes have changed, particularly among the youth and better educated. Most of us know today that same gender sexual orientation is not a disease, but is as normal as being left-handed or having a particular pigment of skin. Most of our mainstream churches and pastors now love and accept gay couples and families. Organizations like PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbian and Gays) provide excellent support for gay youth and their families. School counselors are now better equipped and trained. At Hale Kipa we have found that some of our best foster parents are same gender couples.

Everyone deserves to be treated equally under the law, a chance to experience love and happiness with full civil rights, and be part of the American dream.

I hope you will take this opportunity to correct this injustice in our society. It will go a long way toward the healing our youth and families.

Thank you for your support.

Rev. Sam Cox, Visitation Pastor  
Kailua United Methodist Church  
1216 Keolu Drive, Kailua, Hawaii 96734  
Telephone 261-1934

Honorable Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Honorable Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair  
Honorable Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

**HB444, Relating to Civil Unions**

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 am  
State Capitol Auditorium

**IN SUPPORT**

Herewith, I respectfully present testimony in support of *House Bill 444, Relating to Civil Unions - Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.*

Members of the Legislature will no doubt hear vigorous and emotional testimony from both proponents and opponents of civil union. I offer personal testimony to give voice to those who support this measure but will not come forward because they justly fear disclosure may put them in harm's way. Despite our nation's best effort to protect and preserve justice and liberty for all, racism, class bias, sex discrimination, and ridicule directed at same-gender orientation are still prevalent in these United States.

The National Archives and Records Administration (<http://www.archives.gov>) and the Government Printing Office/Judicial Branch Resources on GPO Access (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/judicial.html>) contain historical documents related to our country's remarkable struggle to enact civil rights laws that many take for granted today. As records show, when we as a free people are able to overcome our individual differences to enact laws that protect every person's *equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*, we strengthen belief in our nation's founding principles and belief in democracy.

The struggle for women's right to vote spanned years of protests, civil disobedience, and unrest. In the fight for justice some supporters challenged gender discrimination in the courts and state legislatures, while others staged parades, vigils, and hunger strikes, and picketed, and petitioned, for equal rights. Advocates were heckled, jailed and abused by opponents. Fierce resistance was not uncommon until women were granted the right to vote in 1920 when the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was finally ratified. Many who helped introduce the amendment in Congress, in 1878, did not live to see or enjoy their right to vote.



In similar fashion, the fight against anti-miscegenation state laws faced decades of prejudice and discrimination banning interracial marriage. In the landmark case of *Loving v. Virginia*, a lower court trial judge had stated in an opinion that: *"Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."*

The case was appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court where in 1967 the Court ruled that laws banning interracial marriage were unconstitutional: *"... The fourteenth amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discriminations. Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State. These convictions must be reversed. It is so ordered."* At the time of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling some fifteen states still had anti-miscegenation laws in place.

Hawaii's native culture and language was nearly lost due to well intentioned but presumptuous ethnocentric beliefs of another culture. In each case, human prejudice discredited a group and diminished their equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We build institutions of higher education and confer degrees of learning in all fields of human endeavor for the betterment of society and community. On the matter before you today, I respectfully ask that you consider the opinions of broadly respected professional organizations in medicine, mental health, education and social work.

In February 2008, the American Psychological Association (APA) announced release of a publication on youth and sexual orientation: *"Just the Facts About Sexual Orientation and Youth: A Primer for Principals, Educators, and School Personnel."* This publication was endorsed by a coalition of thirteen education, health, mental health and religious organizations, among them the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association of School Administrators, The American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the National Association of Social Workers and the APA.

As stated in this primer for administrators and school personnel, *"... the idea that homosexuality is a mental disorder or that the emergence of same-sex attraction and orientation among some adolescents is in any way abnormal or mentally unhealthy has no support among any mainstream health and mental health professional organizations... the nation's leading professional medical, health, and mental health organizations do not support efforts to change young people's sexual orientation through therapy and have raised serious concerns about the potential harm from such efforts... schools should be careful to avoid curriculum choices that may single out and stigmatize lesbian, gay, or bisexual students and foster a disapproving attitude toward them."* The entire text is available online at the National Association of Social Workers website. (<http://www.socialworkers.org>)

The American Psychological Association has long-established policy dating back to 1975 that, *"deplores all public and private discrimination against gay men and lesbians and urges enactment of civil rights legislation at the local and state and federal level that would offer [gay men and lesbian] citizens the same protections now guaranteed to others... Psychologists do not consider sexual orientation to be a conscious choice that can be voluntarily changed. Human beings cannot choose to be either gay or straight. Sexual orientation emerges for most people in early adolescence prior to any sexual experience... Psychological research (which forms the basis of APA policy) provides no evidence to justify discrimination against same-sex couples and families."* (APA Briefing Sheet: June 2006)

Additionally, the APA policy statement on Sexual Orientation & Marriage (adopted by the APA Council of Representatives July 28 & 30, 2004) states: *"Psychological and psychiatric experts have agreed since 1975 that homosexuality is neither a form of mental illness nor a symptom of mental illness."* The APA is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. *APA's membership includes more than 148,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students.*

The American Psychiatric Association is explicit in their support of "civil" marriage. As written in the Association's position statement on this matter: *"... Civil marriage is associated with a unique set of benefits that provide legal and economic protections to adults in committed relationships and to their children. Equal access to the institution of civil marriage is consistent with the American Psychiatric Association's opposition to discrimination based on sexual orientation. Therefore, be it resolved that: In the interest of maintaining and promoting mental health, the American Psychiatric Association supports the legal recognition of same-sex civil marriage with all rights, benefits, and responsibilities conferred by civil marriage, and opposes restrictions to those same rights, benefits, and responsibilities."* (Support of Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Civil Marriage, position statement approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2005)

The American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) is comprised of over 7,500 child and adolescent psychiatrists and other interested physicians. *Its members actively research, evaluate, diagnose, and treat psychiatric disorders and pride themselves on giving direction to and responding quickly to new developments in addressing the health care needs of children and their families.* The AACAP states: *"Parents need to clearly understand that sexual orientation is not a mental disorder. The cause(s) of homosexuality or bisexuality are not fully understood. However, a person's sexual orientation is not a matter of choice. In other words, individuals have no more choice about being homosexual or bisexual than heterosexual. All teenagers do have a choice about their expression of sexual behaviors and lifestyle regardless of their sexual orientation... Gay, lesbian and bisexual teens can become socially isolated, withdraw from activities and friends, have trouble concentrating, and develop low self-esteem. Some may develop depression and think about suicide or attempt it. Parents and others need to be alert to these signs of distress because recent studies show that gay, lesbian and bisexual youth account for a significant number of deaths by suicide during*

2/20/09

To : Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

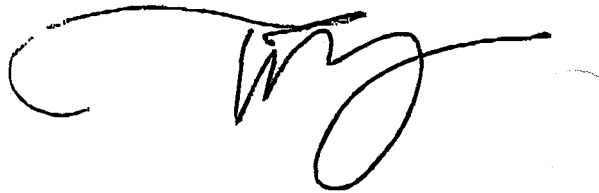
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24,09

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444 hd 1 ( Civil Unions )

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee :

I am writing to strongly support the above mentioned House Bill on Civil Unions that give gay couples equal rights and legal protections under the laws. I am a physician whose believes in equality and fairness to every citizen of this great country.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tyronne Dang', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tyronne Dang MD

411 Kaiolu Apt 402

Honolulu HI 96815

Tel : 924-9183

2/20/09

To : Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing on Tuesday, February 24,09

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444 hd 1 ( Civil Unions )

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee :

I am writing to strongly support the above mentioned House Bill on Civil Unions that give gay couples equal rights and legal protections under the laws. I am a Christian, but I do believe people who do love and care for each other should be treated like anyone else.

Sincerely,



Diana Huang MD

1441 Kapiolani Blvd Ste 1810

Honolulu HI 96814

Tel : 949-5308

2/20/09

To : Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing on Tuesday, February 24,09

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444 hd 1 ( Civil Unions )

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee :

I am writing to strongly support the above mentioned House Bill on Civil Unions that give gay couples equal rights and legal protections under the laws. I am a Christian, but I do believe people who do love and care for each other should be treated like anyone else.

Sincerely,



Michelle Baguyo

94-496 Hiwawa Wy

Waipahu HI 96797

Tel : 630-4990

2/20/09

To : Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

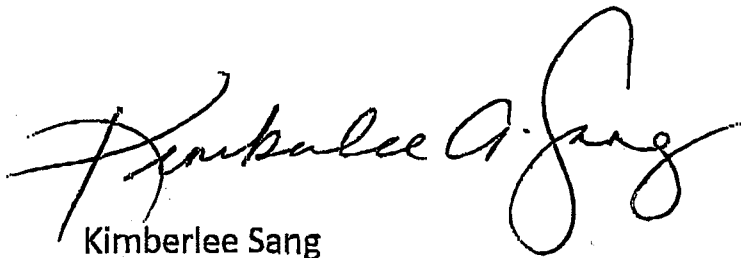
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24,09

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Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee :

I am writing to strongly support the above mentioned House Bill on Civil Unions that give gay couples equal rights and legal protections under the laws. I am a Christian, but I do believe people who do love and care for each other should be treated like anyone else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimberlee Sang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping initial "K".

Kimberlee Sang

91-1011 Koanimakani St

Kapolei, HI 96707

Tel : 282-0337

2/20/09

To : Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing on Tuesday, February 24,09

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444 hd 1 ( Civil Unions )

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee :

I am writing to strongly support the above mentioned House Bill on Civil Unions that give gay couples equal rights and legal protections under the laws. I am a Buddhist, and I do believe people who do love and care for each other should be treated like anyone else.

Sincerely,



Thanh Phan

411 Kaiolu Apt 403

Honolulu HI 96815

Tel :256-9908

2/20/09

To : Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing on Tuesday, February 24,09

Testimony In Strong Support of HB 444 hd 1 ( Civil Unions )

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee :

I am writing to strongly support the above mentioned House Bill on Civil Unions that give gay couples equal rights and legal protections under the laws. I am a Buddhist, and I do believe people who do love and care for each other should be treated like anyone else.

Sincerely,



---

Tiffany Phan

1141 Kapiolani Blvd Ste 1810

Honolulu HI 96814

Tel : 951-1511



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**From:** Jo [jqueja1018@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:14 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony; JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**JoAnn A. Queja**  
**94-316 Kahualena Street**  
**Waipahu, HI 96797**  
**(808) 677-7706**

**ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**

**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM**

**I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

**Please vote against HB 444.**

**FROM: JoAnn A. Queja**

---

**From:** Jo [jqueja1018@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:01 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony; JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: JoAnn A. Queja  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

**Good morning,**

**This is JoAnn A. Queja. I live on Kahualena Street in Waipahu.**

**I'm writing to let you know that I strongly oppose all bills related to Civil Unions (HB 444, SB 458, HB 878) including Death with Dignity Bill (HB-806, HB-587).**

**Mahalo for your time.**

---

**A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!**

---

**From:** A L [aleehonda@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:58 PM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HB-444

THIS IS ALICE LEE, I LIVE ON 2468 ILUNA PLACE, HONOLULU, HI 96819.

**PLEASE LET ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS KNOW THAT I STRONGLY OPPOSE ALL BILLS RELATED TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444)**

PLEASE PROTECT TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE AND SAY "**NO**" TO CIVIL UNIONS. THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST SAME-SEX MARRIAGE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

---

**From:** A L [aleehonda@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:47 AM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HB-444

THIS IS KENDALL KIKUYAMA, I LIVE AT 99-1350 KOAHA PLACE, AIEA, HAWAII 96701.

**PLEASE LET ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS KNOW THAT I STRONGLY OPPOSE ALL BILLS RELATED TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444)**

PLEASE PROTECT TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE AND SAY "**NO**" TO CIVIL UNIONS. THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST SAME-SEX MARRIAGE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

---

**From:** Kendall Kikuyama [kmkikuyama@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:51 AM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HB-444

THIS IS KENDALL KIKUYAMA, I LIVE AT 99-1350 KOAHA PLACE, AIEA, HAWAII 96701.

**PLEASE LET ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS KNOW THAT I STRONGLY OPPOSE ALL BILLS RELATED TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444)**

PLEASE PROTECT TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE AND SAY "**NO**" TO CIVIL UNIONS. THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST SAME-SEX MARRIAGE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

---

**From:** Kendall Kikuyama [kendall@alohapci.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 4:05 PM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HB 444

THIS IS KENDALL KIKUYAMA, I LIVE AT 99-1350 KOAHA PLACE, AIEA, HAWAII 96701.

**PLEASE LET ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS KNOW THAT I STRONGLY OPPOSE ALL BILLS RELATED TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444)**

PLEASE PROTECT TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE AND SAY "**NO**" TO CIVIL UNIONS. THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST SAME-SEX MARRIAGE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

***Kendall Kikuyama***  
Rescue Technologies Corporation  
99-1350 Koaha Place  
Aiea, HI. 96701  
Ph: 485-4929 Fax: 485-4921

---

**From:** Miss M \*\*\*\*\* [opala580@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:07 AM  
**To:** All Senators; PBStestimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi; sentatkamine@capitol.hawaii.gov; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; Rep. James Tokioka; info@hawaiiifamilyforum.org  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HB 444 and WHY

Dear House Reps and Senators,

My name is Stella Rponte and I live on Kauai. I would like to say I and my family are strongly opposed to all bills related to Civil Unions including, but not limited to HB444, SB 458 and HB878. This is a reminder that the people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage. I was one of those, 10 yrs ago, who marched, petitioned, and held road signs back in 1998 regarding this.

Allow me to quote why such a law will deteriorate society as we know it ( and our children may not know if this continues):

It's because civilizations depend on that sanctity of marriage, family, and home. In "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire", author Edward Gibbon discussed reasons for the great civilization's demise, including the the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home and the decay of religion. A civilization even as great as America and like the great Roman empire can be brought down not by invading armies or terrorists but by its own debauchery and complacency.

In 1947, sociologist Dr. Carle Zimmerman wrote a text "Family and Civilization", identified 11 "sypmtoms of final decay" observable in the fall of BOTH the Greek and Roman civilizations. 1. No fault divorce 2. "Birth Dearth"- increased disrespect for parenthood and parents 3. Meaningless marriage rites/ceremonies 4. Defamation of past national heroes **5. Acceptance of alternative marriage forms** 6. Widespread attittudes of feminism, narcissism, hedonis 7. Propagation of antifamily sentiment 8. Acceptance of most forms of adultery 9. Rebellious children 10. Increased juvenile delinquency 11. common acceptance of all forms of sexual perversion

Therefore, I hope this generation will not allow history to repeat itself and our civilization will not go down in history books as "once upon a time".

Thank you very much!

---

**From:** Ernie Ho [ernieho@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:04 AM  
**To:** PBStestimony; All Senators  
**Subject:** Testimony in Opposition HB444

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Ernie Ho and I am here to express my strong opposition for HB444-Civil Unions. I live in the Makiki-University area and I do a lot of interreligious work for world peace.

I am in opposition to the bill HB 444 which seeks to establish “civil unions” because I believe it is a legal stepping stone toward creating a user friendly environment for the practice of homosexuality. In order to achieve the above stated objective, many efforts are being made through the legislature, educational institutions, business, media\_ advertising and even through the religious networks. This opposition is rooted out of a moral concern regarding sexual practices not limited to homosexuality but including adultery, incest, sodomy, bestiality, child molestation, pornography, prostitution and other sexual practices which even homosexuals and advocates of homosexuality deem immoral. If homosexuality practices are given legal privileges where do you draw the line between other deviant sexual practices? This is a moral concern is historically shared by many of the mainline religious entities such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and many others for “thousands of years”. Do not be influenced by the recent “fads and trends” of some religions and interreligious networks which support HB 444 and other legislative efforts to create a user friendly environment for homosexuality. I do not look forward to the day when it will be unlawful for anybody to speak out or take a moral stance against homosexuality or other non-traditional forms of sexuality. I do not look forward to a future of mandatory exposure of children in schools and other educational institutions to the advertising and promotion of such sexual practices as possible lifestyle options.



Ernie Ho  
1505 Alexander St  
Honolulu, HI 96822

---

**From:** Victor Groves [vcgroves@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 11:12 AM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** HB 444

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status :** Flagged

My name is Victor C. Groves  
I live in Kuilioloa Pl. in Ewa Beach.

I am writing to ask you to please vote AGAINST the Same Sex Union Bill HB 444.  
Same-sex unions should not be allowed for the following reasons:

1. 70% of the residents of Hawaii in 1998 opposed it and that could not have changed much since. Thirty of the thirty states which put the issue to vote currently ban Gay marriages. (Only one small state has legalized civil unions.) Therefore, if homosexuals are truly fewer in number, then the lesser does not determine the will of the greater.
2. The point that the homosexuals use that they are a minority and discriminated against is not a valid reason. If they are discriminated against by anyone, it is not because of their social status, it is because their actions are viewed as immoral, and always have been from the beginning of time. A known sexual predator will always feel discriminated against and feel like a minority. Time does not change the status of morality, a persons actions will -every time. Homosexuals are treated as human beings, but their sexual activiies are offensive to most. That will not change with legitimizing it.
3. Same-sex unions will only raise many major issues in society and in governments. There will be protests from the public, which for the most part, have religious influences, and legalizing homosexuality goes against all religious beliefs. Legitimizing same-sex unions will automatically ban Christians from teaching or preaching God's Word which teaches against homosexuality. Christians as well as other religions outnumber homosexuals by a vast number, and why should homosexuality outlaw Christianiy as well as other religions? It has been said that in Canada, already preaching from the Bible against homosexuality is a criminal offence. USA was founded on Christianity.
4. As has been witnessed in the past, school children will be forced to participate in classes exhibiting this type of action to brainwash them at a young age.
5. Studies by sound psychologists have shown that children need the influence of both a male and female parents in their lives -given the diversities in their makeup. Studies show that children thrive under the traditional family. Homosexuality brings confusion to children's minds.
6. Sexually transmitted diseases will increase in Hawaii including HIV and AIDS, which are prevalent in homosexuals.
7. Same-sex unions will only be the beginning of a launching pad of many other unwanted unions. Once this door is opened, any other unwanted "MINORITY" can seek "EQUALITY" using this precedent, namely, incest unions, adult-minor unions if they truly love each other,

polygamous unions and the list is open.

Due to the overwhelming negative after-effects of civil unions, HB 444 should be voted against.

Please stand with the majority and vote AGAINST HB 444. Thank you very much,

Victor C. Groves

---

**From:** Elaine Brown [elainebrown@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2009 10:04 PM  
**To:** PBStestimony; All Senators  
**Subject:** Oppose all bills that will allow Civil Unions

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Honorable Legislators,

I respectfully request that you uphold the voters' decision by a 70% vote in 1998 to protect the definition of marriage which is between one man and one woman.

**Please do NOT vote in favor of any bill that permits Civil Union, ever.**

Thank you.

Elaine Brown

---

**From:** tvut6@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 3:06 PM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Sir/Madam:

It is with great disappointment to learn that HB 444 passed the House recently. As this bill comes up for a vote in the Senate, I humbly but firmly urge you to oppose this harmful bill.

I realize that the odds of this bill passing are high, and that the proponents for homosexual and gay marriage will never stop in their attempts to accomplish their agenda. And make no mistake: this bill, which uses the term "civil union", is essentially a bill that will confer benefits, rights and recognition to homosexual marriages. On at least two levels, the right thing to do is to oppose bill HB 444.

First, the people of Hawaii have already voted in a costly and wasteful election last year to overwhelmingly define marriage as a union between a man and woman. Now bill HB 444 simply uses semantics to try to slip through the back door to achieve recognition of homosexual marriage. This tactic will probably work since most people do not follow legislation closely and indeed this bill has been pushed through quickly and relatively quietly. Many of those who support this bill have been duped into thinking that this would be a positive benefit to society, because "civil union" has such a positive and benign ring to it. But in reality, this bill supports homosexual unions, which are detrimental to society and especially to children who need both a father and a mother for healthy development. Common sense and simple real-life observation affirms this.

Second and most importantly, homosexual acts, and therefore homosexual marriages, are sinful according to God. There are many often-noted references in the books of the Bible (i.e. Genesis, Leviticus, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 Timothy, Romans, and 1 Corinthians) that indicate God's hatred of the act of homosexuality. I know people have different interpretations of the Bible, and also many of the citizens of Hawaii have nothing to do with religion and therefore would not oppose bill HB 444. But divine law is higher than man's individual opinion or interpretation because divine law is unchanging and comes from God our Creator. To pass any law that in essence contradicts His commandments and principles, is dangerous and our community will eventually suffer the consequences.

Once again, I implore you to do what is right and oppose HB 444. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tuan Vu  
3045 Ala Napuaa Place, #1802  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818

---

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---

**From:** SMAELIN@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 18, 2009 9:54 AM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HBB-444

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

I OPPOSE HB-444 Civil Unions in Hawaii. In 1998 we Voted for Traditional Marriage. HB-444 is a veiled means to impose same sex marriage upon the people of Hawaii Against their stated will By the recognition of

- 1) Partners to be equal with traditional spouses
- 2) The solemnization being performed by same person licensed to perform marriage
- 3) Planned recognition of same sex marriage performed in other states as civil union in Hawaii
- 4) Proposed extension of chapter 572, Family Relations (except part 1) every reference to
  - a) marriage as equal to civil unions and
  - b) husband's wife or spouse as equal to partners
- 5) Every reference to marital status, including... procedures for annulment, divorce, separation, or dissolution, shall apply equally... to civil unions and to partners in a civil union.

Thank You,  
Jack & Tabbatha M Shuptrine  
91-1761 puhiko st  
Ewa Beach, Hawaii... 96706

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---

**From:** Terence Chow [terence@hopemountainside.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 18, 2009 12:52 PM  
**To:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Sam Slom; All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony  
**Subject:** HB444  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senators: Brian Taniguchi, Dwight Takamine, Robert Bunda, Mike Gabbard, Clarence Nishihara, Sam Slom.

My name is Terence Chow, and I am the Senior Pastor of Hope Chapel Mountainside in Wahiawa. I live on 94-218 Polapola Place in Mililani. Please know that I strongly oppose the Civil Unions bill HB444.

I respectfully ask that you please protect traditional marriage and say "No" to bill HB444. The people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage - let's uphold their wishes.

Thank you very much,

Pastor Terence Chow

---

**From:** Glen Kozuma [gk@nexaircorp.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 18, 2009 2:34 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony  
**Cc:** www.sentaniguchi@capitol.hawaii.gov; www.sentakamine@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
www.senbunda@capitol.hawaii.gov; www.sennishihara@capitol.hawaii.gov;  
www.sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov; www.senslom@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Please Vote NO HB 444 Bill  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Aloha All,

For the people of Hawaii and our foundation as a State I strongly ask of you to vote **NO** on the Civil Union Bill HB 444. I have a wife and daughter at that work and attend an all girls school whom are currently facing difficult situations with Lesbian teacher. Passing this law will bring many repercussions to the state of Hawaii. Please do not let this bill sneak in pass you and be aware of that the future may hold if this bill is passed.

Sincerely yours,

Glen Kozuma

Best Regards,

  
Sales & Distribution Director  
**NEXAIR**

Nexaircorp.  
Office: 55 Merchant St. Suite 2501  
Honolulu, HI. 96813  
Whse: 334 Kalihi St.  
Honolulu, HI. 96819  
P. (808) 791-2070 x 219  
C. (808) 294-0708  
F. (808) 528-4228  
[gk@nexaircorp.com](mailto:gk@nexaircorp.com)



---

**From:** Castaños [acastanos@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 19, 2009 8:18 AM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** CIVIL UNIONS

Good Morning,

This is Angela Castanos. I live at 3347 D Cruse Pl. in Honolulu, HI.

Please let Senator Brian Taniguchi, Senator Dwight Takamine, Robert Bunda, and Senator Clarence Nishihara know that I strongly oppose all bills related to Civil Unions (HB 444, SB 458, HB 878) including Death with Dignity Bill ( HB-806, HB-587).

Please protect traditional marriage and say "NO" to civil unions. The people of Hawaii have already spoken overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage. Also, let him know I strongly oppose the Death with Dignity bill am unhappy that the Health Committee is not going to hear the bill.

Thank you for hearing my voice,

Angela Castanos

February 17, 2009

Dear Honorable Senators, Representatives of Hawaii and PBS:

Senator Colleen Hanabusa, Senate President, 586-7793  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi (Chair) 586-6460  
Sen. Dwight Takamine (Vice-Chair) 586-7335  
Senator Robert Bunda, 586-6090  
Senator Clarence Nishihara, 586-6970

sentaniguchi@capitol.hawaii.gov  
sentakamine@capitol.hawaii.gov  
senbunda@capitol.hawaii.gov  
sennishihara@capitol.hawaii.gov

[http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects\\_of\\_ssm.html](http://www.massresistance.org/docs/marriage/effects_of_ssm.html)

Please protect our traditional, ethical family values and say no to civil unions HB 444.

1. Using Massachusetts as an example I would not like the teachers of kindergarten, grade school, elementary school, or any age of school children who are supported by their parents or at any time to have the liberty here in Hawaii of introducing any homosexual ideas into the mind of our children because they need the liberty to grow up with a **sound mind** and learn their talents, and skills that will support them later on in life.
  - a. They are not responsible enough to know anything about the consequences of homosexual behavior
  - b. They cannot remember their cell phone 5 min. after they put it down so how can they remember to put on a condom with the same sex partner or the opposite sex partner?
  - c. After introducing the sexual idea via children's books and the child experiments with other children, when should they get HIV testing? Will they remember to tell their parents who can take them down for the HIV test? A sexually active elementary school child may want to experiment with the opposite sex. Who will take care of the child that comes from an 11 year olds pregnancy?
  - d. Condoms are too big for elementary children.
  - e. Perversion is a sickening disgrace for any society.
  - f. Aids will kill off a generation and it could be your family member.
  - g. Why does the government pay so much for psychological help for Homosexuals?
  - h. Why is there so much domestic violence among them?
  - i. Why not use the HIV \$ for other things that will benefit the rest of society.
  - j. Children need a mother and a father.
  - k. Would you like to have homosexual parents?
2. Please, don't steal the childhood of our Hawaii children by allowing civil unions. Why not spend the money on fixing potholes, repairing schools, building affordable housing.

Please vote NO TO CIVIL UNIONS!

Sincerely,

Karen Goodness  
P.O. Box 22165  
Honolulu, HI 22165  
[Mashiach\\_is\\_coming@yahoo.com](mailto:Mashiach_is_coming@yahoo.com)  
808-226-3335

---

**From:** Harriet Dunhour [harriet.dunhour@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 2:47 PM  
**To:** PBStestimony  
**Subject:** snake in grass HB444

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

HARRIET DUNHOUR  
FEBRUARY 17, 2009  
RE: HB444

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB444, IN 1998 WE THE STATE OF HAWAII VOTED FOR TRADITIONAL MARRIAGES, WE VOTED AGAINST CIVIL UNITIES .. HB444 IS A SNAKE IN THE GRASS THAT OUR REPRESENTATIVES HAVE PASSED, HOW CAN THIS TAKE PLACE WHEN HAWAII HAS SPOKEN.

HARRIET 354-8405

---

**From:** Vicky Wong [vickyleewong@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 2:36 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony  
**Subject:** Opposition of House Bill 444

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

February 17, 2009

Dear Senators in the Hawaii State Senate,

**RE: Opposition of House Bill 444**

I seek your support to oppose House Bill 444 on Civil Union. I believe the true definition of marriage is between a man and a woman/ a husband and a wife. Children are a natural blessing that comes when husband and wife conceive and become father and mother. Please do not legalize same-sex unions.

Let me share a personal experience that affected my son who was attending a 3 and 4 year old preschool in San Francisco, California. This state has a high homosexual population and supports civil unions. One day my son came home asking whether he should marry a boy or a girl. His teacher taught him through picture graphs that it was fully acceptable for a boy to marry a boy, a girl to marry a girl, or a boy to marry a girl like his parents. She taught the children that a family unit can be heterosexual or homosexual, and then introduced her female same-sex partner to the class as an example. This distorted my son's understanding of the family unit, and the director of the school explained this was acceptable to teach in this city. I strongly oppose civil union for this reason as we must protect our children on the value of traditional marriage. I believe if this bill is passed, in time our schools will also begin teaching on an equal basis that marriage can be either heterosexual or homosexual, and both are acceptable as this teacher taught my son.

Senators, I ask you to support and protect the children in our state by upholding the tradition of marriage in Hawaii and oppose HB 444 civil union. Thank you for your assistance and immediate attention to this matter

Yours very truly,

Vicky Wong

**Contact:**  
[vickyleewong@hotmail.com](mailto:vickyleewong@hotmail.com)  
(808) 373-1480  
Honolulu, Hawaii



*"You may not be able to change the whole world, but you can change someone's world"  
"This is love: not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."  
(1 John 4:10)*

---

**From:** Mitchell Kanekoa iii [mkanekoa@asbhawaii.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 1:38 PM  
**To:** All Reps; All Senators; PBStestimony  
**Subject:** STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444...

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

To ALL REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS,

**I STRONGLY OPPOSE ALL BILLS RELATED TO CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444, SB 458, HB 878) INCLUDING DEATH WITH DIGNITY (HB-806, HB-587).**

I live in the Aiea district and if you may call me at 330-0203 if you have any questions.

**Mitchell Kanekoa III**

**Adjustor I**

**Ph: 808-846-4645**

**Fax: 808-846-4628**

**E-mail: [mkanekoa@asbhawaii.com](mailto:mkanekoa@asbhawaii.com)**

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**From:** Barbara M.Gross [mochimom@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:21 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony

Dear members of the Senate JGO Committee—

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 444 Relating to the establishment of Civil Unions.

You were elected to serve the people's will. And the people's will has been explicitly stated on this issue when in 1998 a clear majority voted to retain the "one man-one woman" definition of marriage that has held for millennia.

This is not an issue of equality, as even those in favor of the bill will acknowledge that the legal rights purportedly denied them are already available to same-sex couples through Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. No, be assured that the aim of this bill is to redefine marriage to include not only same-sex couples but also any other behavior-based group that desires civil approval of their lifestyle choice. Can others who practice currently unacceptable sex-based behavior be far behind in their demand for "equal rights" and for their right to "marry" the ones with whom they practice their preferred behavior?

This bill is a legislative endorsement of sex-partner civil unions as on par with sex-partner marriage. Please do not shred the definition of marriage to include any people who practice sexually-based behavior who express their desire to call themselves "married".

Again, you have a solemn responsibility to serve your constituents and the generations to come in the decisions you make. Please vote NO on HB444 HD1, as it seeks to establish a ruinous precedent in granting special legal protection and benefits based on sexual preferences and behaviors.

Thank you,

Barbara Gross

---

**From:** TomWest@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:19 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Aloha,

My name is Thomas Hill from Maui and I am writing about Bill # HB 444 HD1 Relating To Civil Unions being handled by the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO) tomorrow February 24th, 2009

I am strongly opposed to this bill. It is just one more case of compromise in our beliefs and morals that have stood strong for so many years. Our country was founded on Christian principles yet each and every year I am witnessing more decay in our society and cultural values. I was hoping that Hawaii would stand out as an example to the rest of the country by voting down this politically inspired nonsense.

Think of our children and their future. Passing this bill only accelerates the impending implosion of the very core that this country based it's foundation. Equality yes, equal representation yes! But not acceptance of something that has been banned since the bible was written.

My wife and I have seen this happen in other parts of the county and the results are that of moral compromise and complications from every angle. Please do not pass this bill.

Aloha,

Tom & Lisa Hill  
Lahaina, Hawaii

---

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---

**From:** wesjanejessmich yamada [yamadas@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:39 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

FROM: JANE YAMADA

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1.

HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD 1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD 1.

MAHALO!

JANE YAMADA



---

**From:** wesjanejessmich yamada [yamadas@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:39 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

FROM: JANE YAMADA

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

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CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

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FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD 1.

MAHALO!

JANE YAMADA

---

**From:** lloydeen peters [lloydeen.peters@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:39 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Fwd: letter to and from Gabbard

February 22, 2009

**To:** Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Senator Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair - Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

**From:** Lloydeen R. Peters, Native Hawaiian

**Re:** HB 444 - Testimony in SUPPORT of Civil Unions

**To Be Heard:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Auditorium

**VIA:** Email to [JGOtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

My name is Lloydeen Roselani Peters and I am writing you in support of HB44.

Recently, our President Barack Obama said, "at its core, this issue is about who we are as Americans. It's about whether this nation is going to live up to its founding promise of equality by treating all its citizens with dignity and respect."

A rather simple statement that I take to mean that the leader of our country wants all of his citizens to be respected and treated the same. Unfortunately for same-sex couples, rights given to heterosexual couples are not privileged upon them purely for the reason that both individuals are not paired as a male and female.

We have three sons and a granddaughter that have grown up with two aunts who are gay. I have never witnessed confusion on their part in regards to my sister, her partner or what role these two women play in their lives. It has always been about love, caring and a respect for these women as individuals and as a couple.

My niece Shylar, the nine-year-old daughter of my gay sister and partner has grown up in a loving home with two mothers. Shylar displays all the characteristics of a child who is happy, loved and understands that having two mothers makes her all the more special. We as a family and myself as an individual would never push away or exclude anyone because they were gay.

I am a native Hawaiian, born generations upon generations here in Hawai'i nei. We, my husband and myself take for granted the many benefits the law provides us such as: health care cost, tax incentives, last rights as a surviving partner. My sister, her partner, my niece and all the families here in Hawai'i should **NOT** have to worry that something unforeseen could happen to their loved ones because their partner is gay. Pure and simple that would be wrong! So on behalf of myself and my family I respectfully ask for your support of HB 444.

Aloha,  
Lloydeen R. Peters

92-1250 Kikaha St. #24, Kapolei, Hi 96707-1511  
Email: [lloydeen.peters@gmail.com](mailto:lloydeen.peters@gmail.com)

---

**From:** guy shindo [guyshindo@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:26 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Measure Number: HB444 HD1

Testimony for State Judiciary Committee Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear State Judiciary Committee:

I strongly oppose HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions. HB444 HD1 states that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage" or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil union". This statement by itself makes "marriage" and "civil union" virtually identical and indistinguishable from each other.

The people of Hawaii clearly stated their position in the Constitutional Amendment in 1998 that marriage should be reserved for one man and one woman. HB444 HD1 by its own definition is marriage under the name of "civil union", and is therefore attempting to redefine marriage to include same sex couples under the disguise of Civil Union which is against the majority will of the people of Hawaii.

Marriage (one man/one woman) and family are the foundation of our society and the integrity of this institution must be maintained if we are to leave a lasting legacy of strength for our children.

I respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,

Guy J. Shindo

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:24 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** nichelle.kcoahu@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Nichelle Morris  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 901 River St Apt 704 Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 8085504739  
E-mail: [nichelle.kcoahu@gmail.com](mailto:nichelle.kcoahu@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I am opposed to HB444. Civil union and same sex marriage are not issues to be legislated; there are statues in place to guard against oppression and discrimination. Please do not vote the choice of civil unions' as normative for the state of Hawaii.

---

**From:** James Arcate [arcate@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:23 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: James R. Arcate  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090223/ap\\_on\\_re\\_us/hawaii\\_civil\\_unions](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090223/ap_on_re_us/hawaii_civil_unions)

In 1998, nearly 70 percent of Hawaii voters approved a constitutional amendment granting the state Legislature the power to reserve marriage for opposite-sex couples. The "defense of marriage" amendment, now in more than half of state constitutions, resulted in a law banning gay marriage in Hawaii .... but left the door open for civil unions.

I am a resident & registered voter in Hawaii and ask that you "close that door for good ! vote against HB 444.

James R. Arcate  
3447 Pipa Place  
Honolulu, HI 96822

---

**From:** Kimberly Marquez [mkplus4@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:23 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony for HB444, HD1 (HSCR157) Tuesday

February 23, 2009

Testimony for  
Tuesday, Feb 24 9am Auditorium State Capitol

To Whom it May Concern:

This is a very emotional and tender topic today. I'm sure we all have people in our families that our caught up in the gay lifestyle. None of us want to condemn or judge these loved ones, but rather, we desire them to know the love of God and to experience joy and peace that comes from knowing Him. Taking a stand for the value of the traditional marriage is not a condemnation of our loved ones, but a call to what is best (by God's standards, not our own) for the state of Hawaii. Why should we offer to our state's children and future generations something that will only deteriorate and attack what is the core of our society, the family unit? What will happen to a society whose basic unit has fallen apart? I believe that as this unit deteriorates, so does society....

Giving civil unions the same rights as married couples will only open a Pandora's Box of trouble in the form of law suits against churches, private schools, and businesses that show any form of discrimination towards anyone that is in a gay lifestyle (civil union), should they make a decision based on their personal convictions in support the traditional marriage/family.

One might ask what harm there is in allowing them to "freedom" to the lifestyle of their choice. The truth is that they do have that freedom, but this bill would give them the "right" to force this belief on our children and society, or face law suits and persecution if we do not believe as they do. Public schools would be required to teach the gay lifestyle as a viable option in sexual education, without parental permission. It is time to take a stand for what is right. Our family cannot remain silent on this issue.

The Marquez Ohana would like to take a public stand with and for the traditional family in the state of Hawaii and strongly urge you to please oppose HB444.

Sincerely,  
Kimberly Marquez

Marquez Family  
[mkplus4@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:mkplus4@hawaii.rr.com)

---

**From:** Wayne C Tanaka [wctanaka@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:22 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; All Senators  
**Subject:** Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444, HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Senators,

I respectfully request that you vote yes on HB 444, HD 1 and that you explain to any of your colleagues in opposition to this bill that the social and economic benefits of this bill to the overall community here in Hawai`i clearly outweigh any perceived threat to unrelated related religious doctrines held by specific religious groups regarding their own versions of marriage, particularly when those specific religious groups are themselves divided on the issue of gay marriage.

As a person of the younger generation here in Hawai`i it pains me to think that religious homophobia still dictates state policy regarding the legal status of intimate relationships between two private citizens, as evidenced in HRS sec. 572-1. Although I do not speak for my many friends, I cannot think of a single one of them who has voiced their opinion differently.

Thank you very much for reading my testimony!

Aloha,  
Wayne Tanaka  
46-271 Kahuhipa St. #E-107  
Kaneohe, HI 96744



---

**From:** Wayne C Tanaka [wctanaka@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:22 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; All Senators  
**Subject:** Testimony in Strong Support of HB 444, HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Senators,

I respectfully request that you vote yes on HB 444, HD 1 and that you explain to any of your colleagues in opposition to this bill that the social and economic benefits of this bill to the overall community here in Hawai'i clearly outweigh any perceived threat to unrelated related religious doctrines held by specific religious groups regarding their own versions of marriage, particularly when those specific religious groups are themselves divided on the issue of gay marriage.

As a person of the younger generation here in Hawai'i it pains me to think that religious homophobia still dictates state policy regarding the legal status of intimate relationships between two private citizens, as evidenced in HRS sec. 572-1. Although I do not speak for my many friends, I cannot think of a single one of them who has voiced their opinion differently.

Thank you very much for reading my testimony!

Aloha,  
Wayne Tanaka  
46-271 Kahuhipa St. #E-107  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

---

**From:** WCJ0077@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:25 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444

Dear Senators,

I am writing this letter to state my opposition in regards to HB 444.

In 1998, nearly 70 percent of Hawaii voters supported traditional marriage when they passed a constitutional amendment that gave the state Legislature the authority to reserve marriage to one man and one woman.

In 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiaries law (Act 383) was enacted to allow any 2 single couples including same sex partners the rights and benefits as an opposite sex couple.

“Civil Union” HB 444 is the same as same sex marriage but circumvented under a different name.

The people of Hawaii have spoken and we have not changed our minds on this issue. We are very concerned that we as a people of Hawaii were not given the opportunity to vote on this very important issue and are now finding out about this after the votes have already been cast.

We are asking that our voice be heard again to stop HB 444 from being passed. We ask for your help and support in stopping this bill from happening.

Sincerely,

Christine Jenks

Mililani Mauka

---

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**From:** David Robins [hawaiiguys@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:24 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** House Bill 444

Aloha,

I have been in a committed same sex relationship for 25 years this March 10th anniversary date. I have contributed to society responsibly and have never caused any trouble along the way. My partner and I deserve equal rights under the law. Here are our concerns IF we do not have protection under the law. If one of us passes, will the other one be protected? What about our assets? Insurance? Benefits? Rights of survivorship? There are many issues within this one issue. We are at a point in time that all people deserve to be treated equally and without prejudice. I know that most all of the professional folks I work with, or come into contact with, support equal rights for same sex couples. And remember, these are also the same people who turn out at the polls to vote for candidates.

Do not cave to the message of folks with hatred in their hearts...who do not wish Hawaii to progress. Unfortunately, we have a Lt Gov who also believes this way, which is backward thinking at its worst. It will not serve him well in the coming years, by the way, be assured. Hawaii's people are more forward-thinking than many of you may realize. You must do the right thing and pass HB 444 into law. The people of Hawaii are watching and waiting to see what you do. And a handful of haters with bigotry, hatred, discrimination, and prejudice in their hearts will not stand in the way. After all, these are so-called "born agains"...and in my humble opinion, if they were doing it right the first time around...they wouldn't have to be born again. Right? Do not allow yourself to be swayed by their toxic opinions. It will hold all of us back from solid progress. Times have changed....we need to change with it....or be left behind. The choice is yours. Do the right thing and move us forward so that all people can live with the knowledge that we are all equally protected under the law.

I encourage you to support HB 444 and pass it immediately...so there is fair and equal rights for all under the law.

Mahalo for your kokua,

**DAVID ROBINS, RA**

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**From:** Leiana Kinnicutt [leiana@endabuse.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:35 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of HB444 HD1 Re: Civil Unions

*For the Senate Judiciary & Gov't Operations Committee hearing, 2/24 at 9:00 AM*

*"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness." – President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 2009*

*Bigots have no place in Hawaii.*

*Aloha,  
Leiana Kinnicutt (born and raised in Kailua, Oahu)  
147 Cedar St, Apt. 3L  
Somerville, MA 02144*

---

Leiana Kinnicutt | Senior Program Specialist | Family Violence Prevention Fund  
67 Newbury St | Boston, MA 02116 | P: (617) 262-5900 | F: (617) 262-5901 |  
[www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org)

---

**From:** Albert D. Rich [Albert\_Rich@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:24 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Albert D. Rich in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Subject** Testimony of Albert D. Rich in Strong Support of H.B.  
**line:** 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Albert D. Rich

62-3614 Loli'i Way, Unit E

Kamuela, HI 96743

Mark Ishizu  
94-1012 Hakea Street  
Waipahu HI, 96797  
808.688-2255

HB 444 HDI

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00AM  
(Auditorium)

RE: Oppose HB444

Senators,

House Bill 444 is redundant, simply adding unnecessary legislation. Currently no one in Hawaii is denied their civil rights as a result of their homosexual behavior; the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act of 1997 (HRS §572C) has given unmarried couples the option of receiving many of the same benefits of married couples. The only result of this proposed legislation is to set up the courts to take this decision out of the legislature's hands, ruling that dishonestly calling same-sex marriages "civil unions" discriminates against those in such unions. Lest this seems unlikely, this is exactly the line of reasoning used by the California Supreme Court last year (*In re Marriage Cases*, S147999, May 15, 2008)

- The state of Hawaii has *no* existing problem tolerating same-sex relationships
- Homosexuals have a right to form meaningful relationships; they don't have a right to redefine marriage for all of us.
- This proposed legislature is not about mere tolerance, it's about *forcing everyone* to fully accept these unnatural families.

Thank you for taking time to hear me out, and I pray that you will think carefully about those whom you represent and the immense decision that lies before you. For the sake of our society and our future of the great State of Hawaii please vote no on House Bill 444. Thank you.

Very Respectfully,

Mark Ishizu

Steven Ishizu  
94-1012 Hakea Street  
Waipahu HI, 96797  
808.688-2255

Testify @ Hearing

HB 444 HDI

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00AM  
(Auditorium)

RE: Oppose HB444

Senators,

The family of a mother, father, and children is the basic building block of society. That block is created by a mother and father raising children and teaching them how to be good moms and dads. Their children in turn marry and have kids who are raised much the same as their parents were raised. Thus if one generation is raised wrong it will lead to moral decline. This will lead to families without traditional values, a bad foundation for society. So when you replace the correct foundation with an improper one the society will crumble. This bill, if passed, will degrade traditional marriage and destroy the building block of society.

I ask that you prayerfully consider your decision and vote for the people you represent.

Thank You

Steven Ishizu

Steven Ishizu  
94-1012 Hakea Street  
Waipahu HI, 96797  
808.688-2255

HB 444 HDI

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00AM  
(Auditorium)

RE: Oppose HB444

Senators,

The family of a mother, father, and children is the basic building block of society. That block is created by a mother and father raising children and teaching them how to be good moms and dads. Their children in turn marry and have kids who are raised much the same as their parents were raised. Thus if one generation is raised wrong it will lead to moral decline. This will lead to families without traditional values, a bad foundation for society. So when you replace the correct foundation with an improper one the society will crumble. This bill, if passed, will degrade traditional marriage and destroy the building block of society.

I ask that you prayerfully consider your decision and vote for the people you represent.

Thank You

Steven Ishizu



Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to strongly support HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions). I write as a Roman Catholic and private citizen. Same-sex couples deserve the rights and privileges of a civil union. They pay the same taxes as I do, a heterosexual Roman Catholic woman. They obey the same civil laws even if we are of different sexual orientations. The spiritual argument against civil unions bears no weight to me. In the name of God and faith, arguments and laws were made against interracial marriage. These racist laws were struck down in the 1960s. Please do not let the realm of faith interfere with civil society and what is due to all people regardless of their sexual orientation.

Same-sex couples deserve the right to the privileges that HB444 will afford them. Supporting all our 'ohana regardless of our differences only serves to make our society and community stronger. I have witnessed the love between same-sex couples and believe they are no different than heterosexual couples. They deserve the same civil rights as heterosexual couples.

Thank you for your time.  
Mahalo,  
Darlene Rodrigues  
94-338 Ulukoa St.  
Mililani, HI 96789

February 23, 2009

Aloha Senators and Representatives:

I am herewith writing in **support** of the passage of HB444, relating to Civil Unions. Now is the time for Government to extend the same rights, benefits and protections to partners in a civil union. This issue goes beyond that of mere religious and doctrinal sentiments or any degree of xenophobia. Passage of HB444 will send a clear message to every single one of your constituents that **we are all** afforded equal protection under the law, which is a constitutional right in this Nation.

The will of the people is not static and can change. To say that the will of the people is the same as it was in 1998 till today is a blatant attempt to keep the majority silent.

I urge each one of you to support the passage of HB444, and include **every** Citizen in this great State and Country the same protection under **all** contracts this State has to offer.

Mahalo for your time,

Ryan K. Gomes

---

**From:** Jeff Hino [kauhale08@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:15 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** opposition to bill 444 re: civil unions

Please keep traditional marriage as the only recognized, lawful union between 2 people: A man and a woman. We don't need to send the wrong message and proliferate a mass of homosexuals and lesbians "coming out" and rushing to lay claim to the same entitlements rightly reserved for those unions of the opposite sex, as has been traditionally and historically recognized for a millennium of years. That traditional marriage, should be compromised to include those of the same sex is sacrilegious and down right blasphemous. Many heterosexuals of the same sex cohabitate as roommates to better manage their living expenses, most don't get intimate or push for entitlements. What about them? Are they supposed to sit silently as you decide to pass legislation that will force them to become willing participants in condoning a lifestyle that encompasses sodomy and unnatural sexual activity? Or, are they to sit idly by as you draft this bill that will eventually end up costing them more taxes to subsidize, yet not provide them with even a single benefit.

Fellow Senators and Representatives let's please be rational.

With out reserve and with quick resolve we must stop this wiled gambit. You must act on our behalf to put these people in their proper place with swift and decisive actions and not allow their ideologies, agendas, and immorality to seep into our main stream of living and end once and for all their continued, nagging bid to become part and parcel of our status quo. There is simply too much integrity at stake, especially for the future of our children. They must know the difference now and they must know it with certainty! Thank you. jeff hino.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:18 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** TAXHAWAII@AOL.COM  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: JEFF HINO  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 99-060 KAUAHALE ST AIEA HI. 96701  
Phone: 808-275-7676  
E-mail: [TAXHAWAII@AOL.COM](mailto:TAXHAWAII@AOL.COM)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

Please keep traditional marriage as the only recognized, lawful union between 2 people: A man and a woman. We don't need to send the wrong message and proliferate a mass of homosexuals and lesbians "coming out" and rushing to lay claim to the same entitlements rightly reserved for those unions of the opposite sex, as has been traditionally and historically recognized for a millennium of years. That traditional marriage, should be compromised to include those of the same sex is sacrilegious and down right blasphemous. Many heterosexuals of the same sex cohabitate as roommates to better manage their living expenses, most don't get intimate or push for entitlements. What about them? Are they supposed to sit silently as you decide to pass legislation that will force them to become willing participants in condoning a lifestyle that encompasses sodomy and unnatural sexual activity? Or, are they to sit idly by as you draft this bill that will eventually end up costing them more taxes to subsidize, yet not provide a single benefit for them.

Fellow Senators and Representatives let's please be rational.

With out reserve and with quick resolve we must stop this wiled gambit. You must act on our behalf to put these people in their proper place with swift and decisive actions and not allow their ideologies, agendas, and immorality to seep into our main stream of living and end once and for all their continued, nagging bid to become part and parcel of our status quo. There is simply too much integrity at stake, especially for the future of our children. They must know the difference now and they must know it with certainty! Thank you. jeff hino.

---

**From:** Maria LaMadrid [jmlamadrid@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:42 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**Testifier:** Robert and Maria LaMadrid

**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24th

**Hearing Time:** 9:00 AM

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

We strongly oppose bill HB 444 HDI Relating to Cilil Unions. We believe traditional marriage.

---

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**From:** Newall, William [wnewall@kiuc.coop]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 7:42 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** FW: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

I strongly oppose passing bill HB 444HD1.  
William O. Newall  
PO Box 684  
Waimea, HI 96796

---

**From:** PUNA SHORBA [puanani42@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 10:51 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444 HD1

February 24, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Public hearing for HB444 HD1...relating to CIVIL UNIONS

—  
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sen. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Sen. Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Testimony given by: Carolyn P. Shorba

Gentlemen,

I am once again testifying in opposition to HB444. With all the many problems that daily arise calling for your attention and fair judgments, why this particular bill should once again present itself is cause for serious concern. Was this not the same issue that was pressed upon you legislators and for which a resounding show of voters said NO to? In a democracy the majority rules, yes? 78% is certainly a majority, no? So this proposal was denied by the people, the same people who voted for you legislators to represent them and abide by their wishes. Somewhere out there the remaining 22%, not accounting for whatever percentile is apathetic, has gained momentum enough to try again. I have no doubt that big money and outside influences are here to push through this bill.

The people who are anxious for HB444 to pass are free to make their choices .But they may not make choices for the rest of us. The family is the core of our society. It consists of a man and woman who with the creator's wisdom are empowered to create also. This core is protected by laws that you are commissioned to instigate and enforce. HB444 is a corruption of those laws and is being twisted, distorted to fit the demands of special interest groups and not the majority of Hawaii's people.

Please put this HB444 to rest. Hear the will of the people who you have been duly elected to serve.



Subject: Testimony Opposing HB 444

Name: Jade Richardson

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Date & Time of Hearing: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00 am

Measure Number: HB 444HD1

Subject: Opposition to HB 444 HD!

It concerns me to know that the elected officials who are suppose to be representing the people are going about in an underhanded way to get a bill passed that does not embody the will of the majority of the people of Hawaii.

Hawaii already has in place a Reciprocal Beneficiary law that addresses rights for partners that were previously only afforded to spouses.

I question why this was not put out to vote.

Could it be that the people have already spoken? I believe that we have. In 1998, the people of Hawaii made it clear where we stood on same-sex marriages. Still you want to slide it by using another name like Civil Union. The bill needs to be reviewed and rewritten. The ads that are being put out by the Democratic Party is only half true and very misleading.

Put it back out to vote and let the people decide!

Yes, the elections are over. But the people of Hawaii will remember those who continue to ignore and conveniently forget that they were placed in office to stand for the will of the people and not for their own agendas.

What happened to a new era of open government?  
It sure looks like the same old, same old to me.

Please do not let us down! **Vote NO to HB 444**

February 20, 2009

To: The Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

From: Dr. Wayne Nickens

Bill Number: HB 444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

RE: **STRONG OPPOSITION TO CIVIL UNION BILL HB 444 HD1**

Senator Taniguchi and the Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

**Civil Union, a Matter of Public Health**

I am a family physician and Addiction Medicine Specialist with 40 years of experience in health care practice and education. I would like to address the issue of House bill 444 concerning same sex marriages as a matter of public health. The harm that would be done to the public, should this bill become law, would have a catastrophic impact on the health of the general public for generations to come. The central issue from the health perspective is the sexual preference and practices of a few individuals. The intention of House Bill 444 is to protect the sexual preferences and practices of a small portion of the population, despite the harm caused to others. Those practicing these sexual behaviors despite the harmful consequences directly or indirectly, are inflicted upon themselves and others to the detriment of all. The human beings involved in these harmful sexual behaviors whether homosexual or heterosexual, are violating natural (biological) and supernatural (spiritual) laws that support life. These practices are a health risk to everyone in the community. Any obsessive compulsive behavior whether it involves eating, drinking, working, smoking, using drugs, sex, or violence is rooted in disease and robs us all of the power to choose. The root disease which is cause of these behaviors is the disease of addiction. It is chronic, progressive, and fatal to all cultural, biological, spiritual, and social processes that support life.

The natural design for perpetuation of the species is being perverted in many ways, but the underlying natural cause of destruction, disability, and disintegration is disease. The disease of

addiction has both a genetic component and a learned component that influences preference and behavior. The DNA determines the wiring and the chemical potential in the brain of every individual. The pleasure centers in the brain that motivate behavior and influence identity under natural laws, are determined by DNA. The life experiences, learning, and environmental exposure acting on the predisposed brain are stressors shaping the harmful behaviors, disturbed emotions and character of all who are touched by the disease. No good can come from any civil law that supports the diseased state and condition, that robs us of choice. Signs and symptoms are evidence of loss of choice resulting in harmful behaviors not freedom of choice. To impose these behaviors that pervert the natural laws of life on the community at large by civil law would be the equivalent to condoning self destructive behaviors such as drunk driving, ice addiction, crack use, or spousal abuse as acceptable healthy behaviors in a healthy civilized community.

According to my research for those raised by a nontraditional family where a mother and father are not present there is an increase in crime by almost 90%. The murder rate is highest, gang involvement is almost twice as high, the abuse rate is increased 40 times, increased rates of incarceration, depression, mental illness, and increased psychiatric treatment among children not raised by a mother and father. I am also concerned with the potential increase in diseases to our already burdened health care system. For example, according to the Hawaii State Department of Health website, "As of December 31, 2007, a total of 3,011 AIDS cases were reported by health providers. Men who have sex with men (MSM) account for the majority of AIDS cases (73%), followed by injection drug use (IDU) (8%), MSM/IDU (7%), and heterosexual contact (6%)." Other similar STD statistics are listed on the website.

Don't be confused on the issue by the clouding of concepts and meaning of words. This is not a racial issue, as sexual identity and preference is representative of a genetic component of the motivational mechanism of the brain that is common to every human being. The preferences of an individual are based on the status of the chemical and structural pleasure centers in the brain as determined first by the DNA in everyone. This structure and function is dictated by natural design and natural laws of genetics. This is not a choice. The choice is whether or not to act on the urges, drives, and judgments dictated by unhealthy thinking and short circuited emotions. Behaviors that are a risk to the health of the public as relates to those who identify with homosexual preferences are violence, homicide, sexually transmitted diseases, obstruction to perpetuation of the species, and elevation to a level of equality maladaptive relationships that threaten the health and safety of the community. The individual citizens of the community, the diverse life groups of a healthy community, and families as defined by natural law would all be harmed by a law that subverts the natural design. Natural law cannot be set aside by establishment of civil law any more than the law of gravity can be set aside by the ruling of a civil court or any man made law.

Our shared problem behaviors are rooted in brain disease, injury, and depletion of life. The solution to disease controlled behaviors is healing. There is no legislation that can produce

a healthy way of life, but it can protect public health. It must be by our choice to value life above death that we insure the future of freedom of choice. The proposed legislation in house bill 444 will perpetrate harm upon the public, community, family, and individual health in ways not yet imagined, by submitting all of us to the authority of the disease. Our choices and the choices of our children will be limited even more than they are now because we will be removing one more boundary of safety and protection from their way of life. Authority and protection is the primary responsibility of every mother and father in every people group. To relinquish this responsibility and privilege to others not biologically defined as male and female in union by marriage, is to pervert the very design and natural laws of life and health. The constitution of the United States already protects the right to pursue health and happiness. It does not guarantee the right to pursue personal pleasure to the detriment of all others. House bill 444, if passed, will make it legal to inflict physical, mental, and spiritual harm on others for the selfish pleasures and desires of a few. Instead of condemning the victims of harm which include all of us, we should be merciful in offering healing to the sick while confronting the behavior that is controlled by the disease entity residing within the human brain.

Who you are and what you do are two different things. What brings pleasure and what brings happiness come from two different sources of law. One is physical (natural pleasure) and the other is spiritual (supernatural blessing). It is our choice as to which master will rule in our lives. It is the collective will of the people that serve the Spirit of Life and Love, and the wellbeing of our fellow citizens that will preserve a healthy community. As a physician and scientist knowledgeable concerning the laws of disease, death, and healing, I prescribe compliance with the laws of Life first by exercising your choice to love the one with a different preference and identity than yours as you love yourself. Resist the common enemy which is disease and do not accommodate or tolerate the behaviors and attitudes it controls. Choose Life.

Offered by Wayne Nickens, M.D.

---

**From:** Dave Yamagata [dyamagat@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:12 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of DAVE YAMAGATA in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
DAVE YAMAGATA  
284 MANANAI PL 3H  
HONOLULU, HI 96818

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Heidi Kawakami*

*Heidi Kawakami*

*P.O. Box 24*

*Kurtistown, HI. 96760*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



Gilbert G. Abalos

P.O. Box 722

Honolulu Hawaii

96727

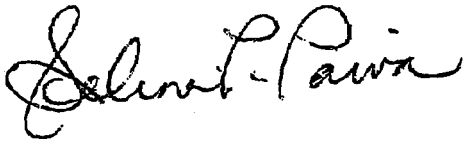
February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Selina Paiva".

SELINA PAIVA  
PO BOX 531  
HONOLULU HI 96827



February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Lorraine H. T. Kane*  
LORRAINE H.T. KANE  
P.O. BOX 325  
KURTISTOWN, HAWAII 96760

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



DEXTER D PACHECO JR

PO Box 185 PEPEKEO HI, 96783

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

Charlton C. Cobear

CHARLTON C. COBEAR

P.O. BOX 776 KEAHOE, HI 96749

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,



Jonathan Faford

P.O. Box 180249

Hawaii National Park, HI 96718-0249

**Testimony In OPPOSITION OF HB 444 HD1 – Relating to Civil Unions**

**TO: SENATE JUDICIARY and GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

**FROM:** Alice M. Nishihira

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

*I strongly ~~oppose~~ oppose this  
same Bill 444 HD1.*

Sincerely,

*Alice M. Nishihira - a registered voter  
Kalaheo, Kauai, HI.*

Date: 2/22/09

SHIRLEY N. GARCIA, ESQ.  
3366 Kaohinani Drive  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817  
(808) 595-0704

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
From: Shirley N. Garcia, Esq.  
Date: February 23, 2009  
Re: H.B. 444, H.D. 1; Bill on Civil Unions Hearing on February 24, 2009 at  
9:00 a.m.

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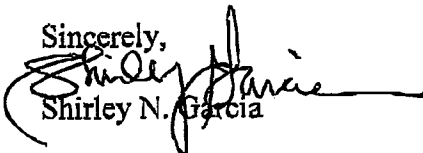
Dear Committee Members:

As a Catholic, as a civil rights attorney, I am writing to strongly urge you to support H.B. 444, H.D.1, granting same-sex couples the same secular, government created rights afforded to heterosexual married couples. There are long held values of equality, justice, fairness, separation of church and state, equal representation that are at stake here. Future generations will look back at what this Committee and this Legislature does regarding affording same-sex couples equal rights under the law. Will this Committee act out of intolerance and/or fear of a vocal majority who wishes you to discriminate against a minority group? It is up to you to decide whether you act based upon fear or whether you respect our system of government which is based on the idea that all men and women are created equal under the eyes of God. Same-sex couples are not second rate citizens. The government does not treat gay individuals differently in determining how their income is taxed; they are asked to contribute to the betterment of our society the same as heterosexual individuals and couples. Why should their relationships, their families, be devalued, be disgraced and discriminated against?

Remember that what you decide on this issue will affect how people of this State view their neighbors; how children will view their classmates. Will your actions teach them hate? Intolerance? That some people, some families, are valued less in this State? Remember your commitment to the Constitution of these United States. Keep the church out of secular decisions, such as benefits provided by the government to married couples or same-sex couples. You are charged to represent all your constituents – straight and gay.

It is really a simple decision. Support equal treatment for all citizens of the State of Hawaii. We are a State known for its strong commitment to civil rights. That is the Hawaii that I want to live in. I am appalled by the hate coming from those opposing Civil Unions. I hope that you will not be a part of this hate and intolerance. I respectfully request that you make the right choice, what history will bear out to be the right choice, and support H.B. 444, H.D.1.

Sincerely,

  
Shirley N. Garcia

FROM: Kim S. Roy (print name)

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1


IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

**ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.**

**I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.**

Thank you,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim S. Roy', is written over a horizontal line.

DEAR SENATOR *Inaguchi,*

Thank you for your willingness to work tirelessly in behalf of the people of our district. We seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii and our district will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Should it ever come to a vote please vote against HB 444.

With grace and respect,

Name: *Nianne O'Brien*

Address or e-mail: *djosteen@hawaiiantel.net*



DEAR SENATOR *Taniguchi,*

Thank you for your willingness to work tirelessly in behalf of the people of our district. We seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii and our district will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Should it ever come to a vote please vote against HB 444.

With grace and respect,

Name: *Gregory Ahuna*

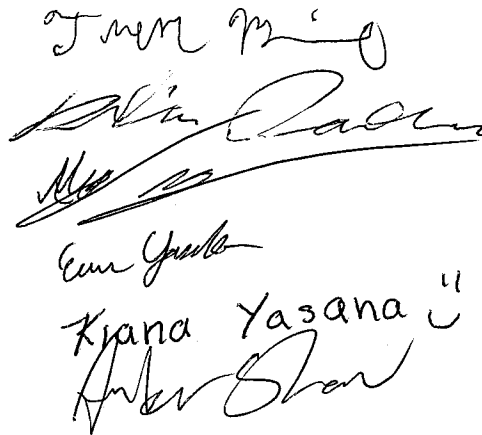
Address or e-mail: *Gregory.Ahuna@aol.com*

February 24, 2009

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations,

We the undersigned, wish to submit testimony in support of House Bill 444, House Draft 1. We believe that the banning of same-sex marriage constitutes discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual orientation, and that it unjustly deprives homosexuals of equal rights guaranteed by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, Section 1. We also agree with the 1993 ruling by the Hawaii Supreme Court in *Baehr v. Lewin* that barring same-sex marriage is a violation of Article I, Section 5 of the Hawaii State Constitution. While we would prefer to see the legalization of same-sex marriage as would happen under House Bill 878, we are also willing to accept the passage of House Bill 444, especially considering that the former measure has not progressed this session. (Our primary concern against House Bill 444 is that the creation of civil unions allows a "separate but equal" category of marriage that may lead to future discrimination.) We want Hawaii to follow the example set by states such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont; we do not want to repeat the failures of others such as the recent example of California. We believe that the State of Hawaii was right in becoming one of the first states to grant domestic partnership rights, but simultaneously failed in that it came at the expense of allowing full marriage rights. We ask for your support of House Bill 444 so that Hawaii can begin to repair the damage done in 1998, and do what is right.

Yours Truly,



The block contains five handwritten signatures in cursive script. From top to bottom, they appear to be: 1. A signature that is mostly illegible but seems to start with 'Trevor'. 2. A signature that appears to be 'Kristian Naone'. 3. A signature that appears to be 'Alex Rasmussen-Silverstein'. 4. A signature that appears to be 'Evan Yasaka'. 5. A signature that appears to be 'Amber Shaw'. The signature 'Kiana Yasana' is also visible, possibly overlapping with or near the 'Evan Yasaka' signature.

List of signatures:

Trevor Nagamine (Senate District. 17)  
Kristian Naone (Senate District. 16)  
Alex Rasmussen-Silverstein (Senate District. 17)  
Evan Yasaka (Senate District 17)  
Kiana Yasana (Senate District 22)  
Amber Shaw (Seante District 22)

---

**From:** Mel [mel@hopepearlview.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:11 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposed to HB 444

**Mel Isara**  
**94-1119 Pulai St. Waipahu, HI 96797**  
**808-429-9707**

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

Sincerely,

Mel Isara

---

**From:** Cheah, Delray W CIV NAVFAC PAC [delray.cheah@navy.mil]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:44 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 , Relating to Civil Unions

Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am oppose to House Bill 444, relating to Civil Unions.

I do not believe that we should recognize civil unions on the same level as traditional marriage between one man and one woman. To me, this bill gives civil unions the same benefits as traditional marriage and I am not in favor of that.

I want to keep our society, morally and ethically sound and allow my children, and the children of Hawaii to grow up clearly understanding that marriage can only happen between a man and a woman.

Please extend my views as you vote to oppose HB 444.

Thank you.

Delray Cheah  
NAVFAC Pacific  
Business Office  
Phone: 808.472.1248

Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: HB444, Public Hearing 2/24/09, 9:00 A.M.

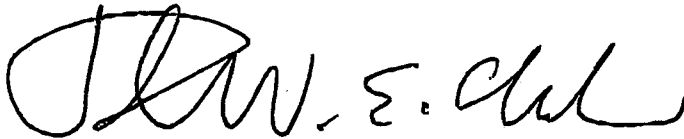
Aloha, Senators:

Please uphold my value in the definition of the traditional family—one man and one woman. I fear the day that my young children will be conflicted with the teachings in school that gay or lesbian unions are acceptable and, worse yet, an option that they may entertain for their own future.

I truly hold in my heart that the fabric of society begins with the core unit of the traditional family. Any permutation of that will increasingly fray that fabric and gray many areas for us as a state, and help forge the decline of our nation---degeneration, if you will, as it sets greater precedence for other states.

I think you get my sentiment on this issue. Please don't let this pass---as I see that it will have regrettable repercussions for us today and for generations to come..

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia Chock". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Patricia Chock

FROM: Kathy Watanabe, Chiu Yee (print name)

To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE / Sen R BUNDA / Sen C Nishihara

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1

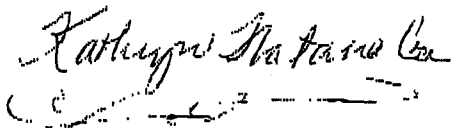
HB 444 WILL REQUIRE HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE SAME SEX MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS FROM OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES. THE STATE WILL THEN HAVE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO SAME SEX COUPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS OPPOSITE SEX MARRIAGES. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. PLEASE VOTE NO ON HB 444, HD1. PROVIDING EQUALITY TO SAME SEX UNIONS MAY RESULT IN THESE COUPLES ALSO SUING CHURCHES FOR REFUSING TO ALLOW WEDDINGS.

IT MAY ALSO RESULT IN GAY COUPLES ASKING SCHOOLS FOR EQUALITY IN ANY TEACHING MATERIALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE.

OUR CHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW THE VALUE OF MARRIAGE IF THE DEFINITION REMAINS CLEAR AND CONSISTENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO THE CHANGING WHIMS AND LEGISLATION OF MAN.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE, PLEASE DO NOT LEGALIZE SAME SEX CIVIL UNIONS. DO NOT PASS HB 444, HD1

MAHALO!

*Kathryn Watanabe*  


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Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations .  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
Place: Auditorium  
Re: Testimony of Amanda Lawrence in Strong Opposition of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Committee:

Please don't allow the passage of HB 444. It would be a travesty to not listen to what the public has said through the rally of thousands at the courthouse on Sunday. I always learned in school that elected officials were to represent those who elected them. Look at the numbers of who showed up to the rallies who care about this issue. Clearly, your constituency opposes this bill, and so should you.

Sincerely,

Amanda Lawrence  
1515 Ward Avenue  
Honolulu HI 96822

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Sen Brian Taniguchi  
Fax# 586-6464

Feb 23, 2009

Senator Taniguchi,

I am writing this letter to you in opposition to  
HB 444 HDI Relating to Civil Unions.

I believe in upholding the tradition of marriage in  
the state of Hawaii. I ask you to support and  
protect the children + families of our beautiful  
state Hawaii, and oppose this bill HB 444.

Thank you for your service + God Bless you.

Mahalo,

Esther Caneso-Cabasan



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**From:** Katie Paul [katiepaul85@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:02 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Katie Paul in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I am contacting you in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Paul  
Project Manager, Malama Kaua`i  
2222 Liliuokalani, Kilauea, HI 96754

---

**From:** Daisy Dela Torre [delatorre3828@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:02 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Gay and Lesbian couples In strong OPPOSITION of H.B. 444 HD1  
Relating to Civil Union

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong **opposition to Gay and Lesbian Couples (and say NO) ....** of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

It is **not** just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. **WE VOTE NO TO GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES...**

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.  
Respectfully submitted,

**Matthew Pesta**  
**1363 Kukana Way**  
**Kailua HI 96734**

---

**From:** kentintucsonaz@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:21 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Kent Gearhiser in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing

Date/Time:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Place: Auditorium

Re: Testimony of Kent Gearhiser in Strong Support of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

As a former Hawaii resident I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and malama pono.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kent Gearhiser  
4748 E. Towner Street  
Tucson, AZ 85712

---

**From:** R P [justpuckett@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:59 AM  
**To:** Eric Barker  
**Cc:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony of Eric Barker in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

Another major inequality exists in matters involving a shared home or similar property, one partner is considered nothing more than a friend regarding access and decisions regarding that property. This is a big issue in boating at the state and privately owned marinas where only one partner can be on a waiting list for years as the same gender couple are not considered "betrothed", but instead as separate individuals. Waikiki Yacht Club is just one example that currently practices this discrimination.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert Puckdett  
Student  
Honolulu, HI

---

**From:** Daisy Dela Torre [delatorre3828@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:58 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Gay and Lesbian couples in Strong OPPOSITION of H.B. 444 HD1  
Relating to Civil Union

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong **opposition to Gay and Lesbian Couples...** of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

It is **not** just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. WE VOTE NO TO GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES...

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mel Pesta  
1363 Kukana Way  
Kailua HI 96734

---

**From:** Jeannie Thompson [whit\_by@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:31 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Rev. Jeannie D. Thompson in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
**Hearing Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Jeannie D. Thompson  
Pastor  
4792 Iiwi Road  
Kapaa, HI 96746

JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions

February 24, 2009-02-22

9:00a.m., Auditorium.

Aloha chairs of the committee on Judiciary and Government Operations. My name is Rachel Dorr, I am a Masters student at the University of Hawaii Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am submitting testimony today to STRONGLY SUPPORT bill HB. 444, Relating to civil unions.

Although I believe that this bill could, should and has been supported by studies, statistics and data, I feel that the heart of the issue lies around how we, as a community, want to treat the people of Hawaii. With all emotion, religious affiliation, cultural beliefs or upbringings set aside, what this really comes down to is equality. Regardless of how an individual may feel about homosexuality, everyone deserves to be given equal rights and opportunities. That it is how our country was established, and it is shameful that we have not upheld this core belief by denying civil unions thus far. I find it appalling that an individual, let alone the government, can truly believe that they have the right to control the lives and happiness of another.

Hawaii is constantly boasted as the Aloha state; a place of love, support, warmth and happiness. If Hawaii doesn't pass HB 444, I believe that we no longer have the right to define ourselves by the love, support and warmth that we offer, because by denying civil unions, we are treating our people as inferior, which is the exact opposite of the spirit of Aloha.

Thank you for your support.

---

**From:** Michael Barham [associate@stclem.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 9:47 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

To: [JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium of the State Capitol

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

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

My name is Michael Barham. I am a Christian. I am a priest, ordained in the Episcopal Church. I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions) and to declare my support of civil unions for same-sex relationships, which stance is consistent with my moral theology and denominational teaching. Thank you for the opportunity to do so.

I know many same-sex couples, including those who are raising children. They teach me and inspire me. They have strengths that will benefit (and are already benefiting) our society, and they are making contributions to their local communities. They are not going to go away, and neither will their cry for equal rights. Now it is our turn to recognize them and to provide the important framework in which these relationships may find the legal and financial protection and support due them. Civil unions provide for the civil expectations, responsibilities and moral obligations appropriate for any loving and committed relationship.

After many years of struggling theologically with questions of human sexuality, I have found consolation and wisdom in the sacred texts of my faith: The Holy Bible. There are many passages that ground my understanding of human relationships, but I will share with you one: Acts 10. We find ourselves in a time when the good that is so very evident from same-sex relationships demands that we reconsider their value and contributions to stronger families, stronger communities, and a stronger society. Those once thought to be morally wrong I (and many) now find are beloved of God.

Churches will continue to work out for ourselves our differences in moral theology, and how we can negotiate them in the light of state law. Fortunately this bill does not take away from those of us in religious communities our rights to exercise our pastoral and moral discretion within our various denominational guidelines. You have the opportunity to create civil law that helps society move forward without inhibiting our religious rights and obligations. While some will refuse to bless civil unions (and I appreciate their right to do so), I hope civil law will permit me to exercise my religious rights and clerical judgment to offer blessings of civil unions for same-sex couples, as appropriate within my denomination. I will continue to pray and work for just that.

I urge you and the entire senate to support this bill allowing civil unions for same-sex relationships. Support strong families - support strong communities - support our mutual walk on the path to a more just society, along which civil unions is a step forward.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



---

**From:** C. Frank Wolfe [frank@cwolfe.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:50 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Carl F. Wolfe in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

**Hearing** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at the

**Date/Time:** Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

**Please remember, this had nothing to do with the church.**

Many countries have two words for marriage, one used for the church and one used for civil unions. This issue confuses people in the U.S. to think we are trying to tell the church what to do. That would be wrong, government can not tell the church what to do, and also the church can not tell the state what to do. **This bill is about Civil Unions by the state.**

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl F. Wolfe

PO Box 11392

Lahaina, Hi 96761

---

**From:** Cjhawaiiinc@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:47 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444

Dear Senators,

I am writing this letter to state my opposition in regards to HB 444.

In 1998, nearly 70 percent of Hawaii voters supported traditional marriage when they passed a constitutional amendment that gave the state Legislature the authority to reserve marriage to one man and one woman.

In 1997 the Reciprocal Beneficiaries law (Act 383) was enacted to allow any 2 single couples including same sex partners the rights and benefits as an opposite sex couple.

“Civil Union” HB 444 is the same as same sex marriage but circumvented under a different name.

The people of Hawaii have spoken and we have not changed our minds on this issue. We are very concerned that we as a people of Hawaii were not given the opportunity to vote on this very important issue and are now finding out about this after the votes have already been cast.

We are asking that our voice be heard again to stop HB 444 from being passed. We ask for your help and support in stopping this bill from happening.

Sincerely,

William Jenks

Mililani Mauka, Hawaii

---

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---

**From:** Becky Ghent [trivenus@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:26 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Please support civil unions

Dear members of the Hawaii Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 444 HD1: Civil Unions, and asking you likewise to support its passage. I am an American citizen currently working in Canada, and I recently interviewed for a job in Hawaii. One of the key factors I had to consider was Hawaii's same-sex union policy; if I am offered the job, I will be much more likely to accept if civil unions are legally recognized under Hawaii law. I feel that it is a fundamental right of all people to decide who they want to spend their lives with, regardless of gender, and I will continue to choose to live in places where that right is upheld. Hawaii is such a wonderful place and has so much to offer; please continue your tradition of tolerance and equality for all, and add same-sex unions to that list.

Respectfully,

Dr. Rebecca Ghent  
67 Alcina Ave.  
Toronto, ON, M6G 2E7  
Canada  
647-436-3467

Testimony in Support of HB 444, HD1

State Senate of Hawaii, Judiciary Committee

February 24, 2009

Dear Chairman, Vice Chair and Members;

I wish to add my voice to those who are calling for the passage of HB 444, HD1, a bill for an act relating to civil unions.

It is time for this measure to pass our Hawaii State Legislature and be signed into law. It provides full civil rights for same sex couples within our State. Along with those rights come responsibilities, the combination of which makes families coherent and stronger.

Please give this bill your support.

Mahalo.

Charles Freedman

731 Ocean View Drive

Honolulu HI 96816

**From:** gtoyomura@juno.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 5:38 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** gtoyomura@juno.com  
**Subject:** HB 444, HD1

FROM: GERALD TOYOMURA

TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB444, HD1

DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE

PLEASE DO NOT PASS OUT HB 444, HD 1 FROM YOUR COMMITTEE.

SOCIETY'S STAKE IN MARRIAGE IS BASED UPON THE FAMILY AND THE NEED FOR ITS STABILITY. IT IS THE FAMILY THAT IS THE BEDROCK OF ANY CIVILIZATION AND OF ANY COMMUNITY. ONE OF THE OBVIOUS PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE, FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL IS THE PROCREATION AND FORMATION OF CHILDREN. SUCH PROCREATION IS NOT POSSIBLE IN A SAME SEX UNION AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN THE DIGNITY OR PROTECTION AS MARRIAGE.

CHILDREN GROW BEST IN A STABLE ENVIRONMENT WITH A MOTHER AND

FATHER. ALTHOUGH THIS IS OBVIOUSLYNO ALWAYS POSSIBLE, OUR LAWS

SHOULD EXPRESS THE IDEAL STRUCTURES THAT ARE BEST FOR CHILDREN.

PLEASE CONSIDER THE RAMIFICATIONS OF PASSING THIS BILL. SCHOOLS WILL

BE FORCED BY LAW (NOT BY REASON) TO TEACH THAT SAME SEX MARRIAGE

IS "NORMAL", SEX BETWEEN MALE AND MALE, AND FEMALE AND FEMALE,

IS "NORMAL" WHICH IS BLANTANTLY A LIE AND A GROSS DISTORTION OF THE TRUTH.

FOR THE SAKE OF HAWAII'S FUTURE, PLEASE VOTE NO ON THIS

MEASURE.

BLESSINGS WITH ALOHA,

GERALD TOYOMURA

E-mail: [JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

For **Public Testimony Hearing on Tuesday, 2/24/09 at 9 a.m.**

**Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:**

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony. My name is **Paul Gracie** and I serve as the **Coordinator** for the **Ohana O Ke Anuenue**, the parenting group that was organized here in the late 1990s for lesbian and gay parents and their children. I am in full **support of HB444 HD1** and speak from my personal perspective, as a gay parent, and on behalf of the many other families like mine, and especially on behalf of my twins and their other father.

I believe that it is time to focus on what is in the best interest of children, ensuring that every child has a stable, loving home and family. Although the Ohana is intended mainly for families in Hawai'i with lesbian or gay parents, we are in all other ways very representative of the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of families here.

We personally, are an older, well established couple with our own business. We actually waited until we had been together for 23 years before becoming parents. However, this is not at all common. Without the civil union legislation before you today, most lesbian and gay couples are very vulnerable and forced to piece together a patchwork of legal documents, health coverage and legal statuses that still don't provide them with the security and protections that their families need, especially now in these 'up-in-the-air' 'all bets are off' economic times.

Passing HB 444 HD1 will show some much overdue aloha and respect to all of the families headed by lesbians and gays, but is especially important to younger families with children. This is a fair and necessary piece of legislation. Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono? Please support this bill.

Thanks again,

Paul Gracie

2028 Kuhio Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815

---

**From:** Iris Poepoe [ibpoex2@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 5:12 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444 HD1 Strong Opposition

Dear Chairman Taniguchi & Members -Senate Jud. Committee

I have never been so hurt and disappointed by the leaders of our State. You all made a "promise" to abide by the wishes of the people, by the people and for the people. The people who voted against a lifestyle such as this. The wording is different but the intent is the same. If you say it's a legal issue, why are there only five states with such passage? Why did the most liberal state of California reject its own passage of their bill?

I know it must be very difficult being pushed and shoved in all directions. However, is this what you really want for your children and your grandchildren?

Whatever decision you make, remember that God loves you all, and I do too. Aloha Ke Akua.

---

**From:** kokie003@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:55 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** FOR HB 444, HD1 IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

FROM: Earline T. Koki

TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM FOR HB 444, HD1 IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

Thank you,

Earline T. Koki



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**From:** Rev Suzanne Stover [scsaloha@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony...HB 444HD1

RE: HB 444HD 1

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I am writing because I am in support of equality and fairness for all people. I strongly believe in and support House Bill 444 and Civil Union.

Thank you for your consideration and for your support of this bill.

Suzanne Stover  
P.O. Box 662141  
Lihue, HI 96766

---

**From:** Clelie Taylor [clelie@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:01 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of HB444

Thank you to the committee for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 444 - Civil Unions. My name is Clelie Taylor, and I am an undergraduate student at the University of Hawaii. I am writing to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that this bill will help to empower families who currently face unnecessary hardships.

I am often asked what I would like to do after I graduate. While career plans may change, one thing I have always known for certain is that I want to be a mother. However, in the pursuit of this dream I am faced with unique worries. I worry that I will not be able to adopt a child if my partner and I have no legal relationship, and no way of forming one. I worry that if I choose to have children myself, that my partner will not be able to act as their guardian. I want to start a family someday, yet I feel daunted by the obstacles set in my way.

I believe it is unfair that I should have these worries because my partner is of the same sex. All citizens deserve the same opportunities for happiness, regardless of race, sex, religion, or sexual orientation, and this includes the right to protect their families. I believe that providing legal benefits for committed same-sex couples will help to achieve this. I ask for you to support equal rights for families by supporting HB 444.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Clelie Taylor  
2569 Dole Street  
Frear Hall 1201D  
Honolulu, HI  
96822

---

**From:** Nations, Tamara M. [NationsTM1@GCC.EDU]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:40 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Vote NO on house bill 444

Vote NO on house bill 444

---

**From:** Michael Lee [Wmlinca@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:40 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of HB 444 hd1, Civil Unions

**To: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair**

**Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations**

**From: Michael Lee**

**RE: Hearing: 9am, Tuesday, February 24, 2009**

**Subject: Strong Support of HB 444 hd1, Civil Unions**

My name is Michael Lee. I am a resident of Honolulu. I would like to register my strong support for HB 444 hd1, **Civil Unions**, which would provide fair and equitable treatment for all families.

Your support of this bill will help demonstrate Hawai'i's support of all of its citizens to lead happy and productive lives. In times such as these, family and equity are resounding themes that keep the faith and hope of all of our citizens alive...and serve as a beacon to those in other countries who are not fortunate enough to live in a land with a strong history of tolerance of differences.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to present my own testimony and for your consideration of this bill and the testimony of others.

Sincerely,

**Michael Lee**

Michael Lee

2130 Hā'ena Drive

Honolulu, HI 96822

=

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**From:** denise smiley [dmarie8s@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 5:40 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 HD1 RETLATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

Testifier: Denise Smiley  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

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**From:** ethanhawaii@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:21 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support HB444 HD1

Aloha,

I support HB444 HD1 because I support equal rights and equality.

Religious right arguments aside, this does not affect them in the least and I am still hearing the same nasty comments used throughout history to oppress a minority.

These were the same comments used to oppress women, African Americans, and now a small minority.

Please don't let these falsehoods, not matter how nicely they are packaged sway you from doing what is right and good.

Please be a part of history and help humanity move forward and become a better place for our children, grand children and future generations.

Economically this bill can have a significant positive impact for the people of Hawaii, especially in these dire times, every dollar helps greatly.

Thank you.

Ethan Wung

---

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 5:44 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** caleb@gluad.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** EQUALITY\_TESTIMONY.docx

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Caleb L  
Organization: Gay & Lesbians United Against Discrimination  
Address: P.O. Box 8732  
Phone: 623-229-1504  
E-mail: [caleb@gluad.org](mailto:caleb@gluad.org)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

As President of Gay and Lesbians United Against Discrimination, I would like to bring to your attention numerous issues that affect the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. I am hearing stories from others saying they are being harassed, abused, neglected, and so much more! I also found that many of us are afraid to express ourselves, because we are uncertain of the outcome in which one may respond to us being ourselves. Hate crimes are a huge issue that we face along with harassment. On record according to the FBI's statistics in just the year of 2007, over a thousand reported hate crime offenses were committed JUST in cause of someone's sexual-orientation. That number will only continue to rise and increase if we do not immediately take action. Statistically speaking, many hate crimes based on someone's sexual orientation are un-reported. Also many of the members of the LGBT community commit suicide, because they are always put down, and they feel no need to live as they are discriminated upon, and frequently abused or beaten by the community that has negative views on the LGBT community. Sadly LGBT youth are up to four times more likely to successfully attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers! Plus Eighty-four percent of LGBT students report being verbally harassed at school (GLSEN 2003). Our gay community is and should be part of the one community called "Americans" Whether you be African American, Hispanic, Christian, Gay, Straight, or Disabled. We are all citizens, better yet human. As citizens of the United States of America we all have freedom and the right to express ourselves, as our rights are guaranteed in our state, and United States Constitutional Amendments. Banning these rights and marriage between the LGBT community, is absolutely discriminating, un-constitutional, and unjust! Rights should not be taken away from any individual because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc. A very heartrending memory back in history, not too long ago when the Caucasian race was treated better then the African American race. Is that honestly the definition of freedom and equality? Now with the LGBT community we are repeating history and facing some of those habits and problem once again. Currently, one of the main changes would be that it's discriminating on someone's sexual orientation, rather than their race. I feel that this issue can be changed as we can re-solve this problem as a community, working together! We need to make our schools, offices, and all public places more friendly towards all people, no matter what someone's sexual orientation is, and so forth. This is a very important issue, that must be acted upon now, before more of our community and citizens are injured, commit suicide, or get brought down, and lose their self confidence. The citizens in this country have elected you for the better. Please, we all respectfully ask that you as a decision maker, speak up for equality and make this a high priority! Please, sponsor, co-sponsor, and support any bill that will assure equality. I am very certain that if equality is supported these officials will not only have the votes you already have, they will also gain the LGBT votes as well. Having equality in the state will reflect magnificently upon not only the state, but the citizens, and officials too!



---

**From:** Phillip M. Arnold [arnoldp003@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:17 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Subject line: Testimony of Phillip M. Anold in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Phillip M. Arnold, Moili'iili Retired Resident

2825 South King St #2102, Honolulu, HI 96826

---

**From:** wonderwomandani@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:15 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** written testimony

Dear State Representatives and Senators,  
23,2009

February

I strongly appose HB-444 Civil Unions in Hawaii. I am asking you to uphold the people's voice in Hawaii against same sex marriage and to protect traditional marriage.

Thank you,

Danielle Kamakani  
94-1102 Lumi St  
Waipahu, Hi 96797

---

**From:** vjp@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:17 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony - HB 444

My name is Valerie Pedro. Please accept this email as testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee for the public hearing scheduled on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00a.m.regarding **HB 444**.

**I am strongly opposed to this bill for the following reasons:**

1. Hawaii State law currently allows for Reciprocal Rights for homosexual couples.
2. Our legislators say they want to be fair to all members of our society. Allowing Civil Unions to homosexual couples at **the exclusion of other domestic relationships** is biased and prejudicial. What about those other domestic relationships? Shouldn't they be extended the same "rights" also?
3. In 1998 an amendment to our Constitution gave the legislature power to define marriage as between a man and a woman. "Civil Union" is same-sex marriage. If it were not so, why would this bill allow for the words "Civil Union" to replace the word "marriage" everywhere that the word marriage appears in the Hawaii Revised Statutes? Our Senators must abide by the will of the people by *protecting and defending* the **definition of marriage as defined in 1998**.
4. If our senators want to amend the law, let them put it to a vote of the people of the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak out against HB 444.

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**From:** Josh Cashmore [joshcashmore@ymail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:16 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB 444 Relation to Civil Unions

Testifier: Joshua Cashmore

Bill number and title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary @ Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tue Feb,24 2009

Hearing time 9:00

Hearing Location : Auditorium

Yes i feel the people against the bill HD 444 have not had a fair hearing on our views on said bill its unfair to pass a bill with only one side speaking for i would think you as a government would agree to let both parties have a say in my belief in the Word of God i do not want to see the bible torn to pieces i believe kids should not be forced to feed homosexual material in school personally i do not think your born that way i'm against this bill HB 444 please let the other side be heard God Bless

---

**From:** Dennis and Karlyn Miyashiro [dkmiyashiro@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:00 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**Importance:** High

Testifier: Dennis Miyashiro

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

**SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions !

I believe that "Civil Unions" already has a law in place for benefits.(The Reciprocal Benefits)

I believe that they want to use this for their own purpose to further marriage of same sex. I am a father and I don't want my child exposed to unions other than what God intended.

Please don't pass this Bill.

Please put me on the list to testify at the hearing.

Thank you,

Dennis Miyashiro

My name is Clyde Wadsworth. I'm an attorney practicing business litigation with a large Honolulu law firm and a director of the Hawai'i Lesbian and Gay Legal Association, a newly forming organization of lesbian and gay lawyers, legal workers and our allies.

My partner and I decided to make this our home in large part because of the gracious, welcoming attitude of Hawai'i's culturally rich and diverse people. The aloha spirit is truly a spirit of inclusiveness—an invitation to share both the benefits and responsibilities of living in this paradise.

The civil unions bill is a natural outgrowth of this spirit. It seeks to remedy a basic inequality in our system that denies gay and lesbian families—and make no mistake about it, we are families in every way that matters—the same rights and responsibilities that protect married couples.

The reciprocal beneficiary law denies loving and committed same-sex couples many of these vitally important rights. For example, reciprocal beneficiaries lack the statutory right to protect children in their families through joint adoption proceedings. They are not treated the same as married couples for purposes of employment-related health insurance policies. Reciprocal beneficiaries do not enjoy the protections of Hawai'i's community property laws, and they do not have access to the same structured dissolution proceedings that married couples have when they divorce. The denial of these and many other rights inflicts a severe hardship on thousands of loving and committed same-sex couples in Hawai'i, and it flies in the face of the State's constitutional obligation to provide equal protection of the law to all its citizens.

We can't let the forces of intolerance dictate the letter of the law in Hawai'i. And we can't let the forces of ignorance masquerade as the word of God. We are real people—your brothers, your sisters, your neighbors, your friends, even your lawyers—who feel the daily sting of the state's failure to recognize and protect the dearest, most central relationships in our lives. That is why this is the defining civil rights issue of our generation.

It may not be easy to take the steps necessary to remedy this issue. But make no mistake about its importance. And make no mistake about its urgency. Some may say there will be a better time in the future to address this issue, but if history has taught us anything, it is that there is never a perfect time for advancing the civil rights of political or cultural minorities. And the longer we delay, the more pain loving and committed families will suffer.

The time to enact HB 444 is now. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important step forward.

---

**From:** Dennis and Karlyn Miyashiro [dkmiyashiro@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:01 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Fw: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**Importance:** High

Testifier: Karlyn Miyashiro

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

**SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions !

I believe that "Civil Unions" already has a law in place for benefits.(The Reciprocal Benefits)

I believe that they want to use this for their own purpose to further marriage of same sex. I am a father and I don't want my child exposed to unions other than what God intended.

Please don't pass this Bill.

Please put me on the list to testify at the hearing.

Thank you,

Karlyn Miyashiro

---

**From:** Nolan Santa Ana [musicman\_921@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:10 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Vote NO on HB-444

Testimony in OPPOSITION to HB-444,  
Judiciary Committee,  
Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 am

Dear Senators,

I am a father of 5 boys, and have been MARRIED for 26 years! I wanted to personally plead with you to stand up for TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE and to rightly OPPOSE this SAME-SEX MARRIAGE bill disguised and veiled as CIVIL UNIONS (HB-444)! Please, on behalf of my family, stick up for TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES! If you would decide to, I just want you to know that my family is behind you 100% and are praying for you. Lt. Governor Aiona's testimony in the house was completely ignored by that body, but when this bill comes to your Senate committee (Judiciary) please hear his plea to use the existing "Reciprocal Beneficiary Act HRS 572C (RBA)" that is already LAW to address the claims of inequality, rather than making a new, FLAWED, DIVISIVE, and CONTROVERSIAL Law that serves only to provide not equal but rather "SPECIAL" rights for some solely based on their Sexual behaviors! It is my hope that you will change your stance on this bill to OPPOSE it, and I hope you can convince your committee colleagues to NOT thwart the will of the people of whom voted 70% in FAVOR of Traditional Marriage between one man and one woman! This Civil Union Bill HB 444 is shamelessly designed to covertly wipe out that vote and the State Constitutional Amendment it created! That would be tragic and shameful. May GOD do HIS work and will thru you and may He go before you so you may be a part of the VICTORY in HIS name for the families and children of our Hawaii Nei!

Thank you again for all your hard work as a servant of the people of Hawaii and may GOD Bless You always!

Please, Vote NO on HB-444!

Aloha Ke Akua,  
Nolan Santa Ana  
PO Box 2605  
Ewa Beach, HI 96706  
#351-2473



---

**From:** Larry Fontanilla [fonta@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:08 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee  
From: Testimony from Larry Fontanilla  
Hearing: Tuesday February 24,2009 (auditorium)  
Measure: HB 444 HD 1

Please Senators,

Stop HB 444 HD 1, First of all let me just say that I have no problem with civil rights for everyone in our great nation. No one should have their civil rights trampled on but to create or conjure up a new class of citizens and classify them as equal to marriage does not make any sense. These citizens have the exact same civil rights as anyone in our nation. And if their rights are violated they can make a civil rights complaint the same as anyone else. This is definitely not a case of a class of people that have been denied their civil rights or of a people suffering the loss of any rights.

I ask you to open your mind and just go back to the basics and keep it simple. It is when we make things over complicated that we lose sight of what is right. Excuse me for my bluntness but by any name you choose Homosexual relationship is not natural in fact it is abnormal. Even when we enter the parking lot we do not enter via the exit only or drive down the wrong way on a one way street. Sorry for the examples but it is only to illustrate abnormal or just wrong behavior.

Not all human being attraction to each other is good. Just because their attracted to each other doesn't mean it is correct and should be accepted. We call an attraction by an adult to a child sick and I agree. Heck we even have a problem with a human being and an animal or a live human with a dead human being. Yet we do call their abnormality sick or an illness. I'm sure these sick people would say they were born with that illness same as Homosexuals do. What about people who want to have more than one wife or one husband. What about teachers having sex with their students and running off with them. Where does it stop, at some point will you be introducing a bill to remove the statutory rape law because the 35 year old and the 12 year old are both willing participants and though their attraction to each other is wrong you become blinded because they say it's love. What you think is compassion becomes blindness caused by moving from simple common sense to complicating a simple remedy. Unfortunately a strategy we see all too often in our court rooms today. Somebody has to be an adult and say NO, THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. Please say no to HB 444 HD 1. We should not trample on anyone's rights but we should not normalize wrong behavior. Thank You Larry and Jolyn Fontanilla

p.s. I don't believe we are homophobic it is just we haven't lost our common sense so our values remain the same and are consistent with all laws that govern our people.

---

**From:** Eric Coyle [ericcoyle@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Eric Coyle in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eric Coyle  
US Army  
WAAF, HI

---

**From:** JanosS@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:56 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Janos Samu in strong OPPOSITION of H.B. 444, HD1 Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong OPPOSITION of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and benefits afforded to a lawful union of a man and a woman. Further, it provides gay and lesbian couples with equal provisions under the law such as ADOPTION OF BABIES AND CHILDREN and to claim benefits, furthermore to receive tax exemptions as married couples. The benefits and exemptions are provided as incentives to adults to maintain a healthy family structure which involves creating progeny, for which a man and a woman is needed. If it is approved, it will be an incentive to men and women with lovers to claim benefits and exemptions for them too, under the same principle.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protection to Hawaiian culture that will consider an approved civil union as a cultural rape by the occupiers. It will do more harm to the majority of the general public, specifically innocent, unknowing children and jeopardize the healthy and sane upbringing of children.

H.B. 444, HD1 will further DENY protections and rights to BABIES AND CHILDREN. This law will permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding.

Also, private employers will be required to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

This bill is a SUBVERSION of the Equal Rights Protections for children and for traditional families.

Thus, I urge you to vote NO.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janos Samu  
Citizen of Hawai'i  
PO Box 527  
Kalaheo, HI 96741

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**From:** rscvlovesjesus@aim.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:39 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition To HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Randy L. Iaea  
Bill Number: HB 444 HD1  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 am  
Hearing Location: Hawaii State Capital Auditorium

I am a concerned citizen and strongly Oppose the HB 444 HD1. If this bill is passed this will be the starting point of Hawaii's turn around for the worse. Please consider the risk you will take for the minority, and disregard the majority. Consider that this is not seeking for normal status as married couples but an unmoral act, stemming from pass hurts and abuse. We all deal with past hurts and one or another have been abused. Please make the right choice and not the good choice. If this bill is passed you will see a horrible change in our school system. Aloha!

---

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**From:** Elila Levinson [elila.levinson@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:54 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
**Attachments:** Civil Unions Testimony HB444, HD1.doc

Attached and below please find testimony from Elila Levinson in support of HB 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 9:00 a.m. Auditorium

Committee:

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Hearing Date/Time:

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

Place:

Auditorium

Re:

Testimony of *Elila Levinson* in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law. H.B. 444, HD1 would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities to *ALL* of Hawai`i's citizens - giving all couples the ability to care for those they love.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that *ALL* residents of Hawai`i are treated equally.

H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress towards that goal. I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Elila Levinson

537 Ka Awakea Road Kailua, HI 96734

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**From:** meleana judd [meleanajudd@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:54 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony in support of HB444

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 444 HD1.

Although my parents have never married, they made that choice. I believe couples of the same sex deserve this choice as well.

Recognizing civil unions serves one of the primary functions of government - to ensure equal access to basic rights for all citizens.

The leaders of our state must act immediately to ensure that all families in Hawaii have the basic legal protections that allow partners, parents and their children to deal with moments of crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Meleana Judd

--  
Meleana Judd  
808.551.8132  
[meleanajudd@gmail.com](mailto:meleanajudd@gmail.com)

Local.Organic.Vital.Energy  
[www.hawaiiseed.org](http://www.hawaiiseed.org)  
Solar.Hot.Water  
[www.solarsupply.com](http://www.solarsupply.com)  
[www.sunearthinc.com](http://www.sunearthinc.com)

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**From:** Ka'u'ionalani Poe [poea001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:54 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444.HD1

**Importance:** High

Aloha,

My name is Anjeanette Poe on behalf of my ohana members Jonathan, Justin, Jonah and Jonstin we don't agree with civil union bill HB 444.

Please count our vote.

May God Bless you All

Da Poe Ohana



---

**From:** Glenda [gmcasall@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:26 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; Sen. Donna Mercado Kim; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Clarence Nishihara  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**NAME** Glenda M. Casallo  
**ADDRESS** 827 Herian Place Unit A Honolulu, HI 96819  
**PHONE** 808-342-6277

**ATTENTION:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

**RE:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Hearing:** TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –AUDITORIUM

I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

We ask for your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

**Please vote against HB 444.**

**FROM:** Glenda M Casallo

---

**From:** Stark, Gary L (IT) [Gary.Stark@ngc.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:51 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony Against Passage of HB 444, HD1 (HSRC 157)

My wife and I are writing to express our grave concern about HB 444 that will be coming to the Senate for passage. We are firmly against this bill, or any like it, that attempt to recognize, in any way, a union of two people other than a union of one man and one woman as a legitimate union. Whether you call it a civil union or a same sex marriage, they are the same thing in our eyes. It is not what was intended when this nation was founded, and is not what is recognized in the Bible as an acceptable union.

As stated, we do NOT support passage of this bill, and WILL NOT support any politician that does not do everything in their power to prevent this bill from becoming law. We are registered voters in Hawaii and both voted during the last primary and general elections. We sincerely hope that you come to see that this issue is one of extreme importance to a lot of people, and if it is deemed that it needs to be addressed, then it should be addressed through a public vote on a ballot, NOT through our elected officials presuming to know our wills and desires.

Respectfully,  
Gary & Linda Stark

---

**From:** Daisy Dela Torre [delatorre3828@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY OF GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES AND I VOTE NO

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in **strong opposition to Gay and Lesbian Couples (and say NO)** .... of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

It is not just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. **WE VOTE NO TO GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES...**

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.  
Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Dela Torre  
91-1041 Makaaloa St  
Ewa Beach HI 96706

---

**From:** Norman S Hankins [hankolulu@juno.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444 HD1

To: [JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
From: Norman Stan Hankins Hankolulu@juno.com  
Subject: Opposition to HB 444 HD 1

Dear State Judiciary Committee:

I oppose HB 444 HD 1. When a societal norm and bedrock institution is devalued and expanded in its definition, it is deluted. Instances in history are legion when a presumptive action produced inevitable unintended consequences. Please consider the ramifications, and be careful stewards of the people of Hawaii nei. Please recall that the overwhelming majority of Hawaii's people expressed their opinion on the matter a decade ago. Please respect the wishes of the majority of our people whom you represent.

Thank you for your service and consideration.

N. Stan Hankins  
Proclaiming Christ's Aloha  
Throughout the Islands  
Across the Nation      Around the World

---

**From:** Daisy Dela Torre [delatorre3828@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:04 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY OF GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES IN STRONG OPPOSITION ( AND VOTE NO)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in **strong opposition to Gay and Lesbian Couples (and say NO)** .... of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

It is **not** just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. **WE VOTE NO TO GAY AND LESBIAN COUPLES...**

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are to keep the sanction of marriage to a man and a woman. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant dissolution in attaining that goal.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Jackie Asing**  
**41-680 Kaaumana Place**  
**Waimanalo HI 96795**

---

**From:** Clyde Okuda [cokuda3@live.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:01 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**To: Senate Judiciary Committee**  
Date and time of the hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. (Auditorium)

From: Clyde Okuda  
Cell 216-3231 e-mail cokuda3@live.com  
98-111 Kaulike Drive, Pearl City, HI 96782

Monday, February 23, 2009

**Subject: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I oppose this bill. It is contrary to the wishes of the vast majority of citizens born and yet, to be born in our home we call Hawaii.

It is a direct treat to our concept of family which includes a father (male) and a mother (female) and children adopted or born of their marriage-union.

I oppose civil unions for our grand children who have yet to be born.

**If HB 444 bill is passed the following will follow:** When my or your grand children are in second-third grade in our public schools they will initially behave in traditional appropriate behavior. Boys will naturally bond with boys and girls will naturally bond with the girls. In fact our grandchildren, like us, may have a dislike for the opposite sex because of the difference in likes and dislikes that are normal between the sexes for their age.

It is normal that because of the heterosexual model is taught to children develop that they develop an attraction for the opposite sex and eventually unite through traditional marriage and have families. They may them naturally or by adoption as a father (male) and mother (female).

With this bill now law a civil union homosexual model will also be taught to our grandchildren. A boy or girl in the second grade of the same sex would easily conclude, and say to their friend, *"You know we could get married one day."*

I do not want this for my grandchildren. I do not believe the majority of people want this in their future for their grandchildren.

Many of our problems we have are caused by the bad experiences we had in childhood.

For example, Ted Haggard (former nationally recognized Christian evangelist) admitted that in the second grade an adult man abused him sexually. His whole life came apart when he admitted this after it was publically revealed that he solicited the services of a male prostitute. He is still married and has children. A former lesbian who is now a strong Christian woman told me that as a child, she was touched in appropriately by an older female. "It felt good" and was told by the older female that if she, felt good, she was a lesbian. For many years she believed in the "lie". Today she knows the Truth. Ted Haggard has shared his story nationally so that we are aware of what happen to him could or has already happened to others.

Both Ted and Theresa were abused as children. They were confused and they deserve our compassion and understanding. Today both of them know the Truth. Both and others like them, made bad choices because of bad things done to them. We as family members of our community understand and will seek to love and help them overcome their past. They and others who have had similar experiences need healing with the universal truth that marriage is between a man and woman. It is the true foundation for family. And family is the foundation of Hawaii.

Let's teach all our children the truth that true marriage is between a man and women. A civil union is same-sex marriage and does not help our community. We need to protect the children and our families from idea that civil unions are

acceptable or desirable to our core values and the Spirit of Aloha. End the confusion, stop this bill. Start with the love of people of Hawaii and what they believe in. Believe in what is Right not who is right.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,  
Clyde Okuda, Concern Citizen of Hawaii

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February 23, 2009

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## FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL

To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Attention: Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair  
Fax: 586-6461 No. of Page(s): 1  
From: Allison Ching

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**IMPORTANT  
NOTICE**

RE: Opposition to HB 444

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate,

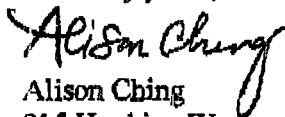
Please do *not* pass Bill 444 which would effectively give the same civil courtesies and tax benefits to gay and lesbian relationships which traditional marriages are allowed. The civil courtesies and tax advantages were afforded to traditional marriage because government acknowledged that society as a whole (and our communities in particular) had a beneficial stake in stable relationships with thriving families. Just because "alternative" relationships desire these civil courtesies and tax advantages does not mean it needs to be extended to them because the basic core concept of why it was granted in the first place to traditional marriages between a man and woman does not apply to them. *And Heaven forbid, should it be granted to them* all other types of "alternative relationships" may vie for the same rights.

By passing this bill, civil unions would have a legitimate entity recognized by government and this would necessitate acknowledgement of (and surely education about) these types of relationships in our periodicals (television spots, newspapers, magazines, etc.) and in the schools to our children! I would prefer to teach my children about the existence of these types of relationships on my own terms and in my own time ....not how and when mandated by the DOE due to a requirement by law.

Please do not legitimize and ultimately promote gay and lesbian relationships as an acceptable form of human relationship by passing this bill. Although it may seem innocuous to simply give them the financial/tax benefits of traditional married couples, this bill will allow much more than that. It would affect many aspects of our society - social mores, our schools, the state and/or city budgets, federal tax income and much more.

I urge you to kill Bill 444 and support the overwhelming vote reflecting the will of the people of Hawaii demonstrated in 1998. Please honor your constituents' wishes and sentiments and do the right thing.

Sincerely yours,.

  
Allison Ching  
915 Hookipa Way  
Honolulu, HI 96816

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**From:** Mara delaCruz [delacruzmara@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:10 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB444

Dear Senate President Hanabusa,

This letter is written to seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB444 to legalize civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Union/Marriage. Please DO NOT put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Please be mindful that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Please vote against HB 444, or better yet, do not even give it a hearing.

With Grace and Respect,

Mara de la Cruz

---

**From:** mauidivemaster@gmail.com on behalf of Maui Sales [mauisales@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:49 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Please give your support to HB 444, it's Pono

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffry Chun Brown  
Maui, Hawaii

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 11:48 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** greenhi3@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Dr. Phil Barnes  
Organization: Individual  
Address: RR 2 Box 4756 Pahoia  
Phone: 808 965-9695  
E-mail: [greenhi3@yahoo.com](mailto:greenhi3@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

Dear members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

I would strongly urge you to pass this legislation to the floor of the Senate where it can be voted up or down based on it's merits. With the election of our first African American president how can you not vote to remove discriminatory barriers preventing the gay community from exercising their full rights under our constitution? This civil unions legislation does not threaten heterosexual marriages in any way. Hawaii has always prided itself in being a model of diversity and racial harmony. Isn't it past time to extend this same aloha to all of our citizens?

---

**From:** Margaret Scow [jonlovesmargaret@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:35 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Fw: STRONGLY OPPOSE HB-444 HD1  
**Attachments:** Testimony from Annemarie- Final.doc

Aloha Senate Judiciary Committee,

In case you cannot download the attachment, here is the Testimony:

February 18, 2008  
To: The Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
From: Annemarie Frye  
Re: **HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions**  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, Feb. 24th  
Hearing Time: 9 am  
Hearing Location: Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium  
**Strongly oppose HB-444 HD1**

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Annemarie Frye and I am a former homosexual. I would ask that you **OPPOSE HB444 HD1**, the Civil Unions Bill. I believe that marriage or in this case, a Civil Union should be between one man and one woman, only.

Last year I got married after having struggled with homosexual feeling for as long as I can remember. Till a couple years ago I would never believe that I could get married to a wonderful man. As I worked through my issues with defensive detachment with my mother and abuse from my dad, I started to change. Since I became a Christian at age 25 I have never pursued a same-sex relationship, because in my view God does not approve of such relationships. Thankfully I received counseling and over the years I developed a desire to be married. Before that I was always open to it, but at that point it was something I longed for. I had found my identity as a woman, which had been suppressed and shut down. As my identity as a woman became stronger I desired to be with a man, no longer with a woman. It is not that I never struggle with same-sex attraction, but it has become a sideline issue instead of my core struggle. I am truly happy to be married.

I have been involved with women and I can tell you the difference between those relationships and my marriage to my husband. I have personally experienced the dysfunction in same-sex relationships. Besides that I have studied counseling and know what can cause homosexual tendencies as well as what is the road to healing.

In my opinion marriage cannot be opened up for couples of the same-sex. Marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman, which God has ordained. There is a complementary in man and woman that you cannot find in a same-sex relationship.

According to this bill HB-444 HD1, same-sex couples can adopt children and raise them. The role of a father is very different from the role of a mother and children will grow up confused. How does a little boy learn he is a boy if he grows up with two women? Even though one might be very masculine and the other more feminine. How can a girl know the love of a man, a father if she grows up with two women? This will cause gender confusion in children. We cannot allow our children to grow up in a society where a husband and a wife are no longer the cornerstone in society.

So I would like to ask you not to pass this Bill HB-444 HD1 and **vote against it, for the benefit of our children and our nation.**

Sincerely,

**Annemarie Frye**

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Margaret Scow <jonlovesmargaret@yahoo.com>

**To:** Senate Judiciary Committee Testimonies <JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov>

**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:18:56 PM

**Subject:** STRONGLY OPPOSE HB-444 HD1

Aloha Senate Judiciary Committee,

Attached is a testimony from a **former** homosexual who **OPPOSES** Civil Unions.

*Sincerely,*

*Margaret Scow*

---

**From:** Janella Hung [janella\_hung@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:45 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

**Testifier:** Janella N. Hung  
**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
**Hearing Time:** 9:00 a.m.  
**Hearing Location:** Auditorium

Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee,

Thank you for your willingness to work tirelessly in behalf of the people of Hawaii. I would like to testify in opposition to House Bill 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

First, this bill is unnecessary because Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law. This provides a method for those unable to be married under state law a means of obtaining many of the same tangible benefits offered to those under marriage.

Second, this civil union bill would give legal preference to a minority based on sexual orientation and would establish a dangerous legal precedence. The evidence is not unanimous that sexual orientation is congenital. Studies have been conflicted about whether a person chooses to be attracted to the same sex or whether it is a congenital condition. Because of this, the homosexual lifestyle should not be considered a category deserving of special consideration for protection from discrimination the same way that race or gender enjoys. If this group is given special consideration, wouldn't the prosecution of pedophiles also be discrimination based on sexual preference? Yet, the people of Hawaii would not agree that pedophiles deserve special protection or consideration. Thus, where is the legal distinction? For this reason, HB 444 should not be made law.

Third and more importantly, this civil union bill would effectively circumvent the will of the people of the state of Hawaii with regard to the institution of marriage. In 1998, the people of the state of Hawaii voted overwhelmingly in support of a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. However, by proceeding with HB 444, the state legislature is presuming that the intent of the people of Hawaii who voted in favor of the definition of marriage amendment was that they merely intended to restrict the name of "marriage," but not the concept. This view is flawed. The very wording of HB 444 equates civil unions with marriage, and thus, the effect of HB 444's passage would be to legalize same-sex marriage under the name of civil unions. This stratagem for trying to accomplish what the people of Hawaii have clearly indicated they oppose is outrageous for our elected representatives to consider. If the Legislature is positive that the people of the state of Hawaii support civil unions, please put the matter to vote as a constitutional amendment instead of just saying that the people of Hawaii are ready for this. Let the people have a say in the matter, since it affects ALL of Hawaii, and not just those in this lifestyle.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope you will do what is right for all of the state of Hawaii.

Respectfully submitted,

Janella Hung  
1548 Ala Aolani Street

Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

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**From:** Steve Zurcher [zurchers001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Steven Zurcher

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>

Hearing Time: 9:00 AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Testimony:

My name is Steven Zurcher. I am the superintendent of the churches in the Hawai'i District of the Missionary Church. I represent 17 congregations composed of approximately 2000 members and regular adherents. I am testifying on their behalf at the behest of our annual conference of churches that convened this past weekend.

God is the creator of mankind and loves every individual. God loves us all equally but He does not condone all of our behaviors. Likewise our churches would welcome people of any lifestyle into our services and do our best to demonstrate our love for them. However, we cannot affirm lifestyles that are clearly prohibited in the Bible. Not only are same sex unions prohibited in the Bible, but God instituted marriage between a man and a woman. So it is that we are strongly opposed to the passage of this bill.

Until very recently every society throughout the centuries, whether modern or primitive, has recognized that marriage between a man and a woman is the norm. The exceptions, even today, are extremely rare.

The people of Hawai'i, by a strong majority, voted to define marriage as only between a man and a woman. This bill, as it is now written, is simply same sex marriage by another name. It is an attempt by some to circumvent the expressed will of the voters of this State. There is no discernable difference between what this bill presents as a civil union and same sex marriage.

The rights of same sex partnerships are already protected under law in this State and this new legislation is not necessary to protect those rights.

The passage of this bill, as it now stands, would seriously diminish and erode the institutions of marriage and family, which are the foundation of any society. Same sex relationships cannot procreate and form families, which is one of the purposes of marriage. A stable environment for the development of our children is that of a home with a father and a mother. We need to promote and strengthen this kind of family rather than officially sanction and encourage same sex relationships that are not normative.

This bill, as it is now presented, violates our moral values and the expressed will of the people of Hawaii. It presents real dangers to our society and to our families. It will have far reaching negative effects on adoption laws, parental rights, the education of our children, and very probably even our freedom to express our



religious beliefs. The rush to pass this bill has not allowed sufficient time for serious consideration of the results, intended or unintended, of this proposed legislation.

Our State motto clearly reminds us that “the life of the land is preserved in righteousness.” I urge you, therefore, not to pass HB 444 HD 1. Tabling or voting against this bill is the right action. This will contribute to the preservation of the life of our beloved State of Hawai’i.

Thank you.

---

**From:** T.B. [tbenito@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:38 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

From: Theresa Benito

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9 a.m.  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Aloha Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members,

I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 and ask that the Senate Judiciary Committee vote no to HB 444 HD1.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. We are confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage. Please do not devalue our long held tradition of marriage being between one man and one woman.

This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people of Hawaii already put this immoral issue behind them and voiced that this is not what we want in our state. The establishment of Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law *already* provides them benefits. The passing of the civil union can result in gay couples asking schools for equality in any teaching material related to their alternate lifestyle. I do not want our future generations having to learn about gay marriages and lifestyles. A marriage is between one man and one woman.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I ask that you please represent me and vote NO on HB 444 HD1.

Thank you.

---

**From:** Barbara Fisher [ki-fish@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:10 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 ho1 1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday Feb 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT OF HB444 (Civil Unions)

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

Thank you for this opportunity to express my feelings to this committee.

My name is Barbara Fisher and I am writing to express my support for House Bill 444 - civil unions. I am a heterosexual woman and grew up happily in a Christian faith and have since added Buddhist meditation practices to my spiritual life. Both of these religions advocate love, compassion and equanimity towards all beings. As an American I was also born into a country that was built on equal rights for all.

I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our constitution. HB444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I personally know of several same sex couples that have shared a life together with a deeper sense of commitment to one another and to the community than most heterosexual married couples. Many of these couples have also raised happy healthy children. These people should have the same benefits under the law as other married couples.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is a part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights of this generation.

I thank you for your careful consideration of this bill and please support HB444.

Sincerely,  
Barbara Fisher  
P.O. Box 574  
Haleiwa, HI 96712

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**From:** Mary Takahashi [gmt96789@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444

It is just mind boggling that we the people who abide by the laws set forth have to continuously suffer time after time to get our word across. Please for our children's sake, do not agree on making the same sex marriage legal. As years go by, the world is just getting worst and worst. Parents have no control over their children anymore. So much crime and violence. Think about it. And, why is that? Simple answer. We are listening to the devil rather than listening to our lord savior Jesus Christ.

Why do you constantly protect the guilty and the innocent continue to suffer in this world. What happen to the word moral? This is wrong. Please, we beg you listen to the people who have spoken.

Thank you.

---

**From:** teruie001@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:52 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Edwin Terui

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 AM Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION  
TO HB 444 HD1

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chairman Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My husband and I urge you to support HB 444 HD1. We are not gay and we don't have any gay children. We simply believe that gays and lesbians are entitled to the same rights as everyone else. As people of faith we feel the responsibility to speak out on this as a matter of social justice.

**Society is strengthened** when two people are committed to caring for each other. We are happy when our sons and daughters "find someone and settle down". We recognize commitment as a positive thing and we reward this behavior by sanctioning into law. These bonds of commitment weave together a society that is strong. Children are protected. It is weakens our society to deny same gender couples the protection of law regarding their committed relationships. It is in society's best interest to extend Civil-Union legislation to all its citizens regardless of gender.

A Civil-Union is a **civil contract**. It is a way of providing equal rights for same gender couples. It leaves the religious issue out of it. Churches are still free to marry or not marry people. We think this bill is a good **compromise position** for those opposed to marriage, but who still want to extend equal rights to same gender couples. It is important to leave religion out of your decision because how are you going to decide whose religion to use? Progressive churches tend to be in favor of civil-unions. Conservative churches tend to be opposed. Your only choice is to make your decision based on the Constitution you swore to uphold.

This is a Civil-Rights issue. All Americans are entitled to equal rights. It is unfair to deny benefits to same gender couples. Historically we have denied rights to blacks and women. It is embarrassing now to look back at our treatment of them. But over time we recognized our prejudice and unfair treatment of them and **we changed the law to reflect our new understanding**. Now is another such time. By enacting this law you can help move us forward in the long human struggle for liberty and justice for all our citizens.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. William and Mrs. Judith Hepfer

---

**From:** leann uno [blondieuno777@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:14 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Sam Slom  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

James Timothy Uno

HB 444HD1 Relating to civil unions

Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

9:00am

State Capitol Auditorium

Strong Opposition to HB444HD1 Relating to Civil unions

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:20 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** makaneole@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: laurie makaneole  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [makaneole@yahoo.com](mailto:makaneole@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:



**TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 A.M.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 444 HD1 - RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE:

My name is Joshua Kakugawa and I am testifying on HB444 HD1. I STRONGLY OPPOSE this bill which would allow same-sex couples one step closer to legalized marriage.

A majority vote in 1998 revealed the will of the people of Hawaii: KEEP OUR MARRIAGES SACRED! As the Hawaii Bill of Rights clearly states:

Section 23. The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples.

As you come to a decision, I urge you to consider our keiki and I pray that we work together to keep Hawaii's marriages between a father and a mother. We want our children to be able to grow up in Hawaii as a traditional family-centered state.

I thank this committee for the opportunity to present testimony on this matter and sincerely ask that you oppose this bill.

Testimony in OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI

Karen Kramer  
1055 Kalihi Wai Pl.  
Honolulu, HI 96825

HB 444 HDI

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m.

RE: Oppose HB 444

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for your attention to House Bill HB 444. I speak to oppose this measure based on the following facts:

1. Civil Union bypasses the will of the people.
2. Civil Union law will result in public schools teaching our children homosexual marriages and acceptance will be mandatory
  - a. As a high school educator, students need to be equipped with knowledge/skills/subjects to advance them into college and passing the SAT.
  - b. Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) is urging public schools in Minneapolis to resist pressure to implement a curriculum aimed at helping students as young as kindergarten embrace homosexuality.
  - c. Students generally learn about adolescence and puberty in 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Parents are informed about the female/male human development (not sexual choice) being taught and are asked to give parental consent
  - d. The "Welcoming Schools program was created by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a homosexual agenda," If HRC merely cared about bullying, they would simply endorse the school district's vigorous bullying and hazing policy. Parents and school officials need to be aware of what HRC is really trying to do.
  - e. Schools will be forced to teach that the homosexual family is normal.
  - f. Pictures in text books will be changed to show same-sex couples as normal.

I oppose House Bill 444 due to the outcome it could have on schools, educators, not to mention families and most importantly our students.

Karen Kramer  
DOE Educator

---

**From:** Gerilyn DeSoto [three31one@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:11 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI

Testifier: Gerilyn Luana DeSoto

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil  
Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00AM

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

To whom it may concern:

I am in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444 HDI. In 1998 the people of Hawaii voted NO to same sex marriages and although this bill carries a different name it is still the same issue.

The purpose of marriage is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the same dignity or protection as marriage. In addition, it is a fact that children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and a father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children.

My husband and I are unable to have our own children however we were blessed to adopt a local child from birth. I share this because although we are not able to procreate we still believe that our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. That is why we and many other male and female partners choose to adopt and raise children in environments that would otherwise have "less than" in one way or another.

I urge you to stop HB 444 HDI from going any further.

Sincerely,

*Gerilyn DeSoto*

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**From:** Suzanne Maurer [suzanne.maurer@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:40 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members  
Suzanne L. Maurer  
123 D Maunalua Avenue  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821  
808-395-9527

Re: HB-444 HD1--PLEASE VOTE NO

Aloha to each of you,

I am writing to urge you to use your vote on HB 444 to vigorously oppose civil unions. The people of Hawaii have spoken clearly about this in 1998, affirming that a clear majority of Hawaii residents believe that marriage should remain between one man and one woman. We do not need this new law to re-open divisive and controversial battle already settled by the people.

You are aware that we already have a reciprocal beneficiary law, passed in 1997. HB 444 is unnecessary to protect rights, and Civil unions will simply be a tool to re-define marriage.

Data is irrefutable: children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and a dad. We must think of our keiki, and not indulge in selfish catering to the desires of a small sector of adults by rewriting our most basic marriage laws.

Please do the right thing and oppose this with your voice and your vote. Mahalo for your consideration of your constituencies.

Aloha ke Akua ia 'oe,

Suzanne Maurer

February 18, 2008  
To: The Senate Judiciary & Government  
Operations Committee  
From: Annemarie Frye  
Re: **HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions**  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, Feb. 24th  
Hearing Time: 9 am  
Hearing Location: Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium  
**Strongly oppose HB-444 HD1**

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Annemarie Frye and I am a former homosexual. I would ask that you **OPPOSE HB444 HD1**, the Civil Unions Bill. I believe that marriage or in this case, a Civil Union should be between one man and one woman, only.

Last year I got married after having struggled with homosexual feeling for as long as I can remember. Till a couple years ago I would never believe that I could get married to a wonderful man. As I worked through my issues with defensive detachment with my mother and abuse from my dad, I started to change. Since I became a Christian at age 25 I have never pursued a same-sex relationship, because in my view God does not approve of such relationships. Thankfully I received counseling and over the years I developed a desire to be married. Before that I was always open to it, but at that point it was something I longed for. I had found my identity as a woman, which had been suppressed and shut down. As my identity as a woman became stronger I desired to be with a man, no longer with a woman. It is not that I never struggle with same-sex attraction, but it has become a sideline issue instead of my core struggle. I am truly happy to be married.

I have been involved with women and I can tell you the difference between those relationships and my marriage to my husband. I have personally experienced the dysfunction in same-sex relationships. Besides that I have studied counseling and know what can cause homosexual tendencies as well as what is the road to healing.

In my opinion marriage cannot be opened up for couples of the same-sex. Marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman, which God has ordained. There is a complementary in man and woman that you cannot find in a same-sex relationship.

According to this bill HB-444 HD1, same-sex couples can adopt children and raise them. The role of a father is very different from the role of a mother and children will grow up confused. How does a little boy learn he is a boy if he grows up with two women? Even though one might be very masculine and the other more feminine. How can a girl know the love of a man, a father if she grows up with two women? This will cause gender confusion in children. We cannot allow our children to grow up in a society where a husband and a wife are no longer the cornerstone in society.

So I would like to ask you not to pass this Bill HB-444 HD1 and **vote against it, for the benefit of our children and our nation.**

Sincerely,

**Annemarie Frye**

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**From:** Melvin Ah Ching  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:37 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** FW: TESTIMONY OF HB 444, February 24, 2009

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**From:** Groylo@aol.com [mailto:Groylo@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:33 PM  
**To:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi  
**Cc:** Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Sam Slom; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY OF HB 444, February 24, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee my name is Geraldine Roylo Aranaydo, I am in opposition to HB 444. This bill if enacted will favor same sex marriage which I am opposed.

In 1998 the people of Hawaii voted 70% to 30% to affirm marriage as being between a man and a woman.

Maraming salamat.

Geraldine Roylo Aranaydo  
1037 Luehu Street  
Pearl City, Hawaii 96782-2632  
Telephone: 808-456-7046

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**From:** Lowell E Filbrun [lefilbrun2@juno.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:41 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**Testifier:** NAME OF PERSON SUBMITTING TESTIMONY Lowell Filbrun 6485  
Makana Rd, Kapaa, HI 96746

**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Hearing Location:** Auditorium

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**From:** Dennis Wong [wongd027@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:22 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444 HD1

To: The State Judiciary Committee

RE: Measure Number HB 444 HD1  
Date and Time of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM

I wanted to write this email to you to express my deep personal convictions about the importance to uphold the sanctity of a marriage between a man and woman. And, to discourage homosexual or heterosexual legal partnerships, which I am in opposition to both.

I grew up during times when the percentage of divorces in America was low. Today, one out of two marriages end up in divorce and we often see unwed heterosexual couples living together for one reason or another. I believe the period between 1970's through 2000's brought about major cultural change, some were good and others were bad. For instance, recent discrimination laws prohibit real property owners from discriminating against unwed couples. While the intention of the law was good, we began to see a decay in relationships. Today, many heterosexual couples often do not wed but instead live together in fear of making a commitment. Statistics show that heterosexual couples who live together for long periods of time have less of a chance in fulfilling a lifetime commitment together as opposed to heterosexual couples who choose to wed rather than live together.

I have been married for 25 years and I cannot say that my marital relationship with my wife has always been good. No doubt, my wife would say the same. Fortunately, my wife and I were committed to work together to iron out our problems. Today, we are happily married and understand how to make our relationship work. You see, to make a relationship work, either person must give their 100% commitment, not the belief of 50/50. We have counseled couples (friends) who legally separated or contemplated divorce were successful results. These couples are presently happily married.

May I say that I know and care about my homosexual friends. I often look for opportunities to help them. However, I feel that legalizing homosexual partnerships would weaken the core of a marriage and would be wrong, both biblically and constitutionally. In regards to the latter, legalizing homosexual partnerships is discriminating against unwed heterosexual partners. Why? There are many unwed heterosexual couples who live together and share personal/real property assets. They, unwed heterosexual couples, would not enjoy or have the same benefits as homosexual couples if HB 444 was passed. Wouldn't this be preferential treatment to homosexual couples? Could this spawn a movement by unwed heterosexual couples to enjoy the same benefits? What would be the difference? In today's law, [lease keep in mind that only married couples, currently between a man and woman, may hold real property as Tenants by Entirety.

Thank you very much for letting me express my views again. I posed these questions to you in hopes that you will not have made-up your mind in support of HB 444, rather you would closely look at the long range impact to our community.

Sincerely ,

Dennis Wong

540 Lagoon Drive

Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

Telephone: 206-5269



---

**From:** James Ward [wardjward@hawaii.rrr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:39 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Fr. Richard Rubie; Barry Lovett Rev. Dr.; Bill & Carol Paul; Crystal Lancaster; James Carpenter; Connie Ma; Dianne O'Steen  
**Subject:** HR 444  
**Attachments:** ATT00001.txt; ATT00002.htm; faint\_grain.jpg; imstp\_animation\_butterflies\_en\_020908.gif  
**Importance:** High

**MY DEAR SENATORS OF HAWAII:**

**I am a registered voter and an active citizen in Honolulu. It is most important to Vote against HB 444 HD1.**

**Do not send it to the floor for vote just trash it.**

**I pray if you are a believer in the one and only GOD.**

**Then I bring your attention to , Leviticus: Chapter 18 in the Holy Bible; verse 22, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination." (KJ). I challenge all of you to read the complete Chapter of Leviticus 18.**

**I believe that it is time to put this issue in the trash once and for all and stop wasting your time and the tax payers monies on an issue that has already been turned down by a solid majority of the voters.**

***This will be remembered at election time by myself and others.***

**Please! I ask all of you again to read; "LEVITICUS: Chapter 18.**

**If you need a Bible Gideons will be happy to provide you one; (808-341-4397).**

**YES! I OPPOSE HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions and pray you do likewise.**

**I am praying for all of you to make the right decision. God Bless!**

**Testimony Of:**

**James Ward**

**1630 Liholiho St. 31802**

**Honolulu, HI 96822**

**I OPPOSE HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions.**

---

**From:** Lionel Camara [LCamara@kaihawaii.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:43 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Testimony of Lionel J. Camara

TO: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee (JGO)  
Re: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Hearing Date: 9:00 am Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Dear members of the Senate JGO Committee—

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 444 Relating to the establishment of Civil Unions.

You were elected to serve the people's will. And the people's will has been explicitly stated on this issue when in 1998 a clear majority voted to retain the "one man-one woman" definition of marriage that has held for millennia.

This is not an issue of equality, as even those in favor of the bill will acknowledge that the legal rights purportedly denied them are already available to same-sex couples through Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. No, be assured that the aim of this bill is to redefine marriage to include not only same-sex couples but also any other behavior-based group that desires civil approval of their lifestyle choice. Can others who practice currently unacceptable sex-based behavior be far behind in their demand for "equal rights" and for their right to "marry" the ones with whom they practice their preferred behavior?

This bill is a legislative endorsement of sex-partner civil unions as on par with sex-partner marriage. Please do not shred the definition of marriage to include any people who practice sexually-based behavior who express their desire to call themselves "married".

Again, you have a solemn responsibility to serve your constituents and the generations to come in the decisions you make. Please vote NO on HB444 HD1, as it seeks to establish a ruinous precedent in granting special legal protection and benefits based on sexual preferences and behaviors.

Thank you,

Lionel J. Camara  
46-232 Kahuhipa St. E207  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

---

**From:** Kit Grant [kitster@lava.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:49 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Kit Grant in Strong Support of H.B.444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kit Grant  
1111 Wilder Ave. #14b  
Honolulu, HI 96822

---

**From:** Secor, Gary [gsecor@rcchawaii.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:46 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** YOSHIMITSU, WALTER  
**Subject:** Senate Judiciary Committee-Opposition to HB 444 HD1, Hearing on 24 Feb. 09 at 9am in Cap. Auditorium

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to express my opposition to HB 444 HD1 that is to be heard by your committee on 24 Feb. at 9am and which proposes to establish a law permitting civil unions for gay and lesbian couples in the State of Hawaii.

As you are aware, the State has a compelling interest in the regulation of marriage and has established a process for obtaining marriages licenses, etc. As a priest licensed in the State of Hawaii to perform marriages for over 30 years, I am quite aware of this process. While I would not witness same-sex marriages or be compelled to do so as I understand the proposed legislation, I believe that it will undermine the clarity of the present marriage legislation.

I also believe that the State has a compelling interest in, as much as possible, preserving the ideal structure of marriage as that between a man and a woman. While I am quite aware that there are many single parent families, I do not believe we should legislate to promote a situation that encourages a single sex parenting situation. This, I believe, would be contrary to the standard societal concept of marriage.

As a priest I have counseled people with same-sex attraction and I have great compassion for those who struggle in this area. I also believe that God loves each of them. But, in speaking the truth with love, I must also state that engaging in homosexual or lesbian sexual activity is disorder behavior.

Finally, the people of Hawaii have already spoken on this issue. Technically, civil unions and same-sex marriage are different. But, when I read the proposed legislation (as a marriage officiant license in Hawaii) I can clearly see that it is the same as what is required for a marriage. It is more honest to entitle this bill "Same-sex marriage".

I strongly urge you and all the members of the Senate to defeat this measure. Thank you for your service to our community and for your consideration of this request.

Rev. Gary L. Secor  
Pastor-Holy Trinity Catholic Church  
Vicar Forane-East Honolulu Vicariate  
5919 Kalaniana'ole Hwy  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821  
808 396-0551x222  
Fax: 808 396-1380  
Cell: 808 286-1332  
Email: [gsecor@rcchawaii.org](mailto:gsecor@rcchawaii.org)

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**From:** Thomas Larabee [tom.larabee@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:50 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Personal Testimony

Tom Larabee  
HB 444 HD1  
Feb. 24 at 9 a.m.  
Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Tom Larabee and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

I am the Father of Four Wonderful Young Men. I am also a Gay man. I lived the hidden life of a closeted Gay man for almost 30 years. I was the son of a Marine and a Marine myself for a period of time. I worked for 20+ years in an environment where being gay would have gotten me fired. I came to Hawai'i because of the accepting environment, so would be able to put the intolerance, hatred and bigotry behind me, and have never felt more loved until Sunday. On Sunday all of the things I moved away from came crashing down on top of me, and made me wonder why I moved. I then took time to talk with my partner, my friends, my support groups and especially my Hawai'ian friends. They all reminded me that intolerance, hatred and bigotry are everywhere but so is LOVE. I have my Ohana here in Hawai'i and they love me and I love them.

I am here with my partner of 4 years to let you know, that while I am able to have benefits for my children because I am their biological father, I am not able to cover the one I love, because we can not be in a legally recognized relationship until this bill passes. I am here to let you know that passing this bill gives me that ability to have a legally recognized relationship and all of the legal benefits this allows. I have been married and know the benefits of that relationship that automatically go with it, so I am very familiar with what is lacking now.

Its time to be able to have legally recognized relationship and to be able to provide for our family's and the ones we love. The unequal treatment that my family endures is unfair and unjust. How would you like to have to make the decision of food on the table versus a Doctor's visit. All because your partner has no health insurance due to the fact our relationship is not recognized and the benefits are not provided, so a Doctor's Visit comes out of the food budget.

Please listen to the minority and protect us from the well rehearsed dogma of the well funded religious majority. I want to remind you, that this is not about marriage, it's about EQUAL RIGHTS.

As the father of four keiki, I can tell you we are not, I repeat NOT, harming keiki's in any way. What I have taught them through example is Love and tolerance for all people, and it shows through their own friendships in and out of school.

Thanks you for your support of HB444 and your careful consideration of this legislation.

Mahalo,  
Tom Larabee

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:54 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** stephie\_jones1@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** Civil Union hb444 testimony to Hawaii State Legislature.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Stephanie Jones  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 1031 Nuuanu Ave. #2103 Honolulu, HI  
Phone:  
E-mail: [stephie\\_jones1@yahoo.com](mailto:stephie_jones1@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Copy of testimony:

Dear Chair Karamatsu, Vice-Chair Ito, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Stephanie Jones and although I am straight and married to my partner of the opposite sex, I would like to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public, President Obama, and the majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,  
Stephanie Jones  
1031 Nu`uanu Avenue #2103  
Honolulu, HI 96817

---

**From:** Art Takamiya [atakamiya@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONGLY OPPOSING SAME SEX MARRIAGE HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Arthur Takamiya  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Aloha,

My name is Arthur Takamiya and I strongly oppose house bill 444 HD1.

I believe that marriage is between one man and one woman and it has always been and should always be this way. Passing House Bill 444 and allowing Civil Unions will destroy what is right and moral beyond repair. Please do not pass HB 444!

Thank You,

Arthur Takamiya

---

**From:** KLT [Tamagawak001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:05 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** opposition to HB444  
**Attachments:** greenbubbles.jpg

**TESTIFIER: LYNN TAMAGAWA**

**BILL NUMBER AND TITLE: HB 444HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS**

**COMMITTEE: SENATE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**HEARING DATE: TUESDAY, FEB. 24, 2009**

**HEARING TIME: 9:00 A.M.**

**HEARING LOCATION: STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM**

**SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444HD1**



Via E-mail: JGOtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov  
Committee: Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
Place: Auditorium  
Re: ***Testimony of Deborah Zysman Supporting HB 444 HD1,  
Relating to Civil Unions***

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of HB 444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions.

HB 444 is about equal rights for all people in Hawaii.

Minority groups of people have always had to fight for equal rights. This is the chance for the Legislature to do the right thing

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely yours,

Deborah Zysman  
Resident of Senate District 13

---

**From:** Sharon Takamiya [stakamiya001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:56 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** RE: Strongly Opposing Same Sex Marriage HB 444

**Importance:** High

Testifier: Sharon Takamiya  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

Good afternoon~

My name is Sharon Takamiya, housewife, mother of 3 children, I strongly opposed of this same sex marriage bill.

Honestly, I am very uncomfortable and not happy with this HB 444 bill. Our God of Isra'el has created marriage to be between one man and one woman.

Genesis 2:24 THEREFORE, A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE AND THEY SHALL BECOME "ONE FLESH".

Oh, how my heart aches and creation groans at the thought of having same sex marriage in Hawaii. Please, I humbly ask that you would extend your mercy and NOT be in favor of such a bill that will allow such same sex marriage in our beautiful islands.

Praying for the next generation of children in Hawaii!

Praying from HIS mercy seat.

With his Love,  
Sharon

---

**From:** Sean M Smith [seansmit@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:03 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony in support of HB 444 HD 1, Civil Unions

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

My partner Kale and I **strongly support HB 444** re: civil unions.

We are in a long-term, committed relationship, we own a home together, and we plan to adopt kids in the future. We are registered as “reciprocal beneficiaries,” but this really hasn’t really mattered where it counts.

- **We consistently pay more in state income taxes** than similarly-situated opposite-sex couples because we are not allowed to file joint tax returns.
- **We paid more in UH tuition.** While other students were granted resident status based on their spouses’ indicia of residency, I was deemed a non-resident, though Kale is born-and-raised local Hawaiian.
- **We have not been able to obtain health insurance** from employers that covers “reciprocal beneficiaries.” As a result, we have paid more for health care.
- **We can’t have a commitment ceremony of any legal significance** – i.e., one that creates any real rights or obligations. This has affected how our families view our relationship.
- **We are concerned that we may not be able to adopt** as co-parents under Hawai`i’s adoption statute and that this will negatively affect the emotional and financial security of our children.

We are tired of paying more because of who we are. We are tired of feeling like second class citizens. We are tired of the state undermining our familial relationships. Please pass this bill and help change all of this. It is time. Our lives and our state will be better off.

Mahalo,

Sean Smith  
2092 Kuhio Ave, Apt. 1705  
Honolulu, HI 96815  
(808) 497-0650

---

**From:** Sean Hoff [sean\_hoff@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:09 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony on HB444 HD1 (2/24/09 9AM)

Sean Hoff  
2026 Kilakila Dr  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
(808) 223-5273

HB444 HD1

February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 9:00 AM

To The distinguished members of The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

Today, as we come together to discuss the future of civil unions in Hawai'i, we are passionately divided on this issue. I believe, however, this can be boiled down to two points. First, this is not about religion or personal beliefs, for we differ greatly even within religions. As a Christian Minister I can safely assure you that not everyone in the church opposes this bill, despite what some would have you believe. Second, we are different than any other state in the union, for we know and practice aloha. In these two ways, it is obvious that our state should indeed allow for civil unions.

The civil unions proposed today do not threaten my marriage, nor anyone else's. They do not infringe on anyone else's rights. They do not endanger the public nor our children. What they are is a guarantee of rights, rights which should be universal, and expected, but sadly must be numerated. These are lives. The lives of taxpayers, constituents, citizens, neighbors, friends and family. They deserve the same rights afforded to me and my wife. If anything, the lack of civil unions helps to make my marriage less special, because the law bars loving couples, just like us from the simple rights we enjoy. I feel a great sadness that I am allowed these rights while others are denied. It isn't right, nor should it be legal.

In our back and forth on this issue, we sometimes forget that we live aloha here in Hawai'i. Trying to deny simple rights to others does not show aloha, but instead stands against it. This is not the mainland where I grew up. We do not have to fall to the level of discourse I saw on television, heard on the radio and experienced firsthand. We must instead have much aloha for each other, and in doing so, put in print rights which should already be inalienable. Anything less will be an act of disrespect, a turning of our backs on our neighbors. If we truly are different, if we truly show aloha, we will support civil unions.

I commend the lawmakers who are taking a stand for what is right, despite what others are saying and trying to do. It takes courage to do this, and so it is with the greatest of respect I truly thank you.

---

**From:** cardonar001@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:02 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Unions

TO: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Raynaldo Cardona

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 am

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Chir Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am registered voter who opposes HB 444 HD1 - Relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,  
Raynaldo Cardona  
February 21, 2009

**Glenn Nakasaki, Moderator, Kalihi Union Church**  
**grnakasaki @hawaiiantel.net**

**ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**  
**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**  
**Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 am-Auditorium**

**Aloha Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members,**

Thank-you for your service to the people of Hawaii. We all desire to make Hawaii a place of equality and justice. **However, I am in strong opposition to HB 444, HD1.**

Having read the description in HB 444, it is clear that Civil Union = Gay Marriage. Much of the public has not seen the exact wording as I have. It seems that proponents of this bill have purposely kept things low key.

Gay Marriage and Traditional Marriage are not equal. It is like comparing apples and oranges. Traditional Marriage involves one man and one woman who love and are committed to one another with the purpose of procreation and formation of children. Gay marriage goes against the natural law. Gays are a small group of people (2% of the population) who engage in abnormal behavior. They desire to have their abnormal behavior, normalized in society. Their cause has been disguised in the name of equality and civil rights which are politically correct.

In 1998, 70% of the people of Hawaii voted against gay marriage and for traditional marriage between one man and one woman. Passing this bill will go against the natural law and re-define marriage as we know it, it will also contribute to the breakdown of family. In Hawaii we pride ourselves in the family. Strong families define the health and strength of this nation.

Passing this bill will mean:

1. Schools will continue to be used to promote the Gay agenda. 2% of the people imposing their beliefs on 98% majority. Indoctrinating and confusing our children and messing with their lives. **This is not right!**
2. Restriction on Church from speaking contrary to the Gay agenda. This has already happened in Europe. **This is not right!**
3. Gay adoptions to be mandatory. Studies have shown that children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. **This is not right!**
4. The breakdown of the family will lead to more crime, addiction, mental illness. This will lead to the decline of society and work against everything that you and I have been working for. **This is not right!**

**Please vote "No" on HB 444.**

**Date:** 23 FEB 2009

**To:** The Senate Judiciary Committee

**From:** Mrs. Kenvee J. Daniel-Parker

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24

**Hearing Time:** 9 am

**Hearing Location:** State Capitol Auditorium

**Re:** HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

**Subject:** **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB-444-HD1**

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am a resident currently here in Hawaii, island of Oahu and I would like to give my formal written testimony to why "CIVIL UNION SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED" i.e., "SAME SEX MARRIAGES". For the upcoming hearing scheduled for 24 February, 2009 at 0900, I would like to have this testimony added as an **OPPOSITION** to the bill **HB-444 HD1**.

Some one asked why same sex marriages should be stopped in the last hearing on 5 Feb 2009. I would like to reply with a couple of reasons why this bill should be stopped.

**HOMOSEXUAL ADVOCATES** and what they want to do

They won't stop with just legalizing civil unions their agenda is to Legalize Same-Sex Marriages, Teach homosexuality to our children in the Public Schools, as young as Kindergarten, whether us as parents want them to or not. This will supersede parental rights to raise our children how we wish with the parent's faith, and moral values and not the governments. Also, to endanger our religious liberty and convince the world that homosexuals were born homosexual. I beg to differ; if they (homosexuals) were born as such, then why do they feel a need to teach the lifestyle to the children so young? Please explain? LET'S STOP THIS ABOMINATION NOW!!

**OUR COUNTRY AND PART OF ITS HISTORY**

Sir, I would like to remind you of history in our country. This country, the USA, was built on the foundations of the **BIBLE** and in the **BIBLE**, it clearly states, "**Homosexuality is a SIN!**" Leviticus 18:6 & 22, Leviticus 20:13, Ezekiel 16:35-38, Sexual Immorality is a **SIN!**

I would also like to quote to you out of a book titled "60 THINGS GOD said about SEX" by **Lester Sumrall**.

Page 92 of this book says, "Worst thing about homosexuality –the spiritual result. It degrades the individual and distorts his moral values. The Bible says that

homosexuality *ranks beside* drunkenness, extortion, and idolatry as a despicable form of ungodliness. “

Drunkenness in this country is looked down on, and considered to be a problem. Extortion is a crime, but the state wants to legalize homosexuality and same sex marriages? This is confusing to me. The Bible says, 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10, “***Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortion will inherit the kingdom of God.***”

Sir, if you recall that the sinful ways of mankind is what destroyed the world the first time. Remember Noah’s Arch and the **GREAT FLOOD**? Improper marriages, sexual immorality caused the greatest catastrophe the world has ever known and the Lord destroyed all that where sinners.

### **THE INFLUENCE OF LIES**

Also, in the book on page 89 the author agrees that “***NO PERSON HAS EVER BEEN BORN A HOMOSEXUAL.***” A homosexual becomes so through lust, which leads to experimentation, or through the pressure of homosexual or bisexual friends or relatives. It is taught and learned. It is not what GOD intended. GOD gave man and woman a duty with the gift of marriage and sex. He commanded us to “be fruitful and replenish the earth”. How can you multiply with man and man or woman and woman? If everyone agrees that homosexuality is a model for the new marriages, humanity would die out in one generation.

### **WHAT MANY DON’T KNOW**

Homosexuals have comprised their souls, the three components, the mind, the emotions, and the will all make up the soul. Sex can destroy the soul, and anything that destroys the soul should be taken seriously. We are also spirits, GOD created our body and soul, GOD breathed eternal life into us which makes our spirit. The spirit is the divine element that reminds our soul of GOD’s will for our lives. The BIBLE says, Ezekiel 18:4, “***the soul who sins, shall die***”. If you know that GOD is the final authority on sex you will not get upset with His instructions if you will believe. Therefore, allowing same sex marriages is *wrong in GOD’s eyes and is a SIN*. GOD overrules your reasoning about marriage and matters of sex. The BIBLE says, in Romans 6:23, “***The wages of sin is death,***” this is the price you can expect to pay for immoral sex (homosexuality).

### **SOCIETIES RESTRICTIONS**

Even societies that never heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ impose some limitation on sexual conduct and marriages. In fact, all known societies have regulated sex in some way, either with written laws or unwritten customs and taboos. Muslim countries a woman’s charms (hidden by a veil) is a privilege reserved for *her husband* alone. In China, the parents of *the boy* chose *the bride* (a girl) and the bride and groom do not



meet until their wedding day. This shows that we as human beings *know, deep down inside*, that sex is a very important and serious matter. This, I believe is the reason why so many homosexuals have trouble accepting that the lifestyle they have chosen, not born into, but chosen to live. They know in their minds that it is wrong so they hide it. It is not something they are born as, even scientist have proven that fact.

## **TODAYS SOCIETY, THE STATE**

The people of Hawaii already voted - 70% said they wanted Traditional Marriages. Are you ignoring us? Doesn't our vote count? Times has changed but those who want Traditional Marriages in Hawaii have not changed. 70% of Hawaii still wants Traditional Marriages.

Over half of the United States has **PROHIBITED** this bill in their states, why can't Hawaii? That's over half the population that **does not want** this act of sexual immorality, blaspheming the truth of GOD's love in our country. *Ungodly marriages undermine the entire nation*. These marriages warp the values that a decent home should uphold, because they are not founded to the word of GOD's truth.

I am in agreement with my church, the BIBLE and all opposing parties that this bill is; A devious way to have the state legally approve different forms of **homosexual relationships** as being the same as traditional marital relationships. The damaging impact "civil unions" will unleash on Hawaii's children and Hawaii's future is incalculable. This diabolical manifestation called "civil unions" must be stopped, as it was in 1998 when it was called "same-sex marriage."

I am also in agreement with the author of the book, **"Until Americans repent and accept the LORD, they will struggle with, famine caused by inflation, crime, disease and spiritual bankruptcy."**

Look at the world today, there has been a war going on in IRAQ, IRAN, AFGANASTAIN, AFRICA, NORTH KOREA for awhile now. The new recession, the country's famine caused by inflation, no more jobs or job layoffs cause crime to increase, homosexuality causing the spread of HIV/AIDS (disease) and the non believers has the spiritual bankruptcy. CONGRESSMAN the world is coming to an end and you're allowing it! **REVELATIONS 18:2-10**

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to voice my opinion on this matter.

Mrs. Kenvee J. Daniel-Parker

**From:** Desiree Catlin [desireecatlin@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:15 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** stop same sex marrage!!

God gave adam a women so that they could mutiply. In my personal opinion I don't belive in same sex marrage because I think that it's wrong god gave man a women. if god wanted same sex marrage I'm pretty sure that he would have gave god another man but he didn't so if u belive in god and the bible then I say STOP SAME SEX MARRAGE!! People should know that god wants whats best for us in the bible genesis chapter 2 verses 24-25 and it says 24: for this reason a man will leave his father and mother to be united to his WIFE and they will become one flesh. 25: the man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. For this is why I don't belive in same sex

x

marrage

February 22,2009

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi  
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operation  
State Capitol Building  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Testimony HB 444

Good morning Chairman Taniguchi and members of the committee. I am here to testify in support of HB 444, which will give all the citizens of Hawaii similar rights. This bill brings equality to Hawaii law.

I feel as a legislator you must do what is right and not be swayed by political pressure from groups pushing a particular religious ideology. **Please have the political courage to do the right thing and support HB444.**

Thank you.

George Davis Jr.  
Hawaii Kai

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**From:** mmnations@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:24 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** 'Keizer, Jerome'; 'Nations, Tamara'; 'Nations, Tim'; rebecca.keizer@gmail.com  
**Subject:** STOP HB 444

**To:** Senate Judiciary Committee  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00AM  
**From:** Marlene Nations  
**RE:** STOP CIVIL UNIONS (HB 444)

Honorable Legislators of our Wonderful State of Hawaii,

Before you, stands a bill that erodes the very intent of our Pro traditional marriage stance voiced by the people of Hawaii over the last several years and specifically in the 1998 election with our amendment. Once again the sanctity of marriage is being challenged by those who would want same-sex marriages to be legal. Now the indirect attack comes by way of legalizing civil unions and thus challenging to the meaning of marriage and granting reciprocal benefits laws for civil unions.

**Please exercise your  
responsibility the voice of  
the people and VOTE NO  
ON HB 444**

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**From:** christinemcclarin@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:36 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1 (Hearing 2/24/09 at 9:00 am)

HB 444 HD1  
Hearing: February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 am  
Senate Judiciary and Government Operations

Dear Committee,

My name is Christine McClarin, and I come before you on behalf of myself and my family to express our support for HB444-Civil Unions.

I am a married woman with six children. Like any parent, the birth of my children filled me with hope and love, and dreams for my children and their futures. I have raised these children to be loving, respectful and responsible members of the community; and I must say that I have done well. They are each wonderful and unique, and I am very proud of them. As these children are growing into young adults, I wonder about their futures and how those dreams that I have for them will come to fruition. But I know that if one of these fine young men or ladies that I raised comes home one day to tell me that he or she is gay or lesbian, my love and pride for them will not change, nor will my hopes and dreams for that child. I still pray that he or she will fall in love, and be loved; and I hope that their love will be celebrated and accepted by all. I still want to walk next to that child as he or she declares unending love for another, and shares a commitment to live in harmony. I still will hope to be a grandmother; and I want those grandchildren to have the same opportunities as other children, including the benefit of a stay-at-home parent (if they so choose), with all the healthcare and benefits of any other devoted partner and parent. I want my family to be treated equally under the law, including rights of inheritance, healthcare decisions, insurance, wrongful death actions, and child support and property distribution in the event of separation.

I do not think that I ask for much for the future happiness and protection of my children, and the children of other citizens; after all, it is the very same protections afforded to other, heterosexual citizens. All I ask is that all citizens be treated equally under the law.

I understand that for some, irrational reasons, some individuals feel threatened by such a proposition of equality for the gay and lesbian community. They say that such unions somehow threaten their heterosexual marriages. This I simply cannot understand, for I know that the union of two other individuals has absolutely no impact on the bond that I share with my husband. The religious groups that are installing fear in the community and using the Bible to support their attempts to oppress are reminiscent of those groups in the 1950's, who used the same rhetoric to attempt to protest interracial marriages. They, too, used Biblical quotes to support their hatred and their fears of the destruction of the institute and sanctity of marriage. However, it is time that we come into the 21st century, and uphold the true meaning of "liberty and justice for ALL."

As a citizen, I do not want religious arguments to have any bearing on government policy decisions. But for the record, I am a Christian, too; and as such I would like to paraphrase the great Desmond Tutu and stress to those in opposition to HB444 the following sentiment: I cannot, for the life of me, imagine a God that says "I am going to punish you because you were born Black and should have been born White; or you were born female, and you should have been born male; or you were born homosexual, and you should have been born heterosexual."

Likewise, I cannot imagine a government that adheres to such discriminatory policies. Thus, I ask you to please support HB444 and ensure the civil rights of same-sex families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine McClarin  
Wailae Iki resident

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**From:** Stacey J Weber [webers005@clearwire.net]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 8:22 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

**FROM: STACEY WEBER**

**TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM FOR HB 444, HD1**

**IN STRONG OPPOSITION OF HB 444, HD 1**

**ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sex-partner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.**

**I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444,**

**Thank You,**

**Stacey Weber**

**98-1870F Kaahumanu St**

**Pearl City, HI 96782**

Aloha Senator,

My name is Timothy Sciulli and I am a resident of Waipahu, HI. I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB444 (SB458). The people of Hawaii, 70% of them made their voice very clear by voting against same sex marriage in 1998. This new bill is being pushed through as a means to supposedly expand the benefits of same sex couples, when in fact, HB444 contains unmistakable language that would give civil unions between same sex partners equal footing with traditional heterosexual married couples.

When I learned that HB444 passed the House last week I realized that our legislature took a huge step in moving against the will of Hawaii's people. Your solemn responsibility as an elected official is to listen to and do the will of the people you represent. I would expect you and all of the Senators representing our fair state, to vote NO on HB444 (SB458). An overwhelming majority of the people of Hawaii, voted to preserve marriage between a man and a woman in 1998. I would have voted to preserve this union between a man and a woman but I was too young to vote back then.

This is what the House has crafted into HB444: calling same sex marriage by another name, i.e. a civil union between same sex partners. It purports to extend to that new title of "civil unions" all the same rights and privileges afforded to traditional married couples. I am sure you are already hearing from many other people in the state of Hawaii who join me in opposing this bill. Again, I respectfully request that you will do what is right as a true representative of the people's will and VOTE NO on HB444.

Sincerely,

Timothy Sciulli

May God Bless You



Date : Feb. 25. 2009

To: Honorable Senator BRIAN T. Taniguchi  
Capitol, Hawaii

From : Karen K. Mai &  
Desgracias A. Zamora

Address: 2333 Kapiolani Blvd. # 2417  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

Dear Sir/ Madam :

Our message to you is our strong opposition about this social issue, that we are united to voice/ vote against civil union (same sex marriage)

Marriages are between man and woman (mutual relation between husband & wife) not man and man or woman & woman.

We pray that civil union (same sex marriage) legislation not be approved and traditional, marriage be strengthened.

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**From:** Cori A Gift [gift@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:15 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Cori Gift in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write you today in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities. It represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Cori Gift, MSW  
Evaluation Specialist  
Mental Health Transformation Grant  
MHSRET: Kaimuki Plaza, Suite 200  
main office: 735-3435; cell: 927-9656; fax: 735-3436  
email: [gift@hawaii.edu](mailto:gift@hawaii.edu)

**Testimony in support of HB 444 HD 1, A Bill For An Act Relating to Civil Unions  
For public hearing, Feb. 24, 2008, 9 a.m.**

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is David M. Walter, and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions.

For the record: Here is some of what a gay civil union, a gay marriage — or any committed relationship between two gay people — is:

It's entering into an exciting but scary new realm of human existence, a realm where the focus on "me" transforms (eventually) into a focus on "us."

It's the happiness and thrill of moving into your first new place together.

It's missing your spouse desperately when the two of you are separated for a prolonged period of time.

It's arguing, during the first year or two, about things that never ever are contentious in later years.

It's finally allowing yourself to be totally vulnerable in front of another person and not worry that your vulnerability will be exploited.

It's being deeply worried and anxious when you have to take your spouse to the emergency room because he is feeling very ill.

It's not being able to fathom life without your spouse.

It's professing your love for your spouse daily — or more frequently.

It's snuggling with your spouse under the blankets on a cold winter night.

It's smiling instead of cringing when your spouse hugs you and his unshaven face makes the nerve endings on your neck go into hypersensitive mode.

It's doing a chore that your spouse was supposed to do, and not minding doing it.

It's inviting friends or family over for a 4th of July cook-out and putting on a mini-fireworks-display in the back yard.

It's quitting your job and moving to a distant city so your spouse can take a new job that will advance his career.

It's going with your spouse to a social event that you know you will loathe, but not getting mad at him when he wants to skip an engagement you want him to attend.

It's going on a trip to Europe with your spouse — and his parents — and enjoying it.

It's being there to support your spouse emotionally when he needs it, and knowing that he'll be there to support you when you need it.

It's watching yourselves grow older and marveling at all the many unexpected twists and turns your lives have taken together.

It's knowing that the relationship you have with your spouse is good, precious and a true blessing.

It's both you and your spouse wishing you knew each other when you were children.

It's watching, over some period of years, as sex falls lower and lower on your list of what's important in a marriage.

It's being amazed that, after 28 years, your love for each other still grows deeper.

It's knowing that no person, no institution, no thing could split the two of you up.

It's accepting that, at various times, you'll experience hurt, reassurance, anger, joy, distrust, respect, jealousy, understanding, confusion, bliss, resentment, praise, sorrow, guilt, self-affirmation, the sense that life is a dream, and the sense that life is a nightmare.

It's — a lot like a good heterosexual marriage, isn't it?

Please support HB 444.

Mahalo.

Sincerely,

David M. Walter  
Aiea

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**From:** Yolanda Natte [mizpah070@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:16 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Yolanda M. Habal  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

ATTENTION: State Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

I am strongly oppose to HB 444 HD1. The consequences of this bill will affect my grandchildren in the future.

The traditional marriage between a man and woman MUST remain!

Thank you for your time,

Yolanda M Habal  
Aiea Constituent

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**From:** Randall Ching [randallching@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Marriage

Written Testimony:

Testifier: Randall Ching

Bill Number & title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 AM

Hearing Location: Auditorium

Mr. Chair & member of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I humbly request you take the following into consideration in your deliberations prior to voting on HB 444:

1. In 1998, voters of Hawaii voted over 70% to keep marriage between one man and one woman. This is the will of the People and your consideration to approve this bill goes Against the Will of the People.
2. Reciprocal Benefits Act, HRS 572C, protects certain rights that previously were reserved to spouses.
3. Marriage was never intended to be persons of the same gender.
4. Children are best brought up in stable healthy homes with both mom and dad.

Based upon the above, I request you vote NO on HB 444.

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**From:** Wendell Au [driedlychee@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:18 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi; Sen. Dwight Takamine; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Clarence Nishihara; senslom@hawaii.capitol.gov  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

From Wendell Au  
to the Senate Judiciary Committee  
Measure number HB 444 HD1

I oppose passage of HB 444, as this is a thinly veiled attempt to pass gay/lesbian "marriage" under a different name. If passed, it is just a simple matter to change the wording from "civil union" to "marriage". Our state has already said "NO" to this. As far as rights of survivorship, insurance, and medical benefits, the legislature has previously provided such consideration.

I further oppose passage of HB 444, as this will cause major confusion within our state social services case management and medical insurance. Our present insurance systems recognize traditional families in covering patients for medical insurance, and by allowing such civil unions, will cause major confusion regarding where each partner fits into the insurance plan. This will add to the cost of medical care by using time which would be better spent on patient care.

Finally, federal law does not recognize civil unions. If such a law should pass here, it would not agree with the law of the land, and it would also disagree with the laws of almost every other state.

Thank you.

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**From:** Shimi Rii [shimi.rii@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Shimi Rii and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many.

As a second job I used to tutor at the Kahala Branch of the Sylvan Learning Center. While I was there I had the pleasure of tutoring a little girl who, as I found out later, has two mothers that I happen to know from a separate engagement. I was delighted at how wonderful their little family was - the two mothers and the little girl reminded me of my little childhood, which consisted of just my mom, my sister, and myself. My parents separated when I was young, but my mother and father have always been in my life equally and I have benefited greatly from the rights and protections that are allowed in so-called "normal" marriages. I strongly believe that any family that is built on love and a strong desire to support each other should be given the rights and benefits given to spouses in a marriage. These rights should not be out of reach from those who are our neighbors, our friends, our loved ones, who are in no way different from us except for their sexual orientation, that of which, most of us know, is not a lifestyle "choice" but merely who they are. That being said, no one should be denied rights for living a happy life that everyone deserves.

I am an oceanographer who is born and raised in the islands of Hawaii and constantly seek to preserve the beauty and the natural wonders of our state. The natural beauty of our state does not just come from the ocean and the trees and the rainbows - it is, first and foremost, our people. I ask that you support HB 444 and help preserve our people. I appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo nui loa for your time,

Shimi Rii  
2446 Waiomao Rd.  
Honolulu, HI 96816



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**From:** nora ganigan [noraganigan@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:18 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Nora P. Ganigan  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Sir/Madam:

My basis for opposition against Bill# HB444 HD1, are based on the following:

- 1) The people of Hawaii have already spoken and clearly support keeping the definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman.
- 2) The following Position Statement on Same-Sex 'Marriage' and Civil Unions by Focus on the Family eloquently captures significant impacts traditional marriage can have on society:

*Marriage is a sacred, legal and social union ordained by God to be a life-long, sexually exclusive relationship between one man and one woman.*

Marriage is a sacred, legal, and social union ordained by God to be a life-long, sexually exclusive relationship between one man and one woman. Focus on the Family holds this institution in the highest esteem, and strongly opposes any legal sanction of marriage counterfeits, such as the legalization of same-sex "marriage" or the granting of marriage-like benefits to same-sex couples, cohabiting couples, or any other non-marital relationship. History, nature, social science, anthropology, religion, and theology all coalesce in vigorous support of marriage as it has always been understood: a life-long union of male and female for the purpose of creating stable families.

## **HISTORY AND MARRIAGE**

Marriage is not an American invention. It has existed as an institution since the beginning of civilization, and thus supersedes our modern laws. Every society at all times has viewed the social norm of marriage as a union of male and female.<sup>1</sup> Studies of previous civilizations reveal that when a society weakens the sexual ethic of marriage, it deteriorates and eventually disintegrates.<sup>2</sup>

## **NATURE AND MARRIAGE**

Even a casual observation of nature reveals the vital distinctions between male and female and the need that each has for the other. Gender distinctions are not simply an artificial social construct. Men and women are uniquely designed to complement each other physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Marriage is the means for melding the two sexes into a stronger and more complete whole. Thus while marriage has intrinsic value of its own, a primary purpose of marriage is procreation. Marriage is the best means for producing and raising a healthy and productive next generation. Marriage is also the way societies protect women from predatory males and socialize men.

## **CHILDREN AND MARRIAGE**

The optimal environment for raising a child is one in which the child's mother and father are married to each other. Deliberately depriving a child of a mother or a father is not in the child's best interest and is never compassionate. But this is what every same-sex family does for the sole purpose of fulfilling adult desire. On average, when compared with children raised by both parents, children deprived of mothers or fathers fare worse in virtually every measure of well-being.<sup>3</sup> The sparse research regarding children raised in same-sex couple households reveals that such children are comparable in well-being to those in single-parent households.<sup>4</sup> In addition, children raised by homosexuals are

significantly more likely to develop a homosexual orientation themselves.<sup>5</sup>

Men and women are distinctly different. Each gender brings vitally important - and unique - elements to a child's development. Thousands of academic studies reveal that the presence of a father in the home increases children's cognitive and verbal skills, academic performance, involvement in or avoidance of high-risk behaviors and crime, and emotional and psychological health.<sup>6</sup> Our hearts and a wealth of research tell us of the power and importance of the mother-child bond.<sup>7</sup>

## **DISCRIMINATION AND MARRIAGE**

We elevate marriage in our laws over other relationships because marriage has proven over millennia to be an obvious societal good. Society provides benefits to natural marriage because natural marriage uniquely provides necessary benefits to society. Marriage law does not discriminate. Marriage is open to any two individuals provided they meet certain criteria regarding age and blood relationship, and provided the individuals are of the opposite sex. All are free to marry under this universal and age-old definition of marriage. Homosexual activists seek not to end discrimination because laws do not preclude homosexuals from marrying. Rather, they seek to completely redefine - and thus undermine - the foundational institution of marriage. And *no one* has the right to do that. Indeed, some prominent gay activists have gone so far as to state this as their goal.<sup>8</sup> This powerful, advantaged, vocal special interest group is seeking not to be left alone, not to be simply tolerated or even respected, but to force its views on the rest of society. They are asking each of us to radically change our understanding of marriage and family. And this new definition of marriage and family will be force-fed to our children at every grade level. Groups like the ACLU will force churches to perform such "weddings" in order to maintain their tax-exempt status.

Those who would redefine marriage often insist that the only necessary qualification for marriage is "love." Yet if one accepts that rationale, then there can logically be no boundaries as to what constitutes marriage; any combination or number of consenting individuals must ultimately gain the same legal and societal sanction as natural marriage. What about bisexuals? Won't they ask to marry members of both sexes at once? While love is vital, it is not the definitional element of marriage. We love many people we do not marry.

## **RELIGION AND MARRIAGE**

The five major world religions, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism recognize and uphold the natural, heterosexual understanding of marriage. By contrast, these religions teach that homosexual behavior is sinful or wrong.<sup>9</sup>

## **THE BIBLE AND MARRIAGE**

Marriage is the first institution ordained by God and has served from the beginning as the foundation for continuation of the human race. Genesis tells us that shortly after the creation of the first man, God acknowledged Adam's incompleteness. God then created Eve as Adam's partner, his completer, and blessed their union.<sup>10</sup> Jesus underscored the importance and sacredness of marriage in His own teachings.<sup>11</sup> The apostle Paul taught that the marital relationship is to be an ongoing demonstration of the sacrificial love that Christ showed His church. In contrast, the Bible clearly proscribes any form of homosexual behavior as sinful.<sup>12</sup> As such, it is not and cannot be the basis for a sacred marriage relationship.

Marriage is unquestionably good for individuals and society. It deserves respect and protection. Any efforts to redefine marriage destroy the institution - and ultimately - civil and healthy society. Thus we oppose any government recognition or endorsement of marriage counterfeits, including same-sex unions.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora Ganigan

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<sup>1</sup> Suzanne G. Frayser, *Varieties of Sexual Experience: An Anthropological Perspective on Human Sexuality*, (New Haven, Conn: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1985); Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, Vol. 1-3, (New York: The Allerton Book Company, 1922); Helen E. Fischer, *Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery and Divorce*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992); George P. Murdock, *Social Structure*, (New York: Macmillan, 1949).

<sup>2</sup> See J. D. Unwin, *Sexual Regulations and Human Behavior* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1933).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Glenn T. Stanton, *Why Marriage Matters: Reasons to Believe in Marriage in Postmodern Society*, (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1997); David Popenoe, *Life Without Father: Compelling New Evidence That Fatherhood and Marriage are Indispensable for the Good of Children and Society*, (New York: The Free Press, 1996); D. A. Dawson, "Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-being," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 53:573-584 (1991); Ronald P. Rohner and Robert A. Veneziano, "The Importance of Father Love: History and Contemporary Evidence," *Review of General Psychology* 5.4 (2001): 382-405..

<sup>4</sup>Ellen C. Perrin, MD, "Technical Report: Coparent and Second-Parent Adoption by Same-Sex Parents," *Pediatrics*, Vol. 109 No. 2, (2002) p. 341. F. Tasker and S. Golombok, "Adults Raised as Children in Lesbian Families," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 65:2: 203-215 (1995).

<sup>5</sup>Judith Stacey and Timothy Biblarz, "(How) Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter?" *American Sociological Review*, 66 (2001) 159-183.

<sup>6</sup>See Glenn T. Stanton, *Why Marriage Matters: Reasons to Believe in Marriage in Postmodern Society*, (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1997); David Popenoe, *Life Without Father: Compelling New Evidence That Fatherhood and Marriage are Indispensable for the Good of Children and Society*, (New York: The Free Press, 1996); David Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America*. (New York: Basic Books, 1995). See also, Kyle D. Pruett, *Fatherneed*. (New York: Free Press, 2000).

<sup>7</sup>See for example, B. Hunter, *The Power of Mother Love*. (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup>See Michelangelo Signorile, "I DO, I DO, I DO, I DO, I DO," *OUT*, May 1996, p. 30; Stanley Kurtz, "Beyond Gay Marriage," *The Weekly Standard*, August 4-11, 2003, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup>"Major World Religions on the Question of Marriage," Marriage Law Project, April 2000, at (<http://marriagelaw.cua.edu>).

<sup>10</sup>Genesis 2:24.

<sup>11</sup>Matthew 19:6.

<sup>12</sup>Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:18-32; I Corinthians 6:9-11.

**To:** Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

**Hearing Date:** February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9 AM

**Bill:** HB 444 (A Bill for an Act Relating to Civil Unions)

**From:** Sumner La Croix

Professor, Department of Economics, University of Hawaii-Manoa

E-mail: lacroix@hawaii.edu

### **The Impact of Civil Unions on Hawaii's Economy and Government**

#### **Testimony Summary**

How would passage of HB 444 (civil unions) affect 1) tourism arrivals to Hawaii; 2) state government revenues; 3) state government spending; and 4) health insurance coverage and employer spending on employee health insurance plans by private firms and government agencies? After examining the experience of five other states with civil unions, I conclude that civil unions in Hawaii are likely to generate small positive impacts on tourism arrivals to Hawaii and government revenues. Civil unions are unlikely to have a major impact on government spending, the workload of critical state government agencies, health insurance coverage, or employer spending on employee health insurance plans.

#### **Background**

Five states (Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oregon, and California) and the District of Columbia have enacted legislation providing for civil unions that are equivalent to the civil unions provided by HB 444. I use Vermont's experience with civil unions as a benchmark for understanding the impact of civil union legislation in Hawaii. Vermont's experience provides a good benchmark for Hawaii, as there are many similarities between the two states (and obviously some big differences). Vermont is a small, rural state, with 638,000 people. Like Hawaii, Vermont has a state income tax, a state sales tax, a large tourism industry, an agricultural sector in transition, and great natural beauty. <sup>1</sup>In April 2000, the Governor of Vermont signed legislation authorizing civil unions, effective 1 July 2000. The Vermont Secretary of State reports that between July 2000 and August 2006, the Secretary of State's office registered 1,286 civil unions of Vermont same-sex couples and 8,058 civil unions of out-of-state same-sex couples. The 2,572 Vermont residents who entered into civil unions during the relationship contract's first six years represented just 6/10<sup>th</sup> of 1 percent of the state's 2005 population between the ages of 18 and 65.

Does Vermont's experience with civil unions provide a reasonable prediction of the propensity for Hawaii residents to enter into civil unions? If Hawaii residents have the same propensity to enter into civil unions as Vermont residents, then the Department of

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<sup>1</sup> Unlike Hawaii, Vermont has a large (declining) manufacturing sector and its population is overwhelmingly Caucasian.

Health would register 2,292 civil unions of Hawaii same-sex couples between July 2009 and August 2015. This would translate to 382 civil unions per year, with more civil unions occurring towards the beginning of the period. A cross-check of this estimate comes from U.S. Census data which indicate that 3,262 self-declared same-sex couples resided in Hawaii in 2005 (American Community Survey, 2005). If 50 percent of the 3,262 same-sex couples entered into civil unions between July 2009 and July 2015, this would amount to 1,631 same-sex civil unions. If, however, legalization of civil unions causes more same-sex couples to become more public about their relationship, then the estimate derived from the Vermont experience could be more plausible. For the rest of this testimony, I use an average of the two estimates for the number of civil unions (1,962).

### **Impact of Civil Unions on Tourism Arrivals to Vermont and Hawaii**

Legalization of civil unions by the State of Hawaii could affect visitor flows to Hawaii in two main ways.

**First**, tourism flows could be affected by the change in the character of the destination, e.g., that it has become more supportive of same-sex couples and gay, lesbian, and bisexual residents. However, the passage of civil rights legislation for gays and lesbians in such cities as Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco, Boston, and New York City has not been associated with declines in visitor arrivals or the growth rate of visitor arrivals in these cities. The rise of a more visible gay community in Singapore has also not been associated with declines in visitor arrivals or the growth rate of visitor arrivals. The absence of bad news associated with gay and lesbian civil rights legislation is significant, as each of these cities hosts over ten million tourists annually.

To date, there is also no evidence that the recognition of same-sex marriages by Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, and (temporarily) California and the recognition of civil unions by New Hampshire, Vermont, Oregon, California, or New Jersey have adversely affected tourism arrivals to any of these states.

**Second**, the legal recognition of civil unions in Hawaii will motivate some same-sex couples residing in other states that recognize civil unions or their equivalent (Vermont, New Jersey, Oregon, New Hampshire, Washington, D.C., and California) to visit Hawaii for their civil union or domestic partner commitment ceremonies rather than to have them in the dreary Oregon rain or New Hampshire sleet. Many will be accompanied by relatives and friends. Similarly, some civil union ceremonies for resident same-sex couples will bring off-island relatives and friends to Hawaii for the ceremony.

How many more visitors should Hawaii expect if it legalizes same-sex civil unions?<sup>2</sup> In 2007, the number of visitor days from visitors coming to Hawaii to get married totaled 1.17 million days. In 2007, the number of visitor days from visitors coming to Hawaii for a honeymoon totaled 3.82 million. Over 43 percent of the visitors coming to Hawaii to get married and over 49 percent of the visitors coming to Hawaii for honeymoons were

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<sup>2</sup> All visitor data are from the *2007 Annual Visitor Research Report, DBEDT*, State of Hawaii. Population data are from the U.S. Census.

from the United States. Consider that civil unions are currently legal in states with 16.7 percent of the U.S. population. If Hawaii received 3 percent more visitors from these states consisting of same-sex couples coming to Hawaii for a civil union or a civil honeymoon, then 11,969 additional visitor days would be generated. If Hawaii received 5 percent more visitors, then an additional 19,948 annual visitor days would be generated. Assuming that each visitor spends \$174 per day, this would generate \$2.1 million and \$3.5 million, respectively. Visitors who come to Hawaii to enter into a civil union are likely to spend additional resources on their ceremonies and celebrations. Using data from *The Wedding Report* (published by a wedding industry research group), Christopher Ramos, Associate Professor Lee Badgett, and Brad Sears estimated that additional wedding expenditures by same-sex couples would amount to at least \$2,181, or one-tenth of the expenditures of an opposite-sex couple. If 1,000 couples visited Hawaii each year to engage in civil unions, then there would be additional spending of \$2.2 million dollars. Honeymoon couples are also likely to generate additional spending. “Multiplier effects”—additional income generated by recipients of visitor spending who spend some of their additional income in Hawaii—would lead to another round of income gains.

#### **Impact of Civil Union on Hawaii State Government Revenues**

Public finance economists have convincingly demonstrated that a progressive income tax—such as the Hawaii personal income tax—cannot ensure that couples with equal incomes pay equal taxes AND that a couple’s tax bill will not rise solely as a consequence of their marriage, civil union, or domestic partnership. If HB 444 were to be enacted, then Hawaii’s personal income tax code would treat parties to civil unions like married couples. Married and civil union couples are more likely to pay a “civil union” tax penalty in Hawaii when both parties are working, their incomes are similar, and they both earn incomes that are taxed at less than the maximum marginal tax rate, i.e., the couple’s joint tax bill increases due to their status as a civil union couple. Alternatively, if only one party is working, the couple’s incomes are very different, and one partner is already being taxed at the highest marginal tax rate, then the civil union couple typically receives a civil union subsidy, i.e., the couple’s joint tax bill falls due to their status as a civil union couple. In Hawaii, most same-sex couples entering into a civil union are likely to pay a civil union tax due to the high percentage of individuals in same-sex couples (77 percent) who are employed (American Community Survey, 2005). My conclusion is that estimates of changes in tax revenue to the State of Hawaii from Hawaii’s personal income tax are likely to be positive but too speculative to estimate with any precision.

Civil unions will, however, generate additional revenue from the issuance of civil union licenses. At \$60 per license (the current fee for a marriage license), an estimated 1,962 civil unions for Hawaii residents will generate \$117,720 between 2009 and 2015 and an estimated 4,000 to 8,000 civil unions for out-of-state visitors will generate \$240,000 to \$480,000 over the same six-year period.

Civil unions will, also generate additional excise tax revenue from the additional spending on civil union ceremonies and celebrations by resident and visiting same-sex couples. Depending on the multipliers used, the \$2.1 million to \$3.5 million in direct

visitor spending and the \$2.2 million in additional expenditures on ceremonies and celebrations would generate \$4.3 million to 5.7 million in additional visitor spending. Using a multiplier of 1.36, additional expenditures could amount to \$5.8-\$7.8 million annually. Using a gross excise tax rate of 4.35%, this would generate excise tax revenues of \$254,000 to \$337,000 annually. These estimates do not take into account additional spending by in-state couples on in-state civil union ceremonies or honeymoons. The additional income would also generate additional state income tax revenues.

### **Impact on Hawaii State Government Agencies**

Two states—Vermont and New Jersey—have issued reports on the implementation of civil unions in these states. The Vermont Commission issued its second and final report, *Report of the Vermont Civil Union Review Commission*, in January 2002. The *Report* concluded that “Act 91 (Civil Unions) has had minimal impact on state government operations,” a “negligible impact on state courts”, and that “Act 91 is working as intended.” In particular, the Commission observed that five important agencies had “reported minimal impact [on their operations]: the Department of Health, the Office of the Secretary of State, the Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities, and Health Care Administration, the Department of Personnel, and the Department of Taxes.”

The Final Report of the New Jersey Civil Union Review Commission, *The Legal, Medical, Economic & Social Consequences of New Jersey’s Civil Union Law*, was issued in December 2008. “The State Departments testifying before the Commission unanimously confirmed that the implementation of the [NJ] Civil Union Act has resulted in minimal costs to the State” (p. 27). Administrators of these departments found that the transition was “seamless” and “smooth”.

The main costs to Hawaii’s government would result from changes in forms, computer reprogramming, and training sessions for employees at the Dept. of Taxation and Dept. of Health. There is no reason to believe that government agencies in Hawaii would bear higher costs than Vermont’s agencies to implement relevant provisions of HB 444. In fact, there are a number of reasons why Hawaii state and local officials and agencies should have lower adjustment costs to civil unions: They can learn from vital statistics forms, tax forms, and real estate forms already produced in other civil union states; and they can consult with Oregon, Vermont, New Hampshire, California, and New Jersey officials who have extensive and recent experience in resolving problems with implementation of civil union legislation.

### **Impact on Healthcare Insurance Coverage**

Enactment of civil union legislation in Hawaii is unlikely to lead to substantial increases in the percentage of Hawaii’s population covered by healthcare insurance due to (1) the small number of same-sex couples in Hawaii, (2) the high percentage of Hawaii’s population already covered either by government or private health insurance plans, and (3) the small percentage of employees with same-sex partners who sign up their partners for health insurance when it is offered by their employer.

Suppose that 50 percent of Hawaii’s same-sex couples (1,962) decide to enter into civil unions. How many of the couples are likely to be already covered by health insurance?

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated that during 2006-2007 around 91.5 percent of the Hawaii population was covered by public or private health insurance (Table 8, Current Population Reports P60-235, August 2008). If Hawaii same-sex couples are similar in their propensity to have insurance coverage as the rest of the Hawaii population, then I estimate that in 84 percent (1,642 couples) of same-sex couples, both partners have health insurance; in 1 percent of same-sex couples (20 couples), neither partner has health insurance; and in 15 percent of same-sex couples, one partner has health insurance (300 couples).

Suppose that all employers who offer health insurance to one of the partners of these 300 same-sex couples decide to offer coverage to civil union partners. How many of the civil union partners will accept the health coverage? Studies of the experience with civil unions and same-sex marriage in other states show that few parties to civil unions or same-sex spouses adjust their health insurance coverage after they marry or enter into civil unions. The primary reason is that federal tax law imposes huge burdens on such choices, as the lack of federal recognition for civil unions and same-sex marriages imposes taxes on otherwise untaxed premiums paid by employers for non-spouse partners who are added to a worker's healthcare plan. Lee Badgett, Research Director at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law and Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, and Mercer Human Resources Consulting have both independently found "that less than 1% of employees with a same-sex partner sign up for domestic partner benefits when a company offers them." If we apply the Massachusetts experience to the 300 same-sex couples in which one party has health insurance and the other does not, we would expect that 3 couples would accept coverage for a partner without health insurance. While this estimate seems somewhat low, it also clearly illustrates that passage of civil unions in Hawaii is unlikely to substantially increase the percentage of the population covered by health insurance or substantially increase expenditures on public and private health insurance.

### **Conclusions**

- A reasonable expectation from the experience of other states enacting civil unions is that the State of Hawaii's adjustment to the passage of civil union legislation will be smooth and cost little.
- There is potential for a small but significant increase in visitor arrivals and spending by same-sex couples from other states recognizing civil unions who travel to Hawaii to enter into and to celebrate their civil unions.
- Passage of civil union legislation is unlikely to lead to substantial increases in the percentage of the state's population covered by public and private health insurance or health care expenditures by public and private employers.
- Passage of civil union legislation is likely to lead to small increases in state revenues via civil union registration fees, excise taxes, and state income taxes stemming from new spending on civil union ceremonies and celebrations by both visitors and residents.



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**From:** Margaret Andrade [samcy2001@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:19 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Kimo Andrade

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

I want my voice to be heard and let it be known that I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444 HD1.

## **Testimony in FAVOR of HB444 HD1**

I wanted to ask you for your support for House Bill 444 which will allow Civil Unions for same sex couples in Hawaii. I request that you approve this bill in committee and allow it to pass to the full State Senate for a vote.

I read the testimony provided for the House and two of the arguments against the bill inspired me to respond. Some argue that there is no need for this new law because we already have the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Law. I disagree with that argument because even though I am in a registered Reciprocal Beneficiary relationship with my partner of 24 years I would be hard pressed to actually name the benefits I get beyond the right to register property together the same way as a married couple and to visit each other in the hospital. It will be much easier to understand our rights if we are in a Civil Union.

The other argument against this law I have seen sited is the constitutional amendment passed in 1998 that states that "The Legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples". I do not have the full text of that law but as I read it, the Legislature was not 'required' to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples, but was just given the power to. I am not sure if this wording was done because those who wrote the law could not imagine the day that our Legislature would be progressive enough to recognize same sex relationships or if they were wise enough to write it in a way that allows them to easily modify our laws as our citizens attitudes change regarding same sex relationships. Of course the 1998 amendment does not directly apply here because we are not calling a Civil Union a Marriage, but those who are against Civil Unions or Same-Sex rights of any kind will try to use that law to justify their opposition to this law.

Thank you,  
Bruce Lenores  
Wailua Houselots, Kauai

Mark LeDoux  
PO Box 411, Lahaina, HI 96767  
Email: markledoux@aol.com

HB444 HD1 – Civil Unions

To: The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Re: Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9am,  
in the auditorium of the State Capital

Dear Senators:

My partner of 19 years, the Rev. William Albinger, and I were married in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2005. Our marriage is recognized by Connecticut, New York, New Jersey (as a civil union), Canada, Spain, South Africa, Israel, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Aruba and the Dutch Antilles. In all these places, the “sky has not fallen” by the granting of marriage rights to committed same-gender couples. So many could not have it all wrong.

The list of states and countries recognizing and granting rights to civil unions is longer and ever-growing, including Oregon, New Jersey, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Uruguay. So many could not have it all wrong.

For sure, the lack of legal protections for same-gender partners exacts very real costs to couples and individuals. When my first partner Patrick was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 1987, the firm for which I worked in New York made it very difficult for me to continue working with clients (even though I was HIV-negative and healthy). When Patrick died eleven months later, I was driven out of our apartment because the landlord had refused to include me in the lease, even though as the primary bread-winner I paid the rent.

By contrast, the marginal cost of providing civil protections to same-gender couples is minimal. The profit-making corporate sector has innumerable examples of corporations large and small that have enjoyed a net positive return (e.g., increased sales, productivity and retention) by extending

benefits to same-gender couples. Companies would not do this unless it made good economic sense, and I suspect that Hawai'i might gain as well in all sorts of unexpected ways.

As with gender and race, it is only a matter of time before the legitimacy of same-gender couples is recognized by civil law in more states and other countries. If Bill and I live long enough, I expect we will eventually enjoy civil protections in Hawai'i. With the support of the Hawai'i House of Representatives already in place, and in spite of certain opposition by some religious and social constituencies, will your Committee and the Senate have the courage to take leadership on this very civil (not religious) matter?

I respectfully urge you to pass HB444 out of Committee, or if it is held up in Committee, to pull it out of Committee and send it to the floor of the Senate.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. May God bless you, and our wonderful state and country!

Sincerely yours,



Mark LeDoux

Independent management consultant  
Parishioner of Holy Innocents (Episcopal) Church, Lahaina  
Arts & Culture Committee of the Lahainaluna High School Foundation  
Volunteer, Meals-on-Wheels, Kaunoa Senior Services, Maui  
Alumnus of Harvard College (1977) and M.I.T. (1982)

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**From:** Marion Moody [mmoody002@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 1:01 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HDI

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Testifier: Marion Moody  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HDI Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00am  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

I am hereby registering my strong opposition to the above named bill. I believe that marriage (civil unions) should be between a man and a woman and am opposed to same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have already voted on this issue, and if this bill is passed it will be going against the people you represent. Don't let this bill pass.

Aloha  
Marion Moody

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**From:** Miki Akiona [mikia@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:31 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STOP HB 444

My name is Michelle R. Akiona. Address: 51-279 Kekio Rd. (P.O. Box 174); Ka'a'awa, HI 96730.

re: HB 444, Public hearing 2/24/09 @ 9:00am

As a citizen of Hawaii, I respectfully am voicing my disapproval of HB 444. STOP HB 444. I am AGAINST civil unions.

Mahalo,

Michelle R. Akiona  
#808-237-8251

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**From:** Felicia Lambe [flambe@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:46 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** In support of HB 444 HD1

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Felicia Lambe and I am writing to express my support for House Bill 444 HD1 - Civil Unions.

I believe that Equal Protection means just that - equal. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept, yet sadly it remains out of reach too many. I hope that you take this opportunity to live up to the principles that we as a nation and as a state hold so dear and redress this shameful policy of leaving gays and lesbians as second class citizens. I ask that you support HB444 HD1.

Mahalo,  
Felicia Lambe  
3233a Huelani Dr.  
Honolulu HI, 96822

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**From:** Eunice Tangonan [etangonan@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:24 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Eunice Tangonan

Address: 92-323 Pueonani Place, Kapolei, HI 96707

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

**Re: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I want to let you know that I strongly oppose HB 444. An overwhelming majority of Hawaii's people voted in 1998 that marriage must remain between one man and one woman. The Civil Union Bill, which is essentially the same as Same Sex Marriage, contradicts the majority who voted for traditional marriage in 1998.

Proponents of the Bill states that they want equality. However, as we all know Hawaii already has a reciprocal beneficiary law, which was passed in 1997. The Reciprocal Beneficiary Act affords certain rights that previously were only reserved to married people.

I feel that legalizing Civil Union or Same Sex Marriage will be detrimental to the moral fabric of our society. The data are clear and irrefutable that children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and dad. People should not be granted special legal protection and benefits based on their sexual preferences and behaviors.

I would like to see our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren continue to live in a society where there are absolutes, where they know what is right from wrong, where they are taught that marriage is made for one man and one woman alone as stated in the Word of God. The Civil Union Bill completely contradicts these hopes and values that's why I oppose it.

Thank you for this opportunity to write to you and thank you in advance for listening to the majority of Hawaii's people who voted for traditional marriage in 1998.

Eunice Tangonan



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**From:** Chuck [chuck@mauisunseeker.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:40 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support for House bill 444: Civil Unions

I STRONGLY support providing the rights to all citizens so we are all equal and can enjoy the same privileges as opposite sex couples.

Please pass House bill 444 providing civil union protection to same sex couples.

Thank you

Charles Spence  
551 Kihei Road  
Kihei, HI 96753

**Mr. Stewart L Selden III**  
**94-555 Makohilani St # 1054**  
**808-625-4204**

**ATTENTION: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee**

**RE: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions**

**Hearing: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM –**  
**AUDITORIUM**

## **I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

I ask for your wisdom and courage to OPPOSE HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. I affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. Even though some say that times have changed, they have not. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. I am confident that the overwhelming majority of people still believe in traditional marriage like I do. Please do not devalue our long held traditions of marriage being between one man and one woman. It is one of the few unchanging truths that our young people can hold on to in this ever-changing world. I am a resident of Hawaii and ask that you represent the will of the people.

## **Please vote against HB 444.**

**FROM: Stewart L Selden III      Mililani Resident**

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**From:** Joel Fischer [jfischer@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:30 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444;JGO;2/24/09;9AM;Aud.  
  
**Importance:** High

HB444, Relating to Civil Unions  
JGO; Chair, Brian Taniguchi

**PLEASE PASS THIS BILL! It is a marker for how we in Hawai`i nei treat our minorities!**

This bill has widespread support in our community except for those factions who wish to deny others their rights. It is horrifying that gays and lesbians are the last people who are not granted all the rights of our state and nation and against whom it is still legal to discriminate.

**HEWA!!!**

This bill is a pro-family civil rights bill, and any one who opposes it, by definition, is opposed to civil rights for all. Same sex couples deserve all the rights that my wife and I have; there is no basis at all for denying them these rights.

I realize that for some in our community, this issue is controversial because they do not see it as a civil rights issue. But what else can it be called when one group is denied the rights that everyone else has?

I ask for your support in passing this bill and advocating for its passage in the full senate.

Thank you.

Aloha, joel

Dr. Joel Fischer, ACSW  
President, 19-3, Democratic Party

Professor  
University of Hawai'i, School of Social Work  
Henke Hall  
Honolulu, HI 96822

"It is reasonable that everyone who asks justice should DO justice."  
Thomas Jefferson

"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Never, never, never quit."  
Winston Churchill

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:29 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** davidlhenkin@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: David L. Henkin  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 47-856 Kamehameha Hwy Kane'ohe, HI  
Phone: 808-239-7400  
E-mail: [davidlhenkin@yahoo.com](mailto:davidlhenkin@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

Good morning Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the committee:

My name is David Lane Henkin, and I am testifying as a father of two wonderful children. I strongly support House Bill No. 444, H.D. 1. If the State is to confer rights and impose obligations on its citizens based on their participation in a committed relationship, it should not discriminate based on whether the individuals forming that couple are of opposite sex or the same sex. House Bill 444, H.D. 1, which would extend the same rights and obligations as spouses in a marital relationship to civil union partners, is a vital step toward providing the people of Hawai'i with equal protection under the law, regardless of sexual orientation.

My daughter is eight years old, and my son is five. They are too young at this point for me to know their sexual orientation. As a parent, my only hope is that, whether straight, gay, bisexual, or transgender, they will find happiness in a committed relationship with someone they love. When they do, I want to ensure that they will enjoy the same legal rights as any other citizen of this state, regardless of the sex of their partner. Please pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

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**From:** Maria Miller [queeneagle7@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** SUBJECT LINE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Maria I. Cook Miller  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

**Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee,  
I am writing to ask you to please protect traditional marriage and  
to say "No" to civil unions.**

I oppose House Bill 444 and Senate Bill 458, as the Civil Union Bill is a direct attack on the religious freedom of Christians in the State of Hawaii.

You are well aware that the Same Sex Marriage Bill was voted against by 70% of the people in Hawaii in 1998, their voices should not be silenced and it is wrong to erase the voice of the majority of the people under any circumstance. The people of Hawaii already voted "**NO**", and to make Bible believing people of Faith, be classified as those, who would commit Hate Crimes by speaking the Word of God and what it clearly says about sexual sin of any kind, is an attack on religious freedom.

Sexual Sin is Sexual Sin, and not matter who you are doing it with, we believe God is judge of everybody.

Lust, Fornication, Adultery, Homosexuality, Bestiality, Rape, Incest, Sexual Assault, Idolatry, Pornography they are all the same, they are sin in our faith. God granted us the right/freedom of choice, for the way we live and believe. If we repent, God will hear us.

Christians do not seek to hurt Gay and Lesbian people, or assault them, nor do we hate them, we love them, we endeavor to tell everyone that God loves them, and we know God can change anyone, deliver them, set them free, and heal them, as **we all must obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

Look at Canada where Ministers/Pastors/ Preachers have been placed in jail for speaking the Word of God concerning sexual sin. There are even account of business people being sued because they refused to denounce their faith over this issue.

Gay and Lesbian people can reject God if they want, they have that right, no one is trying to force them to change, but we do not need them to force us to abandon our faith. The Christian Community has not done anything wrong to Gay and Lesbian people and we want **religious freedom preserved in the State of Hawaii and in the entire United States of America.**

Thank you for your time concerning this important matter.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:26 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** imari@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Ira Asato  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 59-615 Alapio Road Haleiwa, Hi. 96712  
Phone: 808-6387168  
E-mail: [imari@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:imari@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:



Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Co-Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
February 22, 2009

Testimony of Professor Linda Hamilton Krieger,  
on behalf of the Lambda Law Students Association,  
of the University of Hawai`i,  
William S. Richardson School of Law  
In Support of House Bill 444, H.D. 1  
Relating to Civil Unions

Honorable Chair Taniguchi, Co-Chair Takamine, and members of the Committee:

My name is Linda Hamilton Krieger, and I am a Professor of Law at the University of Hawai`i, Manoa, William S. Richardson School of Law. I testify today in my capacity as faculty advisor to the Law School's LAMBDA Law Students Association, an organization of the law school's lesbian, gay, and transgendered students and their friends. I come to speak for these remarkable young people, whose passion to serve the people of Hawai`i I see manifested every day, and whose human need for dignity, non-discrimination, and inclusion in the circle of moral community you now hold in your hands, as you deliberate about HB444.

In my testimony today, I hope to persuade you of two main points:

- (1) That it is the legislature's responsibility – not the responsibility of the electorate at large -- to protect the civil and human rights of Hawai`i's lesbian, gay, and transgendered people from discrimination by enacting civil union legislation; and
- (2) That the current system of reciprocal beneficiaries is constitutionally deficient, a fact which this legislature is constitutionally responsible for remedying.

Before I begin, however, let me tell you a little about the students for whom I speak today. Most are local – born and raised in the Islands – Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, South Pacific Islander, European, hapa. They give lie to the stereotype that gay rights are a “mainland haole issue.” Many are deeply religious people, whose faith plays a central role in their lives. Most of these students are already in deeply committed, loving, relationships, or aspire to be. All love their families and their communities, and deeply long to be accepted by them. All will be devastated if Hawaii once again denies them the basic human rights accorded to their heterosexual brothers, sisters and friends.

Over the past few weeks, we heard it said many times that, “the people should decide” about civil unions, or even that “the people have decided” and rejected civil unions, thus leaving the matter settled and out of your hands. But both of these contentions lack merit.

When I became a lawyer, I took a vow to uphold and defend the Constitution of my state and of the United States. Each of you took the same vow when you were sworn into the Senate. This is the same affirmation made by every state and federal judge when they take the bench. All of us – lawyers, legislators, and judges – have a co-equal responsibility to make legislative and judicial decisions in ways that uphold and defend constitutional rights and principles.

But, when an individual citizen registers to vote, he takes no such oath. The individual citizen can cast his vote for any reason at all, whether or not that reason is constitutionally permissible. No solemn attestation constrains an individual citizen from basing her vote on the most invidious and irrational prejudices against a class of her fellow citizens. Nothing constrains a voter from basing his vote on sectarian religious motives that, if they motivated judges or legislators, would effect an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

For this reason, the framers of the U.S. and Hawai`i constitutions wisely constructed a representative – not a popular or direct – system of democratic government. What you are doing now in moving forward this legislation -- taking testimony, rationally deliberating on the constitutional and public policy issues at stake, and then casting your vote in light of constitutional principles, reasoned deliberation, and input from colleagues and constituents, is not only permissible under the Hawai`i Constitution, it is precisely what that Constitution expects of you.

Hawai`i was wise, both originally when our state’s Constitution was drafted, and again in 1998, when it left the decision on same sex relationships to the legislature and not to the popular will. What do you think would have happened if, in 1954, it had been left to the popular will to decide whether segregated schools should be legal? What do you think would have happened in 1943 if Congress’ repeal of the Asian Exclusion Act had been put to a popular vote of the United States citizenry? Where the fundamental rights of a disparaged minority are at stake, the principle of “letting the people decide” can cloak majoritarian tyranny. Representative legislatures, and judges exercising the power of judicial review, provide the checks and balances needed to avoid such undesirable ends.

The Hawai`i State Legislature should pass this civil union bill to remedy an ongoing denial to lesbian, gay, and transgendered people -- and their children -- of the equal protection of the laws relating to the many rights and privileges accorded heterosexual married couples and their children. As legislators, you have taken an oath to uphold and defend the Hawai`i State Constitution. The Supreme Court held in *Baehr v. Lewin* that laws that discriminate based on sexual orientation must be narrowly tailored to further a compelling state interest. Nothing about the 1998



Constitutional amendment invalidated this judicial holding, and as legislators, you are bound by the oath you took to uphold and defend this constitutional principle.

No compelling state interest justifies withholding equal treatment under the tax or inheritance laws, or the laws regulating entitlement to pension and survivor benefits, or any of the approximately 1800 other legal rights and protections appertaining to heterosexual marriage to lesbian and gay couples in committed relationships.

Let us bring this abstract principle to ground: If one of my lesbian, transgendered, or gay law students graduates, passes the bar, goes to work for an employer with a death benefit plan, and then dies, leaving a same sex partner and two children without a breadwinner, why should that partner, or those two children, be denied the pension to which a similarly situated heterosexual family would be entitled?

Sectarian religious convictions about the sanctity of heterosexual marriage most certainly could not provide such a compelling state interest, as this would violate the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 4 of the Hawai`i Constitution. As President Barack Obama stated:

Democracy demands that the religiously motivated translate their concerns into universal, rather than religion-specific, values. It requires that their proposals be subject to argument, and amenable to reason.

There exists no rational basis, subject to logically sound argument, amenable to reason, and based on a non-sectarian rationale, for denying to committed same-sex partners in solemnized relationships the rights that HB444 would accord. There exists no empirical evidence that civil unions – or same sex marriages for that matter – undermine heterosexual marriage, or lead to higher rates of divorce or domestic discord, or harm children. Let us be clear: homophobia harms children. Not being able to get medical insurance for your sick child because your partner’s employer will not recognize her as the child’s parent “harms children.” Denying children the right to be adopted by or placed in foster care with responsible, ethical, devoted lesbian and gay families “harms children.” Telling gay, lesbian, and transgendered youth that they are undeserving of inclusion in moral institutions, that there is simply no way that they will be able to live a personally, morally responsible life as a gay person, that their `ohana will never be recognized, or protected by the law, this “harms children.”

You and I have taken an oath to uphold the constitution. I have taken another oath – albeit a private one – to do everything in my power to help make Hawai`i a place in which wonderful young people like these law students of mine can grow, flourish, and build and strong, loving families, as is each of our birthright in a community that holds `ohana – `ohana for everyone -- as first among our most cherished values. Please, please support HB444.

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**From:** Beverly Nicholson [bevhawaii@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:05 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** House Bill-444/ Civil Unions in Hawaii ( written testimony only) from Diane Mosier

February 23, 2009

Dear State Representatives and Senators,

I strongly oppose HB-444, Civil Unions in Hawaii.

Civil Unions, Domestic Partnerships, Same Sex Marriage, all have the same effect of destroying marriage as we know it. In 1998 the people of Hawaii overwhelmingly voted to keep marriage between one man and one woman. This Civil Union Bill is just another attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using a new title.

If you are going to recognize same sex couples as a Civil Union, it is only logical that you must then recognize any combination or number of consenting individuals to enter into such a union. If not, you would be giving special consideration only to those engaging in same sex relationships. Are you prepared for the ramifications this will have in Hawaii and in society as a whole?

If the concern is to give the same benefits as a married couple have to same sex couples, it would seem to make more sense to make changes to Hawaii's Reciprocal Beneficiary Law that would give equal benefits to ALL persons who do not qualify for marriage status, not just to homosexual couples, than to change what marriage has been since civilization began.

Thank you considering my testimony

Diane Mosier  
87-248 Auyong Hmstd Rd  
Waianae, Hi 96792

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**From:** Cora Newman [cnewman@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

MIGHT BE PRESENT

Dear Members of the Judiciary Senate Committee,

I am writing to strongly oppose HB 444 HD1 and all other House and Senate Bills that are similar to HB 444. The proponents of this bill are attempting to promote this as a human rights issue. This is not a human rights issue, this is a moral issue. I would liken it to an attempt, for example, to legalize the usage of crack, because there are "more people using it today than ever before." I would say that human rights issues deal with the fact that we all have the right to make our own choices to pursue " life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Moral issues deal with the fact that there are right and wrong ways to go about this. Human rights issues will never make sense or create true freedom for all, without the proper boundaries of a moral society. Our constitution was written with the presupposition that it would be applied by a moral people. Without the absolutes of what is right and what is wrong, according to the Creator of mankind, we are left to our own interpretation of morality. If you think about it, every immoral behavior is a direct result of either an attempt to "redefine" what God has already stated is immoral, or a blatant disobedience to His laws as well as the laws of our land. We are all subject to a moral code of conduct, whether by God's laws, or the laws of our land. Whenever anyone disobeys the law, the rights and freedoms of others are infringed upon. For example, whenever someone disobeys the rules of the road, like running a red light, or driving while drunk, do those behaviors not bear unwanted and even lethal consequences? If everyone decided they would stop obeying the rules of the road, would anyone be safe to drive on our roads? Legalizing immoral behavior will never ensure the rights for all citizens. It will, instead, lead to further confusion for future generations, and an increase in a population of people who want to further legalize other immoralities.

The proponents of this bill want to say that "times have changed." This is not true. I would say that while time has progressed, the moral codes of conduct were meant to be fixed and unchangeable by our Creator, who knows that whenever mankind is left to his/her own devices, chaos and every kind of evil ensues. **The moral codes of conduct were not meant to be altered by mankind, and SHOULD NOT be altered by mankind.**

The proponents of this bill already have all sorts of rights - the right to live their lives without incurring physical harm from hate crimes, the right to pursue whatever sexual orientation they want, the right to not be discriminated against in the workplace, etc.....but they should not have the right to re-define marriage for the rest of us, nor should they even have the right to usurp tax dollars to pay for behaviors, or consequences of behaviors that other people do not approve of. You CANNOT, in good conscience, vote to approve this bill if you can think further down the road of how this could affect future generations, and our society in general.

If you recall the history of every major civilization that has fallen to ruin, it's downfall was a direct result of the immorality of it's populace. Without a moral people and moral leadership, our freedoms and our society will cease to exist. It happened to Rome, who is to say that it can't happen to the United States? Until now, no one would've thought that the USA could plummet into the economic crises we are currently in. When you combine the immoral behaviors of greed, selfishness, wanting the good life now, instead of living within our means, allowing loans to people who obviously cannot afford to pay them back, borrowing more money to pay down debt, etc..... it is a current example of how immoral behaviors will lead us down the path of dire consequences, and loss of freedoms.

I sincerely urge you to oppose HB 444 and all other bills that attempt to legalize this immoral behavior.

Sincerely,

Cora Newman

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**From:** Linell Mathre [linell@kaimukichristian.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:03 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444 HD1

RE: HB 444 HD 1 Civil Union Bill  
Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9 am

Dear Chairman Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I would like to ask you to vote in opposition to HB 444 HD 1. The people of Hawaii have already voiced their belief that marriage should refer to a union between one man and one woman. There already is legislation in place protecting benefits for same-sex couples.

Thank you,  
Linell Mathre

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**From:** Melissa Kunz [mmkunz@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:04 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony of Melissa Kunz in Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Kunz

Captain Cook, HI

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**From:** Brian Lax [laxbk@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:08 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I would like to take this opportunity to express my concerns about HB 444 which is currently working before your committee. This is the bill regarding "Civil Unions."

Having read the bill, I am opposed to this legislation because of two items that I have seen in this bill.

The first is Section 1, SS-2, (Eligibility) paragraph (2) which states that in order to be eligible to enter a civil union, a person must be:

Of the same sex as the other proposed partner in the  
  
civil union

Based on this wording, this bill does not offer equal rights, but instead provides special priveleges to same-sex couples, since a man-and-woman couple are expressly NOT allowed to enter into a civil union.

The other section which bothers me is Section 3, which begins:

Except for part I of chapter 572, every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage," or any aspect thereof, shall apply equally to "civil unions,"

which proves that this bill is simply an attempt to sidestep the vote of 70% of Hawaiian voters in 1998 to define marriage as being between one man and one woman.

I urge you to vote against this bill.

Thank you.  
Brian Lax  
Waikiki

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**From:** David Tom [tomd012@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:37 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444, Tuesday, Feb 24, 2009, 9:00am, State Capitol Auditorium

Testimony for Senate Judiciary Committee

Chair Brian Taniguchi and Vice Chair Takamine,

We as a family strongly oppose HB444 and urge you to defer this bill in your committee. We participated in today's rally at the capitol in opposition to this bill. Eleven years ago, the state of Hawaii's voters overwhelmingly voted for marriage to be between a man and a woman. This bill attempts to reverse the voters' decision in everything except the term marriage.

Again, we oppose this bill and ask that it be deferred in committee.

Sincerely,

David A. Tom  
Rosemarie N. Tom  
Matthew K. Tom  
2510 Waiomao Rd.  
Honolulu, HI 96816

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**From:** Steffen Oeser [steffen.oeser@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:37 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
**Hearing Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Auditorium  
**Re:** Testimony of Steffen Oeser in Strong Support of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

There are many bills passed throughout the Nation that offer protection to the individual gay and lesbian. This bill follows in those footsteps and offers protection to the foundation of the issue, gay and lesbian relationships.

Hawaii has always been known for its welcoming and loving nature. It accepts millions of diverse tourists and visitors every year with open arms yet we are being asked to close our hands when our family here needs our support. Why should we not afford equal rights to those wishing to establish a more permanent and stable bond with the person that they love? The time has come to fully support gay and lesbian equal rights by offering them protection under the law in Hawaii.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Steffen G Oeser

Genomics Core Facility Supervisor, UH  
3330 Keahi St, Honolulu, HI 96822



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**From:** Ron Arnold [jonaarnold@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:43 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Senators,

I respectfully ask you to oppose this bill, as reciprocal rights have already become a reality for same sex couples in Hawaii. It is my conviction that this bill is a guise to grant same-sex marriage under the label of Civil Unions or, at the very least, an aggressive, pre-meditated step toward that end. The people of this state have spoken and the will of the people should not be circumvented by representatives who assume they know more/better than the informed and caring peoples of Hawaii. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,  
Ron Arnold, Pastor  
Kaimuki Christian Church  
808-735-1771

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**From:** Michael Esposito [mikeesposito@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:48 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Michael Esposito and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law as is required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,

Michael Esposito

620 Hind Iuka Dr.

Honolulu, HI 96821

Feb. 23, 2009

Jennifer Choi

88 Piikoi st. # 4303

Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: Strong Opposition to HB 444

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Se. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

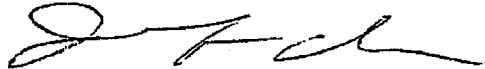
Dear Senator Taniguchi,,

This is concerning Civil Unions Bill HB 444. I strongly oppose to bill HB 444. It is against the natural world and against God.

I do not want to send my son to the foot ball team coached by a gay coach who can use the same men's locker room. I can not mention everything that will cause confusion by passing this civil union bill. I strongly ask you to vote NO to HB 444.

Thank you.

Jennifer Choi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Choi', written in a cursive style.

**Monday, February 23, 2009,**

**To: Senator Brian Taniguchi**

**From: Cindy Gomes**

**Attn: Senate Judiciary Committee**

**Rc: Meeting on Tuesday, February 24,2009 @ 9:00am (Auditorium)**

**Bill: Measure number: HB 444 HD1**

### **Opposition to HB 444 HD1**

**Please vote against the passage of bill HB 444 HD1. The morality issues are tremendously important for us and future generations. We should not condone this call for the same "rights" as man-woman marriages. It is detrimental to the public. I do not discriminate against a person choosing to live the way they prefer except when it infringes upon the majority of those opposed to an "alternative lifestyle". Civil unions between same-sex couples should not have the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a traditional marriage.**

**The cost to businesses will only increase, as they will put more burden on employers to provide health insurance, 401K benefits, or anything that allows partners as beneficiaries to allow civil union partners to participate in these programs by way of their "partner".**

**This measure will also allow other "rights" that will ultimately challenge many policies and issues that are already established. When they feel discriminated against they will cite the civil union as their "rights" being violated.**

**I strongly urge you to oppose the passage of bill HB 144 HD1. The people of Hawaii have already strongly opposed this matter and it should be respected and honored by our elected government officials such as yourself.**

**Sincerely,  
Cindy Gomes**

**FROM: Dawn N. O'Brien**

**TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL  
AUDITORIUM**

**FOR HB 444, HD1**

**DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI & JGO COMMITTEE,**

**Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.**

**WITH ALOHA,**

**Dawn N. O'Brien**

**PO Box 154, Kane'ohe, HI 96744**

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**From:** eileen mckee [meileen@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:35 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** In Support of Civil Unions

Chair Taniguchi  
Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

In Support of HB444 HD1  
2/24/09, 9:00 am, Auditorium

Testimony from: Eileen McKee  
Kihei, HI 96753

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony rather than appear in person. My testimony is in support of House Bill 444 - Relating to Civil Unions.

After having spoken with aides in a few of our legislative members offices regarding this issue, it seems that the folks that are against civil unions are reticent because they believe that the people spoke by voting back in 1998. The problem with that thinking is the majority should never be in a position to rule on minority rights. That's a litmus test that I surely doubt interracial marriage would have passed had there been a vote on it back in 1968.

I was also told that there is no real difference between reciprocal beneficiaries and civil unions, so therefore, this bill is not necessary. I beg to differ, and if you really believe that, I urge you to not stand in the way of progress, to not show up with a negative viewpoint but rather to bring your aloha to our community and allow this bill to pass unabated.

My partner and I have been together for almost 17 years. On a lovely Saturday morning this past July, we attended the wedding of a friend who had known her boyfriend for a mere 6 months. My reciprocal beneficiary was near tears as we witnessed the groom arrive half an hour late, inebriated and lacking any sort of love or focus for his momentous occasion. He joked through the entire ceremony, barely listening to the minister. It felt like a travesty, yet it was solemn in the eyes of the law. Within 4 months of that ceremony, the couple was separated, both now living in separate states.

We see many instances of these thrown together unions that fade in the blink of an eye, yet there we stand, supportive of other's rights, hopeful for their future and wondering when it will be our turn to stand in front of family and friends. Isn't it time we too, were all allowed to make this type of formal commitment? A civil union is not yet marriage, but we are accepting of the fact that this is as close as we can get under the current societal circumstances.

Please, let love rule, not hate. It is time for all to be included. Follow your conscience and include ALL of us in our diverse society. I respectfully ask that you support HB 444.

Mahalo,

Eileen McKee  
279 Alaume Street  
Kihei, HI 96753

---

**From:** Erin, David, Rebecca and Jonathan [thumbtied@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:01 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

RE: HB444 HD1

Dear State Judiciary Committee,

We strongly oppose HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions. In HB4441 HD1 it states that "every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "marriage" or any aspect thereof shall apply equally to "civil union." Passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions would make "marriage" and "civil union" virtually identical and indistinguishable except in name.

We would like you to maintain marriage or "Holy Union" as the joining of one man to one woman. We believe HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions is an attempt to redefine marriage to include same sex couples under the disguise of "civil union."

Marriage and family are the foundation of our society and the integrity of both must be maintained if we are to leave a legacy of order, strength and dignity for our children.

We respectfully submit this testimony to strongly oppose the passage of HB444 HD1 relating to Civil Unions.

Sincerely,

David Haynes  
Erin Kiyuna Haynes

---

**From:** F Cabbab [fcabbab@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:48 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony HB444 SB458

DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
TIME: 9:00 a.m.  
PLACE: AuditoriumState Capitol415 South Beretania Street

## A G E N D A

HB 444, HD1 (HSCR157) Testimony Status RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS. Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union. (HB444 HD1) JGO

Senators,

I will like to testify in opposition to HB444, SB458. I urge you to preserve traditional marriage. There are reasons why we have laws, rules, and moral restrictions. Not all change is beneficiary. Passing the same sex union bill will increase division, confusion, and probably other bills that are unusually unnatural. Such as brothers marrying sisters, fathers marrying daughters, adults marrying children, children marrying each other.

Please, be mindful in your decision on how you vote. Oppose this bill. With the issue of homosexuality, understand that there is a difference between skin color, ethnicity, and behavior. This is not a civil rights issue. This has nothing to do with prejudice or hatred. But that, we americans have been properly educated on what is natural and unnatural, what is immoral and moral.

The evidence of having homosexual genes or being born as a homosexual are not greatly supported, and I could testify to that. I am one who have lived this lifestyle. Gravely, at risk, I am willing to stand for what is true. I plead with you all, homosexual liberties cannot be the alternative american way for the people of Hawaii. Do not open a door that was meant to be shut 10 yrs ago. Some doors are just not meant to be re-opened. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Francine Cabbab



---

**From:** shong005@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:41 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444

Date:  
[Mon, 23 Feb 2009 05:39:36 +0000]  
From: [shong005@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:shong005@hawaii.rr.com)  
To: [jgottestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:jgottestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Subject: HB 444  
From: Gary & Margo Shon

To Committee: Senate Judiciary Committee

Measure Number: HB 444

Hearing Date-Time: February 24, 2009 - 9:00am

Re: HB 444, Civil Union

We feel very strongly against HB 444 and ask for your No vote on Bill 444.

We believe in the social framework and traditional marriage of between one-man & one-woman. This bill should not be allowed to pass in its present form.

Sincerely,

Gary & Margo Shon  
94-368 Kapuahi St #56  
Mililani, HI 96789

---

**From:** Ronkiyoshi@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:41 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Ronkiyoshi@aol.com  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Honorable Judiciary Members,

Thank you for all your hard work in these most difficult times in our country and our very own state.

It appears that more difficult times are rapidly approaching us and hard decisions will need to be made. Some of these choices may appear to be good on the exterior but will actually be the wrong choice if made. It will be the cause of our downfall not only for our state but our nation as a whole. The nation will be look at Hawaii as to what direction we are going as a multicultural state with our diverse ethnic heritage which is our strength. Regardless of our ethnicity we all share one common thing, GOD. He has guided us from the very start with His wisdom and we have been following Him so far. Please let us continue to follow what he has given us in the past.

Let Hawaii be the good leader for our nation and say NO, NO, NO TO Civil Union, with a NO TO HB 444 HD1.

Thank you again for your time and hard work.  
We are praying for all of you.  
God Bless.

Your Christian brother,  
Ronald Tamaye

---

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** tracynunes@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tracy Nunes  
Organization: Individual  
Address: PO Box 5074 Kaneohe, HI 96744  
Phone: 808-239-7005  
E-mail: [tracynunes@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:tracynunes@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Sir or Madame,

There is substantial argument against this bill based on social science and morality. However, I ask you to consider one thing and one thing only. The will of the people. Hawaii's people are not in support of this bill. You, our elected representatives are bound by law to support the will of the people and not enforce your own agenda. Please listen to the voice of your constituents.

Sincerely,  
Tracy Nunes

For Judiciary Committee Members & Senate President Hanabusa

RE: Opposition to HB 444 HD 1

Date of Hearing: Tuesday, 2/24/09 @ 9:00 AM (Auditorium)

Dear Honorable Chair Taniguchi:

We seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 HD 1 to legalize Civil Union in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage.

Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Please vote against HB 444 HD 1 or better yet do not even give it a hearing.

With grace and respect,

Sayoko Yamaguchi

Sayokoya@aol.com

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:48 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** kimi\_owenandowen@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Kimberly Owen  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 1257 17th Avenue Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 737-1290  
E-mail: [kimi\\_owenandowen@yahoo.com](mailto:kimi_owenandowen@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

Just say NO to homosexual/lesbian marriage and civil union. And stop undermining the people of Hawaii by sneaking in a bill that is basically the same thing as allowing for homosexual/lesbian marriage. It will not be good for our country it will not be good for our islands.

**From:** Kelly [ohananews@peoplepc.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:12 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony on HB444

May I receive confirmation from you that this testimony was received and that I will be able to testify in person at tomorrow's hearing? thank you Kelly

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Kelly  
**To:** [JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:JGOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:59 PM  
**Subject:** Testimony on HB444

Freedom... the great passion from which this country was founded on. Freedom.. to do as we please..or to do as we ought. On what basis do we make decisions today if not by a moral standard of right and wrong. If we begin to slide down the slippery slope of immorality.. then by what basis do we are we able to enforce other current laws.. Laws that forbid marrying more than one spouse since poligamy is currently outlawed. Laws that forbid incest [HRS\\_0707-0741.htm](#) , having sex with your mother, as satisfying as that might be to you, or necrophelia [HRS\\_0711-1108.htm](#), having sex with a corpse.. as sick as you want to get. What about bestiality.. that is having sex with your neighbors sheep or even man's best friend. What if you really felt a strong desire to copulate with your spaniel.. is that ok. And if these practices are not ok .. then on what basis do we include them in the law. Would it not be for morality? What about pedifiles.. don't they have rights too. Can't they do what they desire with consenting young children. Where do we draw the line. What is acceptable and what is unacceptable? What we are even talking about today, civil unions, was unthinkable a generation ago.. Are you willing to be the catalyst that generations from now will look back upon when they see the condition of our state and ask where did the roots of our Sodom and Gamorrah society come from. When did morality take a back seat to deviant desires. Sex between two men and sex between two women is immoral and dare I say it out loud.. WRONG. Giving rights to such behaviors only makes it easier for associations like ManBoyLoveAssciation to pursue their own rights to have sex with whomever they choose. Here is where we stand on principal and choose to do what we ought in the name of Freedom and Rights and Morality. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

THIS IS TESTIMONY STRONGLY OPPOSING BILL HB444 , HEARING SET FOR 2-24-09 at 9am..  
Kelly Tomioka  
Kailua, Hi  
96734

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2009

Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 AM

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

My name is Whitney Vellalos, I am a resident of the State of Hawaii, and I oppose HB 444 HD1.

This bill is not about civil unions. It is disguised to redefine marriage as intended by God and has already been decided in 1998 by Hawaii voters. 70% of Hawaii's voters amended the Hawaii State Constitution, which allowed the Hawaii State Legislature to Reserve Marriage to Opposite-sex Couples. I strongly, urge you not to redefine marriage. Choose to echo the will of the people that support marriage between one man and one woman.

---

**From:** Kathryn Rawle [Krawle@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:46 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Dwight Takamine  
**Subject:** HB444 HD1 hearing 2/24

Dear Senators,

I am writing in support of civil unions and urge you to pass HB444 HD1. I'd like to quote a close friend of mine who is gay:

"Our families need the legal protections and benefits of civil unions (marraige in everything but name), because without them they aren't recognized as families at all. In every state there are hundreds of benefits for us and our families that only come with such recognition. Without it our children don't get the benefit of two parents in the eyes of the legal system. The adults aren't treated as family by insurance companies, the healthcare system, the state tax apparatus, or any other institution. Which means I could be denied access to [my partner of 20 years] if she were in an accident and dying in the hospital."

In the name of fairness and love, please pass this bill.

Kathryn Rawle  
64-809 U'ikeoni Street  
Kamuela 96743

887-0320



---

**From:** Karen Tone [karentone@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:43 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** All Senators; Sen. Roz Baker; Sen. Robert Bunda; Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland; Sen. J. Kalani English; Sen. Will Espero; Sen. Carol Fukunaga; Sen. Mike Gabbard; Sen. Brickwood Galuteria; Sen. Josh Green; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa; Sen. Clayton Hee; Sen. Fred Hemmings; Sen. Gary Hooser  
**Subject:** Bill Number & Title: HB444 HDi Relating to Civil Unions-STRONG OPPOSITION

Testifer: Karen Tone  
Bill Number & Title: HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 AM  
Hearing Location: Sate Capitol Auditorium  
Subject Line: Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD1

I, Karen Tone, is in strong opposition on the above mentioned bill relating to Civil Unions.

Karen Tone  
5443 Kawaihau Rd.  
Kapaa, HI 96746

---

**From:** Magdiel J Vilchez [magdiel@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 444, HD1

Testifier: Magdiel Vilchez  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

I am e-mailing to voice my strong opposition to HB 444. HB 44 would allow same-sex couples to enter civil unions with the same rights as those in traditional marriages. In 1998, Hawaii's people voted to keep marriage between one man and one woman. I, too, believe that traditional marriage should be upheld for the sake of our children. Our nation's children will benefit most by being raised in a families consisting of one mother and one father in a nation that supports and encourages the growth of healthy families. Please help protect traditional marriages and vote in OPPOSITION of HB 444.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Magdiel Vilchez

---

**From:** pablo@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444, HD1

FROM: Paul Boddy (Resident Of Hawaii)

TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM

FOR HB 444, HD1

DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE,

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.

WITH ALOHA,  
Paul Boddy  
(Hawaii Resident)

---

**From:** Olin Lagon [olin.lagon@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:01 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** Sen. Gary Hooser; Sen. Colleen Hanabusa  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Aloha e Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

My name is Olin Lagon and I write today in strong support of civil unions, H.B. 444, HD1. This bill would extend civic relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that all of Hawaii's citizens are afforded equal treatment under the law. Hawai'i is famous for compassion and aloha spirit. Polls show that the majority of our Island residents support this bill and believe that all of our residents should be treated equally and will respect. Thus, I respectfully request vote yes on HB 444, HD1 and that you urge your colleagues to do the same.  
Mahalo for your consideration.

E malama pono,  
Olin Kealoha Lagon  
2950 Laelae Way  
Honolulu, HI 96819

---

**From:** joe.haiku [joe.haiku@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:00 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** TRUE Marriage Designed by the Lord

I would like to express my profound opposition to House Bill 444, the hearing of which will be held by the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, February 24, 2009. This bill would grant same-sex couples (or "civil unions" as they are referred to in the bill) the same rights that are granted to married heterosexual couples. As a devout born-again Christian and ministry leader, I strongly believe that the traditional marriage between one man and one woman--not one man and one woman OR one woman with another--is the most sacred relationship created by God for the purposes of procreation and also for the husband and the wife to cherish and enjoy for life.

The Lord says clearly in His Word, the Holy Bible:

This [is] the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.--Genesis 5:1-2 (KJV)

Did you notice He did not say, "Male and male He created them?" Did you also notice that He said, "and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created?" According to Genesis 2:18-25, God had called both Adam and Eve Adam because when God caused Adam to go into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs and then fashioned Eve from it, He presented her to Adam in the Garden of Eden and the two--the man AND the woman--became one flesh and one another's helpmate.

Let me ask you this:

"How can a man and a man OR a woman and a woman have intercourse with one another in "matrimony" the way God had originally intended it to be used within the heterosexual marriage in order to bring forth our next generation?"

Therefore, I proclaim that the marriage as God had created it should be kept the way it is because if such a sacred union of two was to include two gay people, everyone who endorses such abominable "unions" will have to answer the Lord for it.

sincerely,

Jolene Cardenas

[joe.haiku@gmail.com](mailto:joe.haiku@gmail.com)

Co-founder, J's Pastoral Ministry and active member of Calvary Chapel/Honolulu

---

**From:** Robin Nagasako [rnagasak@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:42 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Fw: HB 444

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Robin Nagasako <rnagasak@yahoo.com>  
**To:** JGOTTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:32:31 PM  
**Subject:** HB 444

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Measure # HB 444

Please stop this bill from going into effect. I support traditional marriage between a man and a woman. I believe that all men are created equal but that does not mean that we all have the same benefits. We have different benefits depending on age, employment, social status, and the list goes on. Marriage is a sacred institution that should have its benefits as well.

Please consider the ramifications of passing this bill.

Please hear the public's cry on this matter. Yesterday, thousands rallied at the state capitol in opposition to this. Pastor Wayne Cordeiro and Judge Elwin Ahu of New Hope Christian Fellowship gave opening words of wisdom and encouragement. Mike Gabbart and other representative and senators were present as well. Today, about 75 or so people gathered there to rally.

We appreciate you taking the time to read and consider this.

thank you,

Robin Nagasako

---

**From:** pearlnorthgate@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:06 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Stop Civil Unions (testimony)

Name: Rita Ebisu

Committee: Senate Judiciary Committee

Date and Time: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM

Measure number: HB 444

Testimony: I stand on my testimony in strong OPPOSITION to House Bill 444. The people of Hawaii have already spoken in 1998 against same-sex marriage, and a civil union is just another title for same-sex marriage. Please protect the right of the children of Hawaii to grow up with a mother and a father. Please protect traditional marriage between one man and one woman and keep our society in Hawaii healthy and strong.

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**From:** Lynne [lchi@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:49 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony

Dear Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations,

I support Civil Unions. Please present my support at the hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium.

Aloha,  
Lynne Constantinides



---

**From:** Patricia Chung [pattikm@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:50 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony Opposition to HB 444

Name: Jake Chung Jr.

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Date and Time of Hearings: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 at 9:00am

Measure Number: HB 444 HD1

Subject: Opposition to HB 444 HD1

My name is Jake. I'm of Hawaiian ancestry. My family lineage goes back hundreds of years. My family is wide spread throughout the islands. This land is all we have, this is our home.

I'm disappointed that a few of you choose to make decisions that would affect the lifestyle of the island people. Your appointed position is by the people, you're to represent the people. This was already voted against. The majority of the people already said, NO!

I'm writing to inform you that I oppose HB 444 HD1.

Sincerely,  
Jake Chung Jr.

---

**From:** F. Donna Hughes [fudohu@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:49 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before this committee. My name is Fujiko Donna Hughes and I am here to express my support for House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

I am not gay nor is anyone in my family. I am a mother to a five year old daughter and a wife. I do believe, as an American, we need to separate politics from religion and uphold constitutional rights no matter what a person's sexual preference. I urge you all to consider your duty and keep that in mind as well. Keep religion aside and consider the equality of all Americans.

Civil unions are supported by the majority of the public based on a recent study done in 2007. It is part of the Democratic party platform and has President Obama's full support as well as the support of a majority of the Hawaii House of Representatives. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many. I ask that you support HB 444 and appreciate your careful consideration.

Mahalo,  
Fujiko Donna Hughes  
95-993 Ukuwai St. #2604  
Mililani, HI 96789

---

Windows Live™ Hotmail@:....more than just e-mail. [Check it out.](#)

## **Testimony Opposing Passage of HB 444 HD 1**

Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Taniguchi, members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

We wish to express our opposition to the passage of House Bill 444 HD 1, the Hawaii Civil Union bill. Traditional marriage between one man and one woman has been the standard since the beginning of time. Yes, we oppose this bill because of our Christian heritage, but we also feel that everyone should oppose this bill since the “one man and one woman” standard for marriage is the internationally accepted definition for marriage. For the people of Hawaii to attempt to change this definition of marriage would be presumptive at the very least.

Since Hawaii’s primary industry is tourism, such a change in the law may cause many of Hawaii’s tourists to reconsider whether they should visit.

We encourage you and to vote **NO** on this bill which could have a serious long term negative impact on this State and our families.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

George and Susan Krueger  
1568 Molina St.  
Honolulu, HI 96818  
(808)422-4603

---

**From:** AnnaMarie Among [annamariamong@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:12 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB-444 HD1

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
RE: HB-444 HD1

My name is Anna Marie Among of Kapolei, Hawaii. I want you to be aware of my firm and strong opposition to HB-444 HD1. It is my determinate belief that Civil Unions should not be given equal status to Traditional, one man one woman Marriage. Families consisting of Man Husband + Female Wife = the normal, healthy, stable foundation of our civilization and the appropriate environment for children to be nurtured in. I love and care for all the people of our beautiful Hawaiian islands. But I cannot and do not support any legislation that elevates homosexual relationships to the status of marriage. The very existence of humanity is dependent on this vital, good and wonderful union of man and woman. This alone should speak volumes to you. The commitment and bonds of traditional marriage are strategic to the integrity, maintenance and growth of our society on every front.

Please stop HB-444 HD1 and any other legislative package that you face which undermines traditional marriage and families. Please preserve and honor these family values.

Respectfully,  
Anna Marie Among  
92-831 Makakilo Drive #64  
Kapolei, HI 96707  
February 22, 2009

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Regular Session of 2009

DAY, Date  
Time

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NUMBER 444 HD1, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

TO THE HONORABLE BRIAN TANIGUCHI, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE

My name is Bree'Ana Vellalos and I am a senior in high school. I strongly OPPOSE HB444 HD1, which allows for same-sex couples to "marry". While some may deny this fact, it is clearly stated in the bill. "Every reference in the Hawaii Revised Statutes to "married" shall apply equally to the status of partners in a civil union" (HB 444, Section 3). Simply put, HB444 HD1 is allowing and recognizing "marriage" between same-sex couples.

Interestingly, a similar bill was passed in Massachusetts. Brian Camenker explains in his article *What same-sex "marriage" has done to Massachusetts* that this bill would make it "unconstitutional not to allow same-sex "marriage" (Camenker, 2008). It goes on to show the devastating affects of this bill.

- Because of this bill, "the rates of HIV / AIDS have gone up considerably in Massachusetts. This year public funding to deal with HIV/AIDS has risen by \$500,000" (Camenker, 2008).
- Because of this bill, "the Massachusetts Legislature has felt the need to **spend more money every year to deal with skyrocketing homosexual domestic violence**. This year \$350,000 was budgeted, up \$100,000 from last year" (Camenker, 2008).
- Because of this bill, "\$700,000 of taxpayer money [has gone] into the public schools" (Camenker, 2008), to teach the homosexual agenda.

As I am on the threshold of becoming an adult, I realize that our current economic crisis will have a great impact upon me. As you know our state is currently \$230 million in debt. Do we have an additional \$1,650,000 to earmark as a result of civil unions? We need to learn from Massachusetts' mistake. Instead of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on the ramifications this bill will bring, we should be putting this money toward jobs for the 5.5% who are unemployed in Hawaii. Also, we could use this money to help fund the \$27.2 million needed for education. I strongly urge this committee to vote **NO** on HB444 HD1.

---

**From:** Barbara Denman [barbaradenman@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

To Senate Judiciary Committee

From Barbara F. Denman  
PO Box 390902  
Keauhou-Kona, HI 96739

**Vote NO on the Civil Union Bill >>>HB444 HD1**

on Feb 24, 2008

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**From:** Samantha Lorenzo [smlorenzo\_23@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:28 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** OPPOSE: Civil Union Bill

Aloha Senate Judiciary Committee~

Regarding Public Hearing Scheduled for:  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00am  
Measure Number: HB 444

My name is Samantha Lorenzo of Manuku Street in Waianae, it is with great honor that I have the privilege to express to you my stance on the Civil Union Bill on Same Sex Marriage "House Bill 444 and Senate Bill 458" I would like you to know that I OPPOSE House Bill HB 444 and Senate Bill 458.

It saddens me to even think that we, the State of Hawaii would even reconsider to revisit this issue, I was a Senior in high school in 1998 when this issue came up and back then I was also OPPOSED to same-sex marriage and my position still stands of being OPPOSED to same-sex marriage.

Please keep the values, morals, principals, integrity, righteousness and purity of our Aloha State of keeping marriage to traditional marriage of ONE MAN and ONE WOMAN.

Please, I would like to kindly ask you to protect traditional marriage and say "NO" to the civil union bill. Just a friendly reminder that the people of Hawaii have already spoken in 1998 overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage.

With the many communications you received regarding this matter, I would like to thank you for taking the time in reading my petition and I pray that you will consider my request to say "NO" to Civil Union Bill on same sex marriage "House Bill 444 and Senate Bill 458."

God grant you the wisdom and guidance you need in order to lead our State towards Righteousness. May God bless you and your family with His hand of protection and favor beyond what you could ever dare ask or think because you have been chosen for such a time as this to uphold righteousness.

Thank you very much,  
Samantha M. Lorenzo  
84-575 Manuku St  
Waianae, Hawaii 96792

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**From:** wesleyfoundation@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:22 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

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

I am a United Methodist clergyperson who strongly supports HB444. I strongly feel that all of Hawaii's citizens should be afforded equal civil rights which includes unions between committed couples, whatever their orientation. Our gay brothers and sisters have been excluded for far too long. Treating all citizens equally is compatible with Christain scriptures.

I encourage our state to help lead the nation in acting justly toward all our citizens, especially our gay citizens who contirubute to society in tremendous ways and pay the same taxes as heterosexual citizens, as well. Let's really "live aloha" and pass this bill.

Mahalo!

Sincerely,

Rev. Charlene Zuill  
Director and campus minsiter  
Wesley Foundation, a United Methodist campus minstry at UH Manoa

home address:  
1351 Center Street  
Honolulu, HI 96816



Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary Government Operations Committee:

My name is Marty Guerriero. I come to you from Maui to speak to you as the President of Both Sides Now and as a concerned citizen.

Formed in 1981, Both Sides Now is an organization dedicated to the education and celebration of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community and their many friends and supporters on Maui. It is our opinion that all people should have the right to the equality afforded by Civil Unions no matter what their sexual orientation. This country was founded on the principle that we are all created equal. House Bill 444 is a recognition of and agreement with that foundation of America.

I have many gay and lesbian friends who have lived their lives as partners. Like any relationship, they have gone through good times and bad, but they have one thing that holds them together. That is their love for one another.

By having House Bill 444 pass, these partners will have the same legal rights as any couple in Hawaii. I ask you to give equal rights to all the people of this State. I ask for myself and I ask for my friends.

Rob Boettner and Don Bradstord committed for 24 years  
Michael Waddell and Llevellyn Lightsey committed for 35 years  
Jim and Leon committed for 31 years  
Scott Dean and Ron Calvert committed for 32 years  
Steve Hansen and Karl Hensel committed for 14 years  
William and Jerome committed for 12 years  
Sky Lewis and Evan Foster committed for 10 years  
Gary Canier and Owen Howson committed for 20 years  
Martin and Alfred committed for 36 years  
Patrick and Peter committed for 13 years  
Steven Kruey and John Barberick committed for 10 years  
Richard Anderson and John Lyle committed for 12 years  
Gerald (Stephan) and Richard, committed for 21 years  
Timothy Grisier and H. Michael Fong committed for 12 years  
Jose Serano and Chris Larwood committed for 7 years  
Mark Jesuroga and Dennis Chamberlian for 13 years  
Janet and Jane committed for 41 years  
Caron Barrett and Deborah Vial committed for 10 years

Joseph Bella (age 26) and Michael Percello (age 25) committed for 8 years

We thank you for your attention to this matter and ask you to vote YES on House Bill 444.

Martin Guerriero  
President  
Both Sides Now

20 February 2009

Testifier: Yolanda Richardson  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: 24 February 2009  
Hearing Time: 0900  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

**SUBJECT LINE: STONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

I am strongly opposed to HB 444 HD1. I am an African American, and I take offense to homosexuals comparing themselves to my heritage. It is a proven fact that we were born with our race. There is no fact of homosexuals being born the way they have chosen to be. This country was based upon the foundation and principles of God, and the union of a man and a woman to be married. In the Holy Bible, Leviticus 18:22 states: Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. This civil union is based upon deception and lies.

Statistics for the Department of Health shows As of December 2007, a total of 3,011 Aids cases were reported by health providers, 58.2% OR 1,752 of these individuals are known to be deceased, and 73% of these individuals with AIDS are **homosexuals!** With those statistics, how can you raise children in your home, knowing that you will not live long enough to raise them. Statistics also show that where there is no traditional marriages (mother and father), children are most likely to suffer behavior problems, be abused, be sexually active, and end up in jail as adults.

Marriage is a pre-legal institution and has existed since the beginning of civilization in every known society. I stand on my conviction as a Christian, and I strongly oppose HB 444 HD1.

Thank you for your time.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:42 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** eoura@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Eri Oura  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 3161 Ala Ilima St. 809 Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808-542-0348  
E-mail: [eoura@hawaii.edu](mailto:eoura@hawaii.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9:00 a.m. in the Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 hd1 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I went to the rally held at the capital Sunday afternoon and witnessed with my own eyes the bigotry that was being reproduced through the religious message. It made me ill, emotionally and physically. I couldn't believe that so many people would turn out to support such a heterosexist agenda. Honestly, I could not express myself without being verbally attacked by another person or being gawked at by crowds of people. To be completely honest, the opposing agenda is WHACK. Keiki are learning from such a young age to hate people who do not follow the norms of Christianity - which are also arguable.

To not support this bill would be to support discrimination!

It hurts me to know that EQUALITY is not on the agenda for these religious groups. It hurts me even more to think that my own government of elected officials may not support modeling equality for its citizens.

With that, I ask for your support for HB 444. Mahalo.

---

**From:** Tin Shing Chao [tinchao@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:18 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** My written testimony - OPPOSE HB 444

**Date:** February 22, 2009

**To:** House Committee on Judiciary  
Rep. John Riki Karamatsu, Chair  
Rep. Ken Ito, Vice Chair

**From:** Tin Shing Chao, Lai Ling Ng, Sung Yan Chao, Lok Yan Chao, Yuen Wah Ng, (Hawaii Resident and Voter)

**Re: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions**

We are Hawaii voters. As we followed the HB 444, it seems to FLYING through the House of Representative in a breeze. DID the Representative really read the language and understands the true meaning of the bill?

A few years ago the HAWAII PEOPLE has made their voice clear, over 70 % voted against this issue in 1998 "Same Sex marriage" issue. Please give some thoughts to this bill - Civil Unions = Same Sex Marriage without the Title

**STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, Relating to Civil Unions**

1. Civil Unions = Same Sex Marriage without the Title

Civil Unions (CUs) are simply same sex marriages by a different title.

The bill text reads: "Same benefits, protections, and responsibilities as marriage.

Partners to a civil union lawfully entered into pursuant to this chapter shall have all the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law, whether derived from statutes, administrative rules, court decisions, the common law, or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a marriage validly entered into pursuant to chapter 572."

2. The People Have Spoken: NO to Same Sex Marriage

Civil Unions re-open the community controversy. The people of Hawaii have spoken on the same-sex marriage issue and have overwhelmingly rejected the idea. The decade of the 90s saw countless hours of debate to finally resolve this contentious issue. Let's not re-argue the same sex marriage fight via civil unions when the people have spoken so clearly (nearly 70% support for the constitutional amendment).

3. Hawaii Confers Significant Benefits through the Reciprocal Beneficiary Law

a) Part of the compromise during the same-sex marriage debate was passage of Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary (RB) legislation. The RB law provides significant benefits to many more people in need – separate from their sex partner status.

b) Under the current RB law, elderly siblings residing together can access important benefits. Under the civil unions proposal, only same-sex couples can access the benefits.

Some of the RB benefits include:

- health care coverage
- hospital visitation privileges
- uniform health care decision making rights

- property rights, including tenancy in the entirety rights
  - probate rights, including survivorship rights
  - worker's compensation
  - state employee retirement beneficiary rights
  - automobile insurance coverage
  - mental health commitment approvals and notifications
  - family and funeral leave
  - disaster relief loans
  - public lands leases
  - legal standing for wrongful death
  - legal standing for victim's rights
  - domestic violence family statuses
  - University of Hawaii facility use
  - Anatomical gift rights
  - Government vehicle emergency use
- c) If there is something the Legislature wants to fix with the current set of benefits, like the health insurance provisions, it should simply go ahead and fix the RB statute.

#### 4. Reciprocal Beneficiaries were and are Progressive & Have Been a Model for Discussion Elsewhere - Vast Majority of States Grant NO Benefits

RBs were a progressive solution at the time and still provide many more benefits than the vast majority of states in the country. Hawaii remains progressive. Most states have neither CUs nor RBs. Most states simply provide NO SUCH BENEFITS.

#### 5. Hawaii has many more Pressing Problems – Re-Arguing the Settled Same Sex Marriage Issue is an Unwise Use of Limited Resources

Hawaii is facing serious problems affecting many more people than this narrow, controversial and divisive issue. It is hard to understand why the Legislature would want to re-open this wound that divided our community for so many years without any clear identification of the need for it.

#### 6. Civil Unions Sought Now but Marriage Benefits WITH Title Change Will Be Sought Next

It is absolutely undeniable: if you were to pass civil unions, gay marriage advocates WILL be back arguing "that everything is the same and fundamental fairness suggests you should simply change the title as well." Gay marriage proponents recently in New Jersey demonstrated against civil unions.

They declared nothing but same-sex marriage, including the title, was acceptable and demanded both title and benefits.

#### 7. Actual Reason for Bill Still Unclear

Proponents should be clear about the primary reasons for this bill. Many of the items frequently mentioned are already available under the current law. Some benefits not currently available are limited state-only tax benefits and parenting rights.

#### 8. Legally Complicated and Socially Explosive - Children Adversely Affected

The two most controversial aspects of this will be: parenting issues and what is taught to children about the law. How will the law confer parenting benefits and responsibilities to the same sex partner of a mother without adversely affecting the parenting rights of the mother and the parental rights of a birthfather? The civil union aspects related to children and parenting raise extremely complicated issues of family law and are unfortunately focused on the rights of the adults and not on the needs of the children.

This opens a nearly-unending number of legal possibilities, which will require complicated and expensive litigation to resolve. Again, what justification exists to upend our legal system for a very small number of cases?

Finally, what will be taught to children in public school? Will children be taught that the law says same-sex couples are just like married couples but with a different title? If not, why not? That would be the law. If

it would be taught, then, we're right back to the heart of the same sex marriage debate and this issue is among the primary reasons people opposed same sex marriage in the first place.

Mahalo for your kind consideration we ask you to oppose HB 444.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:14 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** michellerancheta@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Michelle R. Ancheta  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Meakanu Ln Wailuku, HI  
Phone: 242-7968  
E-mail: [michellerancheta@aol.com](mailto:michellerancheta@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:



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**From:** Dana Forsberg [dana.forsberg@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:21 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support HB444 HD1

**Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Auditorium  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009 9 a.m.**

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in **strong support** H.B 444 HD 1 Relating to Civil Unions. There is no reason gay and lesbian couples should not be afforded equal treatment under the law. A majority in in our state and across the country now believe this. **In fact people around the country and the world are increasingly looking at our state as a leader in championing civil rights and diversity, particularly with our own President Obama in office.**

What kind of message will we send if Hawaii now steps backward in fear?

**I am a heterosexual female and have no problem with affording loving gay and lesbian couples in our community the rights and protections I enjoy. I urge you to vote yes.**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Forsberg

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**From:** juanita whalen [facetheson@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:15 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 RELATING CIVIL UNIONS

TO: JGOT (Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee)  
FROM: Juanita K. Whalen  
RE: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 RELATING CIVIL UNIONS  
PUBLIC HEARING: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 AT 9:00 AM

My name is Juanita Whalen, I am a mother, grandmother, and business owner and am strongly opposed to HB 444 HD1.

It was made clear back in 1998 that the will of the people in Hawaii was (and is) to uphold traditional marriage between one man & one woman!

With all the pressing matters in our state and country, why is the legislature re-opening such a divisive and controversial battle that has already been settled by "the people", when time, energies, and tax dollars could be utilized in more critical areas such as economy, housing, domestic abuse, child abuse, crime & drug abuse, education, etc...etc...etc..????

Listen, you know very well that every long standing society has viewed marriage as a union of male & female, and when societies deviate from the standard of marriage as the foundation of its society, they inevitably deteriorate & eventually disintegrate.

I am extremely concerned about future generations and you know clearly that children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom & a dad.

Civil unions are NOT in the best interest of Hawaii's children; this is my primary concern--OUR CHILDREN. The majority of our society is made up of traditional marriages, without this we would not have a stable society.

Please protect our children and future generations from the instabilities and detrimental consequences that civil unions would result in. The attempt to legitimize gay marriages in this blessed state under the guise of this "civil union" proposal is unacceptable and unwanted as the people of Hawaii have already stated!!!

Even the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services offers programs to strengthen Traditional Marriages.

To each of you, our public servants, please hear the people and Vote Against HB 444 HD1 Civil Unions!!!!

Sincerely,  
Juanita K. Whalen  
808-621-2163  
Wahiawa, HI 96786

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**From:** kipunialoha@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:52 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Kristi McCabe  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m.

I oppose this bill because I believe in TRADITIONAL marriage, which is a marriage between a man and a woman. I also believe that it is bad for the community, the future of our children and it is political suicide for you to pass this bill.

If you legalize this bill, it will mess up PARADISE and what GOD created it to be. Let the other states deal with this problem and the wrath of God and let's continue to live in His RIGHTEOUSNESS and by God's laws and NOT the people's!

Thank you for your time and may God Bless you and your decision,

Kristi McCabe

---

**From:** Jo [jqueja1018@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:21 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: JoAnn A. Queja  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

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**From:** kawaii@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:19 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to HB 444 HD 1 relating to civil unions

Testifier: Helen Salvani  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444, HD 1 relating to civil unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 Hearing Time: 9:00am Hearing Location: Auditorium

For Judiciary Committee Members and Senate President Hanabusa

Dear Senator (Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and Bunda/ Gabbard/ Nishihara/ Slom)

(Or Senate President Hanabusa)

We seek your wisdom and courage to oppose HB 444 to legalize Civil Unions in Hawaii. In our hearts and in our minds, we affirm the overwhelming mandate of the vote in 1998. The people of Hawaii will know that Civil Unions are just another term for Same Sex Unions/Marriage. Please do not put the people of Hawaii through this divisive debate again, especially during these difficult economic times. Be mindful, that the people of Hawaii are tolerant as a society because we learn to accept our differences. But we are held together by sharing common values that strengthen our family bonds. Please vote against HB 444, or better yet, do not even give it a hearing.

With grace and respect,

Name: Helen Salvani

Address or e-mail: [kawaii@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:kawaii@hawaii.rr.com)

**Testifier:** ASHLEY LITTLE

**Bill Number and Title:** HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

**Committee:** Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

**Hearing Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009

**Hearing Time:** 9 am

**Hearing Location:** Hawaii State Capitol

## **STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1**

Good morning Senate Judiciary Chair Brian Taniguchi and Vice Chair Dwight Takamine.

**My name is Ashley and I'm a former lesbian. I flew in from the Big Island and this is the first time I have attended a Hearing. I Strongly OPPOSE HB-444 HD1, the Civil Unions Bill. And this is why.**

This is my story. I tell it with boldness and I tell it with conviction. Please hear what I have to say, for this is what God has done; Jesus Christ has done this.

I grew up in a home with two brothers, a mom and a dad. As far as I can remember, I favored my dad, idolized my brothers and shunned my mom. I grew up not knowing who I was and feeling very different from others. Where did I belong? Where did I fit? I was also a young athlete who started playing competitive sports at the age of 5 years old. From a very age I was also very active sexually. I even saw my first pornographic magazine when I was around 7 or 8, which greatly affected me.

When I was 12 years old I was seduced into a relationship with another girl. Part of me was disgusted by it but part of me liked it. I felt there was something in me that craved the attention, the closeness and even the sexual aspect of the relationship. One year later, my parents found out that we were having this relationship and forbid any contact between us. I was sent to a counselor and 'swore I would never do it again.' That was probably one of the most shameful experiences in my life. I felt abandoned and rejected by my family who had no idea how to handle the situation. It only left me feeling more lost and confused than ever.

Soon after that I began another relationship with another girl and by the time I was 16, I had been in 3 relationships with women, was failing school, suicidal, in gay bars on the weekends, drinking heavily, and hanging out with those that accepted me; those living the gay lifestyle. I felt at home with them. I felt accepted. It was the direct opposite of what I was getting at home.

In High School I went in and out of relationships with women. I had no idea how to have healthy same sex friendships either. The friendships I did have and the relationships I had were very dysfunctional.

I went to college on an athletic scholarship and things didn't get any easier for me. I 'came out' in college thinking that if I just let everyone know 'who I am' than things will get easier. Some of my stress went away from trying to hide who I was but who I was on the inside and the struggles I had within, never went away. There was still something missing in my life. I got heavy into prescription pills (addicted to Ritalin and Adderall), was a heavy drinker and partier, I had a secret pornography addiction, I was a sex addict, my relationships were still unstable, codependent and dysfunctional, my relationship with my parents was non-existent, my grades were not very good and I was searching for truth. You see, I grew up going to church. My parents were even leaders of the youth group at some point. But I couldn't understand how a God could make me with these feelings and desires (I was sure I was born this way b/c as long as I could remember I felt these feelings) and then say it was wrong. I searched and searched for Truth. Did New Age have the answers? Well, they tell me that I can do whatever I want and whatever makes me happy is good. Wow, that sure sounded good. What about some of these "New

Religions?" Could they tell me that my lifestyle was created by God and that what I was doing was ok? You bet they could. Was there even a God? Creation spoke for itself so that was out of the question. But none of it sat with me. I was never 'at peace' with any of it. I still had questions. I could never reconcile it with what happens after you die. We are all going to die and it scared me to death to think of what happens afterward. Is the Bible correct? If it is....I have no clue what to do. If it isn't...then who can tell me what happens so I can be secure with the choices (and some things that weren't necessarily a conscious choice such as being gay) I'm making?

Then in my senior year of college (The University of South Carolina- Go Gamecocks!!), I got into a relationship with another girl that I thought I was going to be in the rest of my life. My life still consisted of the partying, pornography addiction, sex addiction and co-dependency (my girlfriend helped get me off pills) but I was coming to a place in my life where I knew something had to change. Because of the values passed to me by my parents (they did a lot of great things as parents) and what I learned by being an athlete all my life, I had a set of morals, ideals and disciplines inside me, that even though I was caught up in all this junk, I always had it in me to succeed in all that I did. So, I applied to the Coast Guard. I was going to go in as an officer after I graduated University.

One weekend in October 2002 (my last year at university), I went home to my parents house for the weekend. My mom came up to me when my dad wasn't there, with tears in her eyes telling me that she thinks dad is having an affair with someone. I was shocked! She said she had found some emails in their account from some lady online. So, being the 'spy wannabe' that I am, I went to the computer and searched for some evidence. I have no idea how I found these emails, but somewhere in the computer (without going online or on their account) I found emails from my dad to a lady who worked for him and some from the lady to my dad. It was made clear that something was going on outside of my mom and dad's marriage between my dad and this woman.

So I told mom, showed her the emails and tried to hold myself together. I hated the fact that I had to tell her this stuff. There's nothing worse than seeing pain in your mom or watching your mom cry.

I left their house, and left them to deal with their issues. I stood up 100% for my mom and became someone she could share her heart with. As hard as it was listening to my mom's pain and having to be a friend to her, as well as her daughter (which I don't recommend), it began to bring us together in a new way. We talked on the phone more than we ever had talked in our life. Even though it was hard for me, a part of me really enjoyed our talks.

My dad denied everything for about 2 weeks, even when evidence was plainly obvious. One night my mom woke up in the middle of the night thinking about a particular scripture in the Bible. She felt in her heart that she was supposed to give this to my dad. The next night the same thing happened. This happened for about 4 nights in a row. One night when they were together, my dad finally broke and confessed the truth. He cried tears that my mom said she never saw before in the many years they have been together. He was a broken man and he cried out to God for help.

My mom tells me that it was then, when my father acknowledged what was going on and repented, that she felt in her heart to start praying for me, big time!. She put me on prayer list after prayer list. Only God knows how many people were actually praying for me during that time. Then one day, when I was alone, I got a phone call from my mom. We started talking and she began to tell me what happened to her that day. She said (and I quote), "Ashley, you won't believe what happened to me today! I got into the car this morning and the first thing on the radio was 'Does your husband or loved one have a problem with pornography? Then come by Manna Church and pick up this teaching.'" She then began to tell me, "Did you know Ashley, that in the Bible it says quite a few times that 'the sins of the father are placed upon his children to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation (Exodus 20:5, 34:7, Numbers 14:18,

Deuteronomy 5:9)?” My heart began to beat fast. My hands began to shake and I felt the Presence of God (I knew it was God) around me that was strong. She said, “If and when the father (or mother. It means both) repents, **that curse will be lifted off his children.**” It was as if, at that moment, something literally lifted off of me and I felt the Presence of God like never have before. I started to shake and I said, “Mom I have to go. I don’t know what’s going on with me but I have to go.” I got off the phone and hit my knees and started weeping. Something powerful was happening to me at that moment and all I could say was, “Jesus I give you my life...I am yours...take my life...it’s yours.” I said that over and over as I sat on my knees, crying. My muscles ached, my body hurt, and I knew God was setting me free and making me new. It was one of the weirdest feelings and experiences I have ever had. But I knew, something more powerful than me, was with me and setting me free from the things that had separated me from Him and kept me in bondage for so many years.

After about 30 minutes I got up and walked outside. It was as if a veil had been lifted off my eyes. Everything looked different. It was crazy! I immediately felt different. Because I had such a crazy experience, my first thought was, “Dang man, I need a beer!” So I went to the store bought a six pack and came back home. I sat on my porch, lit a cigarette and opened up a beer. When I took a sip of the beer, it was like I had never had a beer before and it tasted like the first sip of beer I had ever had. It was gross. That was very strange coming from someone who drank A LOT of beer. The cigarette was still nice though ha-ha, so I took me and my cigarette inside, opened up my Bible and began to read it. For the first time in my life, I knew that if something happened to me that day, and it cost me my life, I would go to heaven and be with Jesus. There was absolutely no doubt in my mind that my eternal life was sealed in me that day. I was finally at peace....total peace!!

It has been 6 years, 3 months and 26 days since God set me free from the bondages of homosexuality and I gave my life to him. After that night, I ended the relationship I was in, told all my gay friends and straight friends what had happened, started going to counseling and 2 months later, after I graduated college, moved back home with my parents. I had no friends and no idea what I was going to do with my life. What I did know was that my dad was attending a group for men struggling with sexual addiction and God was slowly beginning to put my family back together. One year later, I joined a missionary organization called Youth With a Mission. When I landed in Fiji in 2004 to become a missionary, I felt as if I was coming home. I knew what I was created for.

I have been absolutely transformed in these past 6 years and a bit. I have realized how issues with my mom, the lust that came from my dad (and his father) that was passed on to me as a young child, issues with my dad and brothers, all contributed to my same sex attraction. My attractions have changed, my struggles have changed, the way I want to dress has changed, the way I see myself has changed, the way I walk has even changed. I was not born gay and I do not believe anyone else is. If anyone has the right to think they were born gay, it was me. I was a very broken, hurt, abandoned, emotionally abused young girl and out that came a desire to connect on a very deep level with other females, reject my femininity (to some extent) and distance myself from men.

I am still on a journey of healing and restoration. My God is creating in me the woman he desired and created me to be. I am becoming whole. My family is being restored. I owe it all to the love, kindness, compassion and power of my savior Jesus Christ. My change is genuine. Listen to it and take heed. Same sex unions are not healthy, they are not God’s design and they will not benefit society. God created male and female to represent who he is as masculine and feminine. We are created in God’s image, male and female (Genesis 1:27). We are created with a longing to become one with another; one with the opposite sex. If that desire is for the same sex, then it is an indicator that something is wrong. There are reasons why someone is attracted to the same sex. My testimony is proof of that.



---

**From:** Eric Lum [ericlum2158@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Eric Lum

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

Dear Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony.

I am a member of the Democratic Party and an HGEA member. I believe marriage is between one man and one woman. In 1998, more than 70% of Hawaii's people, voted this. I believe that more harm than good would come by the passage of HB444. It would cause many negative ramifications.

I would like you to **oppose HB444**.

Sincerely,

Eric Lum

---

**From:** Margaret Scow [jonlovesmargaret@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:05 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strongly OPPOSE HB-444 HD1

To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
From: Matthew Schaetzle  
Re: HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions  
Date of Hearing: Tuesday, February 24  
Time of Hearing: 9 am  
Location of Hearing: State Capitol Auditorium

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

**I am a former homosexual and I am writing to you about the Civil Unions bill HB-444.** I am **STRONGLY** and let me say again **STRONGLY against passing this bill.** As seen in other states that have passed similar bills the ramifications for Hawaii will be overwhelmingly BAD. I will never vote for a Senator or any other government official that supports the destruction of the fabric of our society. That fabric is the institution of marriage between a man and a woman. There is so much evidence to support this fact that anyone deceived into thinking the opposite would in my opinion, not be worthy of holding public office our great state of Hawaii or in the great nation of The United States of America.

My motive for this letter to this Committee is not to hate anyone, as it has been portrayed by supporters of the homosexual lifestyle. I promote love to those who are hurting inside from pain they either refuse to face, or are so wounded that they are not able to face it yet. Sirs, I know that pain, it took me years to come to terms with the wounding that brought me to a sexual and gender identity crisis in my life. How can you support a bill that will pave the way for more of this **confusion to be drilled into our nation's children** simply because there are so many that are taking the easy way out and embracing the lie that comes from their incredible pain and suffering. If you vote for this bill you will be directly held responsible for supporting the lie and promoting perversion to our children and their children. Is that really what you want to be known for? I believe this group of men, the Senate Judiciary Committee are better than that.

Please do some simple research about men and women who have done the hard work of understanding why they are attracted to the same sex and have walked away from the gay lifestyle after finally finding out what happened to them. Sexual abuse and abuse of all kinds, painful and terrible experiences in early years of life, this is what i am talking about. If you really look you will see that promoting and **supporting civil unions between same sex couples will only increase the social and economic brokenness of our society.**

If you would like to talk to me directly I would be more than happy to help you understand what happened to me and how I was loved through the process of change. I am married now since 2005 with 2 incredible daughters, I wouldn't change any of it for anything in the world. You see Senators, I did the hard work and it took me years to do it, I am still doing it, and I am living proof that this bill is a lie. **Please do not vote for HB-444 HD1, please. For my children's sake, and for yours.**

Sincerely,

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:05 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** jeannine@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jeannine Johnson  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 5648 Pia Street Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 373-2874  
E-mail: [jeannine@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:jeannine@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

This bill is a slap in the face to all the voters of this State. Please oppose this bill.

Testimony: In Opposition to HB444 - HD1  
Name: Mary G.M. Tom  
Committee: Senate Judiciary Committee  
Date of Hearing: February 24, 2009  
Time: 9:00 a.m.

I speak in opposition to HB444, which proposes to give equal benefits to civil unions as to those already given to married couples.

First, as has been repeatedly pointed out and is obvious to all, these benefits are already provided for in the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act in 1997. What possible reason could you have for passing another law stating the same thing except that now the words, "every reference to marriage shall apply to civil unions?"

It is obvious that the intent of this bill is to inch us closer to legalizing same sex marriage. You as elected lawmakers are charged with the responsibility of making decisions that are for the good of all. Same sex marriage is not for the good of our society, neither our state, nor our country.

The rallying cry for same sex marriage has been a loud "equal rights!" This is NOT an equal rights issue. We all have the legal right to marry whomever we choose, with a few restrictions, like age and family relationships. We are all equally restricted from marrying a close relative. We are also equally restricted from marrying someone of the same sex. There is no inequality here.

If you remove the gender restriction, why not remove the restriction against siblings or parents and children marrying? A brother marrying a sister? No worse than a man marrying a man or a woman marrying a woman. Normal, common sense restrictions are in place and have always been.

For the sake of the good of society, please do not remove those restrictions.

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

I would like to extend my gratitude to you for allowing me the opportunity to testify. My name is Tommy Takahata and I am here to urge you to support HB 444 HD1-civil unions.

As many others here at this hearing, I am seeking to have my civil rights which I believe are deserved. I am probably much younger than many of the others here as well, and as such probably have not been exposed to nearly as much discrimination. However that doesn't mean that I haven't had to fight either. I've experienced the hate other people have for people who identify as LGBT. I've had to give up on some dreams as well because people are simply not ready to accept me for who I am.

I am one of the many Eagle Scouts who have attained their rank here in the Islands. I started at the very beginning as a tiger cub almost 13 years ago, and I have to admit that it was one the most rewarding experiences. I have always wished to continue on with the program by becoming an Assistant Scout master for my troop, and give back as much as I was able to gain through the program. However that dream will most likely never come true because the Boy Scouts of America strictly prohibits participants who identify as LGBT.

However, I believe bills such as HB 444 have the potential to change that. I firmly believe that if the government gives recognition to Same Sex couples, it will show organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America that America does not discriminate and that if they want to represent America's fine young men cannot either. I suffered a lot of agony while I was still in the program because of my sexuality, because I knew that I would have to hide it and constantly lie about it going against the first principle of the scout law: trustworthy. I felt like I had to bite my tongue every time I had to say that and I don't think it was right that I had to feel like that. My trustworthiness should not have be under fire because of my sexuality because it has little to do with how able people are able to have trust in me to do what they ask. I don't think that anyone deserves that kind of emotional turmoil, because life is hectic as it is. As such, I sincerely do not wish for anyone else to have to live through that kind of experience.

For that reason, I strongly urge you, the members of the Senate Judiciary and Government operations Committee, to pass HB 444 HD1 so that it can go the floor. I believe strongly that by passing this bill, you are showing that Hawaii and America are about equality and fairness. You are telling all future generations of Hawaii's residence both Straight and LGBT, that our state will not allow inequality to persist within these islands. And you are also saying to those young and uncertain individuals that you will not discriminate against them for who they are.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to Testify.

## **Testimony Opposing Passage Of HB 444 HD-1**

My name is Cheryl Williams. I have lived in Hawaii since 1987 and I am a registered voter. I love this State. I would like to express my opposition to HB 444 HD-1. The passing of this bill will change the way of living in Hawaii in ways that we cannot begin to imagine. I understand that some of the people in favor of this bill are saying that they feel like the blacks of the 1950's. I am a black person and I feel insulted by that. I am sure that these people have not yet had their families sold, been sold into slavery, made to use separate bathrooms or water fountains; just to list a few of the things that black people of the 1950s had to endure. Furthermore, I know of gay people who are members of the Exodus group, who came to know God and now are former gays. I have not heard of a former black person. All of the black people that came to know God are still black. Marriage consists of one man and one woman. It should stay that way. Please vote NO on HB 444 HD-1. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Cheryl Williams  
94-343 Keahilele Place  
Mililani, HI 96789  
Phone: 625-4665

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:16 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** elliot\_dragon@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** Please vote no on HB444.doc

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tawna E. Chun  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 47-483 Pakai Pl Kaneohe, HI  
Phone: 808-223-1453  
E-mail: [elliot\\_dragon@hotmail.com](mailto:elliot_dragon@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Please vote no on HB444. We voted as a state that same sex marriage was not a legal alternative. This bill overrides the intent of the amendment. The reciprocal benefits law already affords most of the legal privileges of married couples.

---

**From:** Wm Lawson family [lawsons@ilovejesus.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:08 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil Union bill HB444

My name is Laurie Lawson. I have been a resident of Hawaii since 1977. I am a wife of 29 years and a mother of 3 children. I am submitting my testimony today to urge the legislature to vote against the passage of HB444. Your vote against HB444 is not a vote to deny civil unions to homosexual couples. Your vote against HB444 is a vote to support and uphold and protect the institution of marriage and to affirm the will of the Hawaii people who overwhelmingly voted to amend the constitution in 1998 to define marriage as between one man and one woman. I was one of those voters who voted for the marriage amendment in 1998 and it concerns me that the will of the Hawaii people is now in jeopardy.

There was a rally at the State Capitol on Sunday, Feb. 22 in support of marriage between one man and one woman. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend as I was flying back from the mainland and due to flight delays, didn't arrive in Hawaii until 3 a.m. Monday morning. The newspaper had a feature article about the Interfaith Alliance and estimated there about 75 people who showed up in favor of civil unions. However, several paragraphs below, the newspaper reported there were over 2000 people who came out against HB444 and in support of traditional marriage. That should have been the headliner, the fact that there were over **2000** people who came out against the civil union bill and in support of traditional marriage. This proves that the people of Hawaii are indeed, overwhelmingly in support of traditional marriage and are urging the Legislature to not allow HB444 to be passed.

The group that is supporting the Civil Union bill is a small minority. They are vocal, they are relentless and that's why they get the headlines. They claim this is a civil rights issue, but it is not. They are not being harmed because they can't be married or have civil unions. Homosexual people have the same rights as everyone else. They are afforded due process under the law, they can vote, they can own property, they have the right to an education, they have legal rights where they can write wills and give their property to whomever they wish. There are laws on the books to protect homosexuals against discrimination in housing and employment. The Reciprocal Beneficiary Law was passed in 1997 to afford same sex couples even further protections, most notably the workplace medical insurance benefit. So I ask, why are homosexuals demanding a civil union bill (which is really gay marriage)? What do they want except to redefine marriage and demand that their way of cohabitating is the same as a heterosexual couple. It is not, and even biology proves it is not.

So I ask the Legislature today, to please, take note of your constituents, those who have written you, asking you to please, not pass HB444. Your vote against this bill is a vote in favor of Marriage, for preservation of an institution that has proved the test of time. It is sacred, it is honorable and should be protected.

Thank you  
Laurie M. Lawon



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**From:** Roland & Michelle Resurreccion [resurreccion@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:15 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1

From: Roland and Michelle Resurreccion

To: Judiciary Committee Members

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – State Capitol Auditorium

For HB 444, HD 1

Dear Chair Brian Taniguchi and JGO Committee:

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as traditional marriage- which is between one man and one woman. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote NO on this measure.

With Aloha,

Roland and Michelle Resurreccion  
91-642 Makalea Street  
Ewa Beach, HI 96706  
Email: [resurreccion@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:resurreccion@hawaii.rr.com)

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**From:** Rita K-K [seeknfind@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:29 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition HB 444  
**Attachments:** 17.jpg; imstp\_animation\_butterflies\_en\_020908.gif

*To: Senate Judiciary Committee  
February 24th. 2009 9:00am  
From: Rita Kama-Kimura  
Re: HB-4444*

*With all due respect, I was distressed to hear how quickly and easily HB444 passed through the House with very little publicity.*

*It now lies in your hands.*

*As a Christian, a Mother and Grandmother I am very concerned about the world we will be leaving our children, thus I ask you to vote against this bill.*

*If we truly love our children how with good conscience could we even contemplate the changes that will further destroy the social moral fabric that we once held so sacred.*

*We are all aware that this is one step away from the legalization of "Same Sex Marriage" and this of-course will lead to our fragile education system which is already somewhat dysfunctional.*

*Do we want a repeat of what is currently happening in Massachusetts? Second graders receiving book showing two men kissing, a father of a kindergartner arrested because he insisted on being notified prior to teachers discussing homosexuality or transgenderism, so he could opt out and yes I said kindergarten. Parents voices are being ignored because "same sex marriage is legal".*

*Do I hate gays and lesbians? Of-course I don't. If that is the life-style they choose, then so be it. However, when they decided that we must accept their way of life as legal and normal to be taught to our children as an acceptable/normal lifestyle then the answer is no. And that I will fight not in hate but with great concern.*

*This is not a political issue but a moral issue.*

*That should be the goal of our elected officials, to represent the wishes of their constituents not to placate special interest groups.*

*After all the people of Hawaii have spoken in opposition to Same Sex Marriage and Civil Union in the past. Now watch, will you listen to the people? Please do not ignore our voices.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

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**From:** david Yamane [david.yamane@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:31 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444

**Committee:** Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

**Hearing Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 9:00 a.m.

**Place:** Auditorium

**Re:** Testimony of David Yamane in Strong Support of H.B.  
444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

I write in strong support of H.B. 444, HD1 Relating to Civil Unions.

This bill would extend full relationship protections and responsibilities - giving couples greater ability to care for those they love. Further, it represents a substantial step forward toward ensuring that gay and lesbian couples are afforded equal treatment under the law.

It is just and appropriate to extend more protections to lesbian and gay couples than those currently provided under Hawaii law. H.B. 444, HD1 will further extend rights to gay and lesbian couples in several significant ways. To identify a few, current Hawaii law does not permit same-sex couples to adopt jointly a child in a single court proceeding. Current law also fails to protect members of a same-sex couple in the event the couple chooses to separate - there are no provisions in the law for judicial dissolution of the relationship or for support of a former partner. Additionally, adopting this law would provide a vehicle for private employers to offer health benefits to same-sex couples.

Besides, the legal reasons why I support this bill, I have personal ties to this bill. I am currently in a 2 year relationship and we are currently making plans for the future. I am studying medicine at the John A. Burns School of medicine. I was born and raised here in Hawaii and all of ohana live here. I have numerous ties to these islands and I wish live here in the future. As there would be a great need for doctors in Hawaii, as a budding doctor I believe that I would be a valuable asset to the state. However, considering my future I would expect legal protections for myself and my future partner. A bill like this would encourage me to make a life in Hawaii and help provide healthcare to its people.

I believe that it is incumbent upon our elected officials to ensure that all residents of Hawaii are treated equally. H.B. 444, HD1 represents significant progress in attaining that goal. Thus, I urge you to vote yes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

David Yamane

Medical Student, John A Burns School of Medicine.

3330 Keahi, St. Honolulu, HI 96822

---

**From:** debra laorosa [deb\_laorosa@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:32 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** testimony for HB444

My name is Debra Laorosa and I am asking for our Senate Judiciary Committee to oppose HB444 civil union for Tuesday, Feb 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM.

Please hear the voice of the people of Hawaii in regards to this issue, HB444 civil union. We place our help in the hands of the Legislators to stand behind and for the people who support them.

Please vote no on this bill.

thank you for allowing the people of Hawaii to collaborate on this issue.  
Sincerely, Debra

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**From:** June Kalohelani [jkalohelani@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:33 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444 HDI Relating to Civil Unions

to the Committee:Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

:Tuesday February 24th,2009. 9am in Auditorium

Measure number HB 444.

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB444 HDI

From June Kalohelani

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**From:** leann uno [blondieuno777@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:36 PM  
**To:** Sen. Brian Taniguchi  
**Cc:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

LeAnn Uno

HB444HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Senate Judiciary and government Operations

Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

9:00am

State Capitol Auditorium

STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD 1

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:26 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** grouch-on-holiday@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Danielle Rodrigues  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone: 808-230-1667  
E-mail: [grouch-on-holiday@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:grouch-on-holiday@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I believe that ALL people should have the right to marry the one they love. This bill is a step in the right direction. A man and a woman should not be the only one's able to wed. I think that If 2 men or 2 women love each other and want the same rights, they should have them. If it is illegal to treat others differently based on race, gender, sexual orientation, etc..., then why is it legal to ban them from being like everyone else in this specific matter? Discrimination is immoral, no matter the reason. When the decision is made, please think of what it would be like if YOU couldn't marry the one you loved, because you were being discriminated against. How would you feel if you didn't have the same rights as everybody else? Please consider all that I've written, this bill is very important to all of my friends and family, let alone all of the LGBT community.

Rev. William J. Albinger, Jr.  
PO Box 411  
Lahaina, HI 96767  
Email: [BillAlbinger@aol.com](mailto:BillAlbinger@aol.com)

HB444 – Civil Unions

Dear Senators :

I urge you to pass out of Committee HB444. If it is held up in Committee, I would urge you to vote to pull it out of Committee and to the floor of the Senate. My support of civil unions is based both on my religious faith and the Constitution of Hawai'i which guarantees all its citizens equal rights and protections under the law. Denial of equal rights and protections under the law must be based on a compelling state interest and not on someone's fears, insecurities, personal religious beliefs or ideology.

I am attaching my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee non HB444 and my parish's testimony in support of civil unions when it was before this Committee in 2007. I believe allowing civil unions is good public policy promoting committed stable relationships and providing them with the legal certainties that they require.

I reject the arguments of some of your members that Hawaii's gay and lesbian citizens must somehow be denied equal legal rights and protections for others to feel secure in their own identities or relationships or because of legislators' personal religious or ideological views. As sincere as those beliefs may be, it is that kind of thinking that kept non-Caucasian people in this country oppressed for centuries.

This issue is one of equal right for all law abiding citizens and it will not go away! Do justice on Tuesday and treat all of our sons and daughters equally.

Very truly yours,

the Rev. William J. Albinger, Jr.



---

**From:** Michael Bennett [michaellarkinbennett@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:26 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil Unions

**Dear Senators:**

**I am writing this letter as a plea for you to vote yes for Same-Sex Civil Unions. We live in state that embraces societal diversity. Many visitors to our islands are awe-struck by the peaceful way we live in harmony with one another. Same-Sex Civil Unions are another way that we can show the country that we love and care for our brothers and sisters and support their choice to take vows before their friends, family and God. It is sad that so many members of organized religion want to strip away the rights of our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters. Luckily we live in a country that allows people to choose their own interpretation of spiritual principals and that organized religion does not dictate our government. All citizens of this great country and more importantly the State of Hawaii have a right to pursue happiness. I am so happy to live in a state where so many people from so many different walks of life come to make commitments to their partners. It is beautiful to see human beings, whether they be Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Hindu or nondenominational take that leap of faith to share a life together.**

**As many of us know each culture has different rituals and traditions that are a part of their marriage ceremony and we as citizens of the State of Hawaii have the privilege to participate in many of these ceremonies since the islands draw many happy couples here for their special day. It has been far too long that we have denied these civil unions to Same-Sex couples. I have faith that Hawaii will not make the same mistake that California did with Proposition 8. I have faith that Hawaii will not allow a select group of religious zealots assist in robbing the rights of the minority. The wonderful thing about being an American is being able to have the same rights as every other American. Whether I am sitting at a commitment ceremony for two women on the beach in Lanikai, or at a Catholic church watching two**

**friends say the traditional marriage mass and sealing their lives to death do they part, I know that I am in the presence of love and the spirit of Aloha. Same-Sex couples deserve to be recognized by the government. I believe that Hawaii is the place to show the rest of the country that we, as people of these beautiful islands, not only embrace diversity but we embrace love and make it official.**

**There are many teens who are struggling with the fact that they are either lesbian or homosexual. That struggle is frightening. Many of those teens lack role models. Being able to see many gay and lesbian couples proclaim their love publicly and have it be recognized by the State of Hawaii gives them hope; it helps show them that they are okay. This is not an issue to be taken lightly. Many statistics show that most teenage male suicide is committed by homosexual teens. We cannot stop the hate that is being preached in the churches on this island but we can help our children to feel good about by providing healthy role models and letting them know that they can find someone to share a lifetime with whether they be gay, lesbian or straight. What better place to start spreading aloha than the islands of Hawaii. I will not pass judgment on the fundamentalist Christians, because they have their right to live their lives the way they wish what they do not have is the right to tell others how to live their lives. If this bill does not pass it will be akin to telling Black people that they do not have the right to marry or that Korean people cannot practice medicine or any other scenario just as ridiculous and driven by ignorance. Hawaii has a tradition of acceptance and love and now we must put it to the test.**

--

Very Truly Yours,

Michael L. Bennett, CLA

808-371-7485

[michaellarkinbennett@gmail.com](mailto:michaellarkinbennett@gmail.com)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:23 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** zookeep@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Kipling and Amy Brumm  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 94-1084 Ho'ohale St. Waipahu, HI  
Phone: 808-664-5309  
E-mail: [zookeep@earthlink.net](mailto:zookeep@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:

Dear Sirs/Madams of the Hawaii Senate;

We desire to express our displeasure with you people for not representing the majority on these islands that elected you. The people have clearly spoken some time ago on this issue. How is it that less than one percent of the population has your ear while you are deaf to the rest of us. One only has to look at the recent history of our country to analyze what happens when the electorate does not follow the desires of the people. The successful eugenic policy that allowed redefinition of human life and freedom to remove it from our bodies has resulted in a vacuum in our society numbering in the millions. Those who would be working right along side us carrying their tax burden are missing, meaning the working class have to make up the difference. As with that case we can use the word for your current work-a perversion of the truth. Changing something from it's normal purpose to something that is abnormal. Marriage has always been for a man and a woman. To give these rights to those who by nature can not possibly share the basic procreative function contained in the historical context of marriage is a perversion of it's purpose.

We the people are not stupid because we aren't lawyers. Call it "civil union" by "solemnization" or whatever you want. It's just marriage redefined. I encourage you to have the courage to do the right thing for all the people not just those few who yell the loudest. Respectfully hoping to be heard- Kip and Amy Brumm

---

**From:** Brian & Pat Foster [bpfos@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444

It seems so simple to us: Vote yes on HB444. Think of it this way, if someone in your family was gay, especially if it were your son or daughter, you would want that person to have the same rights as any other citizen.

As it stands now, a gay person is deprived of many of the basic civil rights that most people enjoy. This is not about faith or philosophy; it is about granting freedom and justice to all. As Americans, all of us need to pull together to get our country headed in the right direction. Our economy is steadily losing ground, and we need every single person to do everything possible to stop this trend.

A yes vote on this Bill would send a clear message to open-minded people everywhere that Hawaii truly is the Aloha State. The economical benefits of a yes vote would readily be apparent in Hawaii. A state so dependent on tourism needs to welcome all visitors, and treat them (and our residents) with the respect they deserve, even if their lifestyle differs from our own.

We are counting on you to show aloha and vote yes on HB444.

Mahalo,

Brian and Patricia Foster

---

**From:** Jaemar Kekahuna [liigirlmj@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:49 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Opposition to HB 444 HD1

Jaemarlene Kekahuna  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
9:00 a.m.

I oppose this bill because I believe in TRADITIONAL marriage, which is a marriage between a man and a woman. I also believe that it is bad for the community, the future of our children and it is political suicide for you to pass this bill.

If you legalize this bill, it will mess up PARADISE and what GOD created it to be. Let the other states deal with this problem and the wrath of God and let's continue to live in His RIGHTEOUSNESS and by God's laws and NOT the people's!

Thank you for your time and may God Bless you and your decision,

Jaemarlene Kekahuna

---

**From:** Barbara Polk [BarbaraPolk@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:19 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support for HB 444

Testimony from Barbara Polk in support of HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions, for the hearing before the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee, February 24, at 9:00am.  
(Address: 1251 Heulu St., Apt. 501, Honolulu 96822)

February 22, 2009

**TO:** Chair Brian Taniguchi, Dwight Takamine Vice-Chair and  
Members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee

**FROM** Barbara Polk

**RE:** Support for HB444 Relating to Civil Unions

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

I was in my teens and living in the South in the mid-1950s. At that time, many states still banned marriage between people of different races. I remember the arguments then—that inter-racial marriage was opposed by God, that it turned people's stomach to think of a white woman and a black man kissing or having sex. They argued that inter-racial marriage would destroy marriage, would be the end of civil society, etc., etc. Of course the dire predictions did not happen, and today, as we look at the dynamic mix of people in Hawaii, we know that we are the richer for the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to rule those laws unconstitutional. And today we recognize the arguments made against inter-racial marriage for what they were--as bigotry, pure and simple.

Yet today we hear those bigoted arguments again, opposing civil unions for same sex couples, seeking to deny fellow citizens full equality in our society. Do not bow to these voices—they have not served us well in the past and do not now. Your responsibility as a State Senator is to abide by our state constitutions, to protect and provide equal rights for all. Please vote Yes on HB 444.

---

**From:** ESTHER MACHADO [esthermachado@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:17 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; Sen. Gary Hooser  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* STONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

From: Raynard Gene Machado

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00 am - State Capitol Auditorium

For HB 444, HD1

Chair Brian Taniguchi and Committee Members,

**I AM OPPOSED TO HB 444, HD 1**

HB 444 will require Hawaii to recognize same sex marriage and civil unions from other states and countries. The State will then have to provide benefits to same sex couples in the same manner as opposite sex marriages. This is not right. Please vote **NO** on HB 444, HD1. Providing equality to same sex unions may result in these couples also suing churches for refusing to allow weddings.

It may also result in Gay couples asking schools for equality in any teaching materials related to marriage.

Our children will only know the value of marriage if the definition remains clear and consistent and not subject to the changing whims and legislation of man.

For the sake of our children and our future, please do not legalize same sex civil unions. Do not pass HB 444, HD1

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**From:** jodi [jnahinu002@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:59 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

My name is Jodi K. Nahinu, pastor of Lahaina Gospel Fellowship, and I am writing this testimony in strong opposition and hope that my previous email will be attached to this. Leviticus 18:22 states "You shall not lie with a man as with a woman, it is an abomination." The Bible is clear on the issue of Civil Unions and I pray that you too will uphold the truth.








February 23, 2009

To whom it may concern:

I oppose bill HB444. It is a sneaky way of passing legislation that the people of Hawaii oppose. Say no to civil unions and say no to homosexual/lesbian marriages. It will not be good for our country and it will not be good for our islands.

Respectfully yours,  
Vance Owen

Call  , write  , fax  , e-mail us  , or just stop by 

[www.owenandowen.com](http://www.owenandowen.com)

Ph: (808) 943-OWEN(6936) Fax: (808) 943-219 e-mail: [vance@owenandowen.com](mailto:vance@owenandowen.com)

Hours: Tuesday to Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closed on Sunday & Monday

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**From:** Yoshimura [dwyoshi12@hawaiiantel.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:14 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Good Day All,

**We oppose HB 444.**

Uphold the will of the people who voted 70/30 in the past that marriage is between one man and one woman.

Let us not let special interest groups manipulate what the people you represent want through the guise of "Civil Unions."

As lawmakers you know the significance of setting precedence which leads to further change.

Father of eleven,

Dean Yoshimura MT (ASCP)  
Laboratory Director

Ruben's testimony for HB444.txt

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

First of all, thank you for some minutes of your time. My name is Rubén Fernández Asensio and I'd like to express my support for the House Bill 444 for Civil Unions. Although I'm not a US citizen, I'm writing in behalf of my fiancé Chadwig Seiji Miyasaki, born and raised in Wahiawa. I want to voice the injustice that is being inflicted on him.

We have lived together since we met almost three years ago and can't imagine the rest of our lives without each other. I'm earning a language degree at UH Manoa. However, the low demand for that degree and the current economic downturn have extremely reduced my chances of being employed. Given that federal regulations allow me only full-time employment that is directly related to my major, lawfully remaining in the US after graduation is almost impossible.

For this reason, Seiji has no choice but to come with me to Spain, where we'll marry in front of my family, which has already accepted him as one of our own. As my legal spouse, he'll have the full rights of any foreign husband and will gain permission to permanently reside there or anywhere else in the European Union.

At any rate, life there won't be easy for us. Not knowing the language of the country, Seiji will depend economically on me and his family for a long time, which will strain our marriage. Moreover, he won't be able to settle back in his homeland for as long as we're married. Essentially, his own government is stripping him of his civil rights as a US citizen and forcing him into exile for the only crime of loving me. I can't see any difference with the plight of Japanese Americans that were rounded up and herded into detention camps during the last war just for their particular ancestry. You don't decide whom you love, just as you don't choose your family. Why are we being denied the constitutional right to happiness that other US-foreign couples enjoy?

I know that immigration law is not directly contingent on the 444 Bill, yet I thought our case might give you an insight on what is really at stake in the long run. Local decisions do make a difference for both good and bad. In 1996 the federal government passed the so-called Defense Of Marriage Act that causes Seiji's troubles because the Hawai'i State Supreme Court had tried to challenge discrimination. Times have changed though. President Obama promised to recall the DOMA, but it will be difficult for him if so few states approve civil unions. Will his own state let him down?

Hawai'i doesn't have to be a pioneer anymore, and is not alone and helpless. Instead, it risks to lag behind. It's time to reverse that wave of unjustified panic that originated in Hawai'i and swept this country. Please, support this bill. Please, be brave and build our future. Please, don't sit for history to just happen on you but make it. You have to set a moral standard in the fight for civil rights, you have to send a message to the rest of the United States. Please show that Hawai'i won't endorse any further discrimination among American citizens.

In short, if you really support Hawai'i's families, please help keep Seiji's family together. Don't separate him from his aging parents.

Thanks for your appreciation. Sincerely,

--

Rubén Fernández Asensio

MA Candidate  
Department of Second Language Studies, UH Manoa  
Department of Languages & Literatures of Europe & the Americas, Spanish division, UH Manoa

2322 Fern street

---

**From:** West Kauai UMC [west-kauai-umc@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:13 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Civil Unions

Aloha,

I wish to go on record in **SUPPORT** Of Civil Unions in the State of Hawaii. We cannot let the leadership of this state be swayed by religious leaders. This is a matter of equal Civil Rights for every person in the state and **NOT** a religious matter!! I urge full support and rights for all wishing to enter into a civil relationship.

Thank You.

Rev. James E. Brooking  
West Kauai United Methodist Church  
PO Box 298  
Kekaha, HI 96752  
808-337-1464  
808-346-7557

---

**From:** ESTHER MACHADO [esthermachado@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:09 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony; Sen. Gary Hooser  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

From: Esther Machado

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @9:00 am - State Capitol Auditorium

For HB 444, HD1

**IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD1**

Aloha Chair Brian Taniguchi and Judiciary Committee Members:

In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal to providing benefits-without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.

I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.

Thank you,  
Esther Machado

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**From:** Nicole K Shinoda [nshinoda@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:57 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD1  
**Attachments:** HB444.doc

Nicole Shinoda  
Honolulu, HI 96821  
(808) 469-2170  
[nshinoda@hawaii.edu](mailto:nshinoda@hawaii.edu)

Attention: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

RE: HB 444 Relating to Civil Unions

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 3009 @ 9:00 AM – State Capitol Auditorium

### **I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444**

Just as in 1998, I am confident that the majority of people from the State of Hawaii and the nation still strongly uphold the belief that marriage is between one man and one woman. I also agree with traditional marriage, and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 444**, because it will allow the marriage of same-sex couples by a different title, civil unions.

Marriage is made up of more than two people who love each other; it is a sacred covenant designed by God. It is natural and beautiful. One of the obvious purposes of marriage is procreation. This natural process is not possible for couples in civil unions. Those in same-sex relationships cannot provide the nurturing roles of both father and mother, which are so essential to development of children. HB 444 will only promote and increase the number of our nation's children who are raised without a mother or father.

If civil unions become equivalent to traditional marriages, religious organizations, social service organizations, and privately owned businesses will be negatively affected. If an organization or business owner(s) does not agree with civil unions or same-sex marriages and declines to marry a same-sex couple, offer adoption services, etc., they may face discrimination lawsuits. As a result, HB 444 would force those who do not believe in civil unions and same-sex marriages to provide marital and family planning services against their moral convictions.

Some may argue that two people should be able to marry if they love each other. If the institution of marriage is based solely on love, why would polygamists or adults and minors be prevented from marrying? If marriage is for the benefits, what would prevent any two people, such as business partners or friends, from entering a civil union simply for the monetary benefits? If HB 444 becomes law, it will open the door for other forms of civil unions and marriages.

Since traditional marriage between one man and one woman is the building block of society, we should work toward strengthening marriage, not weakening it or demeaning its significance. The passage of HB 444 will be sending a mixed message to our children about the importance and sacredness of marriage. For the protection of traditional marriage and the future of our nation's children, **please vote in OPPOSITION of HB 444.**

Thank you very much for your time.

---

**From:** David Houle [houled001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:45 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Concerning HB 444

David and Olive Houle  
95-1003 Hololea St.  
Mililani, HI 96789  
Cel (808)-783-4545

2/22/2009

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

This testimony is concerning HB 444 which will have a Public Hearing Scheduled on February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM at the State Capitol Auditorium.

My family and I are absolutely 100% opposed to making legal so called "CIVIL UNIONS".

The people of Hawaii (OVER 70 PERCENT) voted to reject so called "homosexual marriage" in a referendum vote approximately ten years ago. The sentiment of the people of Hawaii HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE THAT AFOREMENTIONED VOTE .

THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII AS WELL AS THE PEOPLE OF EVERY STATE ( IN WHICH A SIMILAR REFERENDUM VOTE WAS TAKEN ) HAVE REJECTED HOMOSEXUAL MARRIAGE AND/OR HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS BY 70% OR MORE.

CLEARLY, THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII DO NOT WANT HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS OR HOMOSEXUAL MARRIAGE LEGALIZED.

Please act on behalf of the people of Hawaii, as is your sacred trust to do so as elected representatives of the people of Hawaii.

The people of Hawaii are watching this very closely and will remember (at the next election) exactly what their respective State Representatives and Senators did concerning this bill (HB 444).

PLEASE DO WHAT IS RIGHT A KILL THE ABOMINATION WHICH IS THIS BILL (HB 444) .

Regards,

David Houle and Family

---

**From:** jgreenly@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:57 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions !!!

FROM: Julie H. Greenly  
4302 Halupa St.  
Honolulu, HI 96818

TO: JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM - STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM FOR HB 444, HD1 RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

DEAR CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JGO COMMITTEE,

Please do not pass out HB 444, HD1 from your committee. Society's stake in marriage is based upon the family and the need for its stability. It is the family that is the bedrock of any civilization and of any community. One of the obvious purposes of marriage, from time immemorial is the procreation and formation of children. Such procreation is not possible in a same sex union and therefore should not be given the dignity or protection as marriage. Children grow best in a stable environment with a mother and father. Although this is obviously not always possible, our laws should express the ideal structures that are best for children. For the sake of Hawaii's future, please vote no on this measure.

WITH ALOHA,

Julie H. Greenly



I do not support House Bill 444.

Seventy percent (70%) of Hawaii's voters recently voted against allowing same sex-marriage to be recognized in Hawaii. That vote was in response to the ruling by the Hawaii Supreme Court in Baehr v. Lewin. This was a clear mandate to the legislature to limit marriage to the union between a man and woman.

The Legislature, in order to protect the rights of all unmarried persons regardless of their sexual orientation, has enacted the Reciprocal Beneficiaries law.

House Bill 544 undermines the vast majority of Hawaii citizens, whose children would now be forced to accept same sex marriage as normative and acceptable in our public schools. The Board of Education educators will be under extreme pressures to so teach. Text books will be rewritten. Judges will be involved to make decisions on interpretations of a new law which will be murky upon approval—opening a Pandora's Box of discrimination claims, even when the legislature thinks it solved a problem—a problem which does not exist, I may add. Children, who are taught by their parents that marriage is sacred and is to be between a man and a woman, will be taught just the opposite in the schools mandated by this law. Character and value traits instilled in our children by their families will be undermined by passing this law.

It would be easy to dismiss opposition to HB444 by claiming the person so opposed is a bigot. When I publicly opposed HB444---I have been already called a bigot. I ask you--- Was your father a bigot? Was your mother a bigot? Grandparents? I would say they did not teach most of you that marriage was a God given right between a man and a man or a woman and a woman? Most, if not the vast majority of Hawaii's citizens, also believe marriage should be preserved for a man and a woman, and that it is neither discrimination nor a violation of a new-founded civil right nor bigotry for Hawaiian citizens to continue to recognize marriage between as between a man and a woman.

I request you vote against Bill 444. Thank you.

Anson O. Rego  
Attorney at Law

There is no need to protect the right of same sex partnerships. First of all let's approach this from a rational point of view. There is no VERIFIABLE SCIENTIFIC PROOF that homosexuality isn't a psychological problem. (I find it funny that we can't teach creation in school because of the so called lack of scientific proof of God creating the world but I guess after saying it so much, without any real scientific proof we accept homosexuality as something people are born with.) Being heterosexual is obviously normal and right because it produces life. But to get really graphic and matter in fact we have people who say they love the same sex (let's take women for example who love other women). Most of them when they do get intimate use unnatural means to simulate a man's sexual organ. If they truly just are homosexual then this would not be needed. Their body wants what a man has but psychologically they prefer a woman. This is what we call an unnatural affection. When nature takes its course for a regular sexual man their body does crave a woman. Though I know what you'll say love doesn't always have to deal with sex, this is an example how this is deviant behavior. It is irresponsible for society to put these unions on the same level as natural relations and marriage. When you feel a need to protect rights of behavior that is not verifiable natural you allow the avenue to open up the flood gates on what people call civil liberties. This is a ruse to try to allow gay marriage. Why do I say this? If a person writes a will the people they list will have what the will says. So all these same sex partners have to do is list them. The only thing that is brought up is about being able to see a partner in the hospital. For this reason we should not have to accept this union as an acceptable part of society. This can be fixed by letting everyone including a heterosexual have a card of friendship that they may list a friend that may be allowed to visit them say they go to the hospital. (Example-I may want a Christian brother who has no ministry license to be in the hospital room praying for me - no homosexual feelings there just may be close as a brother). Also you can get powers of attorney that say in case this happens to you this person will take care of your business. No need to recognize a civil union. Let's approach this again psychologically let's say a man who has a civil union all of a sudden sees a woman who he is attracted to. If he does something with her are you willing now to charge this man for committing a crime against his partner, when nature shows he should be attracted to the opposite sex. The truth is that there are same sex couples, but that doesn't mean they are right for what they are doing and we have to accept it as normal. You then get into them having the same rights in adoption. Are you serious!! They are not equal to heterosexual in this regard period. Man and woman make baby's that is who should be responsible as such so exclusively this should be the main criteria for adoptions for what is best for kids, since they should see a reflection of what created them to be their caretakers. This is what is best for children. These rulings should reflect much more than what a person wants, it's what's best for children and if you say having a loving Father and Mother is not what is best then you destroy the very identity of society in a whole. Men feeling like they aren't important in raising children will increase which will lead to more violence. This is what studies show when there's no father in the home. Also realize you will allow opportunities for pedophilia to run wild. Pedophiles often times use other men to help coax little boys. If a man likes another man what rationale would you have to believe he won't try to turn that little boy into liking men also. He will encourage it and the natural degradation of such will be to touch them to try to show them this ain't so bad -- man/man. Also realize adoption is not a right. No one has the right to have someone Else's kids. So you may deny the possibility of all this happening but remember all

experiments don't turn out good some become disastrous. We must be on the side of caution. We should not accept this behavior because the difference between color discrimination is that we know for a fact it is natural and nobodies fault they are a certain color. You can't honestly say with all you see on TV that some or not all these people doing homosexual things aren't doing it because it's the in thing cause some claim to be bi-sexual .It' s something they have made a choice to try and like. Your color is not a choice, and you can discriminate against people based on the choices they make. Sexual relations and marriage comes down to you making a choice. <<http://choice.so/>> so this deals with your character. While skin color is skin color. Also the bond of marriage is special and the benefits given for it echoes the specialness given for marriage man and women happily ever after should be encouraged and applauded for it reinforces the importance of the family and the very foundation of life. Man and women 2 opposites physically coming together as one flesh to be a united front. What the government does for marriages is protect this because from the get go it was a realization this is the most important issue in preserving society. Civil unions is just tongue and cheek for gay marriage so please don't insult my intelligence by saying its not redefining marriage. I will ask that you do like a true caretaker of society should do and do the responsible thing. Just tell these same sex partnerships to get a power of attorney and not expect us to call what is not normal, and immoral to most O.K. We don't want our kids thinking loving same sex sexually is acceptable when the love of a man and women is what made them and even science proves sex is basically to produce offspring no wonder why it feels good if it felt bad we will not do it. Respectfully a man who is thinking of what's best to do not what's popular to do.

Respectfully Lance D. Lewis

---

**From:** Jonathan [jonathankessler@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:44 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Support HB 444

Please support HB 444.

All Hawaiians deserve equal protections and rights.

Jonathan Kessler  
Koloa, Hawaii

---

**From:** KRIS AND JUNE VAN DAHM [vandahm@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:42 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: June Van Dahm  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

"A government big enough to give you  
everything you want is strong enough to  
take everything you have."  
--- Thomas Jefferson

---

**From:** KRIS AND JUNE VAN DAHM [vandahm@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:41 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Kris Van Dahm  
Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

"A government big enough to give you  
everything you want is strong enough to  
take everything you have."

--- Thomas Jefferson

---

**From:** Dan Shishido [shishidod001@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:29 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STOP HB444

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

RE: Measure Number: HB 444  
Public Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM

Please STOP HB-444. Same sex civil unions should not be allowed. Marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Very Respectfully,

Daniel K. Shishido  
1212 Nuuanu Ave., Apt 1909  
Honolulu, HI 96817

---

**From:** Carol Tom [cavern575@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:31 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** RE: OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

FROM: Carolyn C. Tom  
TO: The Senate Judiciary Committee

DATE & TIME: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 @ 9:00am (Auditorium)  
Measure Number: HB 444 HD1

Dear Senators of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

As a life-long resident of the State of Hawaii, I want to voice my opposition to the above-referenced Bill before you. In 1998, I and my late husband, Vernon, testified at the Maui Hearing, opposing the legalization of same-sex marriage. The majority of the people of Hawaii (70%) made known their opposition and it was defeated then.

The same issue is being resurrected under the term "civil union." In reading this Bill it is unmistakably obvious that "civil union" is just another term for marriage. There is no difference. This is simply an attempt to circumvent the will of the people voiced over 10 years ago.

The whole issue of the rights of domestic partners has already been granted in the Reciprocal Beneficiary Act (HRS 572C) and there is no need to re-address it.

Serious consideration of all the ramifications to our children, to our families, to our communities and to our beloved Hawaii need to be taken into account before allowing this Bill to be placed on the Senate floor.

UA MAU KE EA O KA AINA I KA PONO!



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**From:** Brien Hallett [brienhallett@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:50 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony HB 444

JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY in SUPPORT of HB444, RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS

February 24, 2009

Brien Hallett  
2565 La'au St #23  
Honolulu, 96826

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine, and Members of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

I am writing to HB444, a bill to create civil unions for same sex committed couples.

Such legislation will not weaken heterosexual unions, but will strengthen our society by reaffirming our common ties and mutual respect.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**Jonathon Berliner**  
**1561 Kanunu Street - APT 1507**  
**Honolulu, HI 96814**  
**(808) 946-0767**

**DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009**  
**TIME: 9:00 AM**  
**PLACE: Auditorium – State Capitol**  
**HB 444, HD 1**

**RELATING TO CIVIL UNIONS.**

**Extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.**

Dear Chair Senator Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Senator Takamine, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony before this committee. My name is Jonathon Berliner and I am providing this testimony on my behalf, as a community member, who has also been in a committed same gender relationship for over 8 years.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to express my **support for House Bill 444, HD 1 – Relating to Civil Unions.** I believe that all people should be treated equally under the law and this is something required by our Constitution. HB 444, HD 1 extends the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.

It is personally demeaning and demoralizing to me to be a part of the one group that has been singled out and who has little rights afforded us in our relationships. We are deserving of the same equal rights the opposite sex couples in marriage enjoy.

The current unequal treatment that a large population experiences is unfair and unjust, when compared to opposite sex couples who enjoy many additional rights with marriage. Civil Unions are supported by the majority of the public locally and nationally. The issue of equal treatment for same-sex couples is the civil rights issue of this generation. Equality is a simple concept yet sadly has been out of reach to so many for too long now. I respectfully ask that you support HB 444, HD 1, and appreciate your careful consideration of this important issue. Help us join the other states that have rightfully and courageously made the decision to allow a form of equal rights for same gender couples who wish to be committed, and deserve these rights.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Jonathon Berliner

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**From:** josey004@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:51 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* OPPOSITION TO HB444 HD1

**Date:** 23 FEB 2009

**To:** The Senate Judiciary Committee

**From:** Mrs. Kenvee J. Daniel-Parker

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24

Hearing Time: 09:00 am

Hearing Location: State Capitol Auditorium

Re: HB-444 HD1, Relating to Civil Unions

**Subject: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB-444-HD1**

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am a resident currently here in Hawaii, island of Oahu and I would like to give my formal written testimony to why "CIVIL UNION SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED" i.e., "SAME SEX MARRIAGES". For the upcoming hearing **scheduled for 24 February, 2009 at 0900**, I would like to have this testimony added as an **OPPOSITION** to the bill **HB-444 HD1**.

Some one asked why same sex marriages should be stopped in the last hearing on 5 Feb 2009. I would like to reply with a couple of reasons why this bill should be stopped.

**HOMOSEXUAL ADVOCATES** and what they want to do

They won't stop with just legalizing civil unions their agenda is to Legalize Same-Sex Marriages, Teach homosexuality to **our children** in the Public Schools, as young as Kindergarten, whether us as parents want them to or not. This will supersede parental rights to raise our children how we wish with the parent's faith, and moral values and not the governments. Also, to endanger our religious liberty and convince the world that homosexuals were born homosexual. I beg to differ; if they (homosexuals) were born as such, then why do they feel a need to teach the lifestyle to the children so young? Please explain? **LET'S STOP THIS ABOMINATION NOW!!**

**OUR COUNTRY AND PART OF ITS HISTORY**

Sir, I would like to remind you of history in our country. This country, the USA, was built on the foundations of the **BIBLE** and in the **BIBLE**, it clearly states, "**Homosexuality is a SIN!**" **Leviticus 18:6 & 22, Leviticus 20:13, Ezekiel 16:35-38**, Sexual Immorality is a **SIN!**

I would also like to quote to you out of a book titled "**60 THINGS GOD said about SEX**" by Lester Sumrall.

Page 92 of this book says, "Worst thing about homosexuality –the spiritual result. It degrades the individual and distorts his moral values. The Bible says that homosexuality *ranks beside* drunkenness, extortion, and idolatry as a despicable form of ungodliness. "

Drunkness in this country is looked down on, and considered to be a problem. Extortion is a crime, but the state wants to legalize homosexuality and same sex marriages? This is confusing to me. The Bible says, 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10, "***Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortion will inherit the kingdom of God.***"

Sir, if you recall that the sinful ways of mankind is what destroyed the world the first time. Remember Noah's Ark and the **GREAT FLOOD**? Improper marriages, sexual immorality caused the greatest catastrophe the world has ever known and the Lord destroyed all that where sinners.

### THE INFLUENCE OF LIES

Also, in the book on page 89 the author agrees that "***NO PERSON HAS EVER BEEN BORN A HOMOSEXUAL.***" A homosexual becomes so through lust, which leads to experimentation, or through the pressure of homosexual or bisexual friends or relatives. It is taught and learned. It is not what GOD intended. GOD gave *man and woman a duty with the gift of marriage and sex.* He commanded us to "***be fruitful and replenish the earth***". How can you multiply with man and man or woman and woman? If everyone agrees that homosexuality is a model for the new marriages, humanity would die out in one generation.

### WHAT MANY DON'T KNOW

Homosexuals have comprised their souls, the three components, the mind, the emotions, and the will all make up the soul. Sex can destroy the soul, and anything that destroys the soul should be taken seriously. We are also spirits, GOD created our body and soul, GOD breathed eternal life into us which makes our spirit. The spirit is the divine element that reminds our soul of GOD's will for our lives. The BIBLE says, **Ezekiel 18:4**, "***the soul who sins, shall die***". If you know that GOD is the final authority on sex you will not get upset with His instructions if you will believe. Therefore, allowing same sex marriages is *wrong in GOD's eyes and is a SIN*. GOD overrules your reasoning about marriage and matters of sex. The BIBLE says, in **Romans 6:23**, "***The wages of sin is death,***" this is the price you can expect to pay for immoral sex (homosexuality).

### SOCIETIES RESTRICTIONS

Even societies that never heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ impose some limitation on sexual conduct and marriages. In fact, all known societies have regulated sex in some way, either with written laws or unwritten customs and taboos. Muslim countries a woman's charms (hidden by a veil) is a privilege reserved for *her husband* alone. In China, the parents of *the boy chose the bride* (a girl) and the bride and groom do not meet until their wedding day. This shows that we as human beings *know, deep down inside*, that sex is a very important and serious matter. This, I believe is the reason why so many homosexuals have trouble accepting that the lifestyle they have chosen, not born into, but chosen to live. They know in their minds that it is wrong so they hide it. It is not something they are born as, even scientist have proven that fact.

### TODAYS SOCIETY, THE STATE

The people of Hawaii already voted - 70% said they wanted Traditional Marriages. Are you ignoring us? Doesn't our vote count? Times has changed but those who want Traditional Marriages in Hawaii have not changed. 70% of Hawaii still wants Traditional Marriages.

Over half of the United States has **PROHIBITED** this bill in their states, why can't Hawaii? That's over half the population that ***does not want*** this act of sexual immorality, blaspheming the truth of GOD's love in our country. *Ungodly marriages undermine the entire nation*. These marriages warp the values that a decent home

should uphold, because they are not founded to the word of GOD's truth.

I am in agreement with my church, the BIBLE and all opposing parties that this bill is; A devious way to have the state legally approve different forms of **homosexual relationships** as being the same as traditional marital relationships. The damaging impact "**civil unions**" will unleash on Hawaii's children and Hawaii's future is incalculable. This diabolical manifestation called "**civil unions**" must be stopped, as it was in 1998 when it was called "**same-sex marriage.**"

I am also in agreement with the author of the book, *"Until Americans repent and accept the LORD, they will struggle with, famine caused by inflation, crime, disease and spiritual bankruptcy."*

Look at the world today, there has been a war going on in IRAQ, IRAN, AFGANASTAIN, AFRICA, NORTH KOREA for awhile now. The new recession, the country's famine caused by inflation, no more jobs or job layoffs cause crime to increase, homosexuality causing the spread of HIV/AIDS (disease) and the non believers has the spiritual bankruptcy. CONGRESSMAN the world is coming to an end and you're allowing it! REVELATIONS 18:2-10

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to voice my opinion on this matter.

Mrs. Kenvee J. Daniel-Parker

**P.U.S.H. , Pray , Until Something Happens!!! JESUS WILL WORK IT OUT!**

---

**From:** Bobby [mcbobby@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:07 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1, Feb. 24 at 9 a.m, Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

HB 444 HD1

Feb. 24 at 9 a.m

Senate Judiciary and Gov't Operations

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

My name is Bobby McClintock and I support House Bill 444 - Civil Unions. This bill is not about religion but about children, equality, and decency. Religions have the right to define their beliefs to the people who follow them. But in this country we have been separatists from when this country was founded. People came here because they wanted religion separated from their governing bodies. This is basic history. Please let us not forget this.

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS BILL

Thank you for your time,  
Bobby McClintock, Honolulu, HI

---

**From:** Alicia Teves [britoteves@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:03 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony

**TO: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009 @ 9:00 AM – STATE CAPITOL AUDITORIUM  
FOR HB 444, HD1**

**IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444, HD 1**

**ALOHA CHAIR BRIAN TANIGUCHI AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**In 1998, the people of Hawaii sent a clear message that marriage in Hawaii must remain between one man and one woman. Civil Unions are just another attempt to thwart the will of the people. This civil union proposal is an attempt to legitimize gay marriage simply by using another title. The people have also spoken through their representatives in reaching the artful compromise that established Hawaii's reciprocal beneficiary law. The law achieved the goal of providing benefits—without basing those benefits on the ill-advised sexpartner status test. The people put the issue behind them. The legislature should not re-open divisive, controversial battles that have already settled by the people.**

**I am a resident of Hawaii and I asked that you please vote NO on HB 444, for our citizens.**

**Thank you,**

**Alicia Teves**

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**From:** Nancie Caraway [nancie@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:08 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** VOTE FOR HB444 CIVIL UNIONS

JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Sen. Brian Taiguchi, Chair

Sen. Dwight Takamine, V. Chair

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB444 CIVIL UNIONS**

Aloha Chairman Taniguchi and Committee Members:

I applaud your civic courage and commitment to equal rights for all Hawaii's citizens. I can well imagine the pressure being exerted upon all of you to respond to a vocal, but small, minority who are asking you to exclude and to discriminate on others

Gay citizens follow in the long line of excluded Americans who have fought and died for equality: civil rights, women's, environmental and now the gay rights initiatives. We must expand, not deny, the benefits and responsibilities of the Constitution.

Please be an advocate for equality to committed same sex relationships. I have witnessed the commitments and family bonds in same-sex families -- they provide a model for the rest of us in integrity and dedication to their communities.

This nation is crucially founded in protecting private life from the encroachments of government. We must defend TOLERANCE AND EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL CITIZENS

HB444 will codify our belief in strengthening our communities, and to reaffirming our common ties and humanity.

Aloha  
Nancie Caraway, Ph.D

Nancie Caraway, Ph.D  
Research Fellow - Human Rights  
Globalization Research Center  
University of Hawaii Manoa  
1859 East-West Rd. TP 1, Rm. 120  
Hon, Hi.96822  
tel: 808.375.3947  
e mail: [nancie@hawaii.edu](mailto:nancie@hawaii.edu)

Nancie Caraway, Ph.D  
Research Fellow - Human Rights  
Globalization Research Center  
University of Hawaii Manoa  
1859 East-West Rd. TP 1, Rm. 120



---

**From:** Hoi Ming A Lo [hoiming@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

Testifier: Antonia Lo

Bill Number and Title: HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Location: Auditorium

To Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

The description of HB444 states that its purpose is to, “**extend the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities of spouses in a marriage to partners in a civil union.**” This sounds quite egalitarian on the surface, but in reality it takes **away** the rights of a large section of the voting public, i.e. those 69% who voted in 1998 in favor of Hawaii Constitutional Amendment 2 (“The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples).

HB444 changes the name from "marriage" to "civil union" without changing the definition at all. I believe HB444 is not only wrong, but essentially unconstitutional. I ask you all to vote NO on HB444.

Sincerely,

Philip L. Musgrave  
324 Keaniani Street  
Kailua, HI 96734

---

**From:** amakanaakua@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:55 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** HB 444 HD1

To our representative in the senate and judicial committee,

I strongly believe in traditional marriage between a man and a woman. I do not have anything against the gay and lesbian couples. I have a cousin who is gay and a friend who is also a gay. I think they are one of the nicest people around. However, as one who believes in the future of our keikis. I oppose the bill that will jeopardize the traditional marriage between a man and a woman. I say NO to HB444 HD1 because I'd like my nieces and nephews and our future children to know that a marriage is designed solely between a man and a woman, not between man and man or woman and woman. Asked your self a question would I want my future children to know the difference between right and wrong? What would our society be like if we all listen to every voice. We all have rights to certain extent and this rights does not mean saying yes to everything just to please everyone even if it is wrong. We are as a society we a re now because of the laws we passed that we thought would do as good. We took God away in our public school systems but did this do our children any good? Are our school system better now when we took away God and the ten commandments in our school? The answers are No. Look around you, our children needs the truth and what is truth when they aren't taught about it in school and at home. The choicest we make has consequences whether we like it or not. We believe in you to make the right choices and making the right choices means thinking about the future. What will it do to our future children and the generations to come? I urge you to look deep and consider the consequences of the decisions your making. Consider the pros and cons and most importantly the laws you pass today affect tomorrow and the days to come. Be wise and thank you for taking the time to read my email. Whether or not you believe in God I pray for you to make the right decisions. Mahalo

My name is Margaret and I oppose bill HB444.

---

**A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!**

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**From:** fridaydelt@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:55 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** \*\*\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\*\*\* HB 444 HD1

Friday Del Toro  
Resident/Honolulu

To whom it may concern, please do not descriminate against me and my partner of 9 years and move forward to passage HB 444 HD1.

As I understand the current laws, there are hundreds of state benefits, rights and obligations automatically given to opposite-sex marriage couples that are not extended to registered same-sex couples. Health care, spousal leave, and access to family court are not covered. There are also over 1,000 federal benefits and rights that opposite-sex married couples receive that same-sex couples are excluded from -- in Hawaii and even in those states where same-sex couples can marry.

It is my hope that as this bill moves foreward that Partners to a civil union lawfully entered into pursuant to this chapter shall have all the same rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law, whether derived from statutes, administrative rules, court decisions, the common law, or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a marriage validly entered into pursuant to chapter 572.

Moving on, let me express my love and commitment (before you all) that I have for my partner.

He is a great man, patient and kind, caring and level headed. He is the one that brings calm and peace to our household. Sends me birthday cards, anniversary cards and cards for other holidays as a caring spouse would.

Let me give an excerpt from our commitment ceremony six years ago; some close friends and family were there.

"To the world outside these walls, this ceremony may not mean much. But within, it is as special and wonderful as the perfect moment in anyone's life. To us it is a day that we talked about and discussed and now it is a dream come true.

I commit to a lifetime with you.

And as mystic time has it's own cycles and seasons, I shall make the best of those times and seasons to be your partner, soul mate and lover. I commit to listen to your woes and fears with an open heart, diligence and compassion, bringing you into the shelter of my arms until you find calm and peace and are able to move forward once again. I commit to building a safe haven called "home," where principles of truth and right are taught and shared with those within; where disagreement is paired with understanding and extra amounts of patience; where learning continues, and children and pets play and grow, nurtured by the love of two dads who teach equality and acceptance and all things that are good."

I am committed to my relationship with my same sex partner. We are good people. We want to have the same advantages that opposite sex couples enjoy.

Let me also express my love to my family, who accept our good works and our committed relationship.

Thank you.

Sincerely.

---

**A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!**

Testimony in Support of Civil Unions  
HB444 hd 1  
Hawai'i State Legislature

My name is James F. Cartwright. I grew up on the Mainland in very active Mormon family. Throughout my adult life, I was consistently promised by Church leaders that if I were obedient and did what I should—participate in Church activities, go on a mission, date young women—I would cease being attracted to men. As many professionals now recognize, the attractive orientation of an individual does not change, nor does God change the individuals.

I struggled to become a heterosexual man into my fifties, living celibately, actively fulfilling my Church callings, praying for the miracle I had been promised. One day while living on Thurston Ave. on the slopes of Punchbowl, I felt the “still small voice” which Mormons are encouraged to seek in spiritual affairs. The words which came to me repeated a New Testament passage, “Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?” I realized finally that God had made my life rich in spiritual blessings, both for me and for those whom I blessed as part of my Church callings. God had said of the creation, “It is good.” I, a gay man, was part of that creation. God did not consider me abominable, nor cursed, but richly poured out His spirit into my life. If God then loved me as a gay man, why should I not accept myself.

Shortly after this, I began attending Lutheran Church of Honolulu along with the LDS ward to which I belonged. The congregation at Lutheran Church of Honolulu had previously adopted a statement welcoming LGBT individuals “into full fellowship” in the communal and spiritual life of the congregation. Members have lived out their statement of welcome. Several lesbian and gay members attend, contribute in numerous ways to the spiritual life of the congregation, and live openly as gay and lesbian people. Several of us are in committed relationships.

Which leads me to the purpose of my testimony. Justice and equality should be universal, offered to all. The civil union legislation now before you is a step toward such a society. I strongly support passage of the Civil Union legislation.

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM, Auditorium

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB444 (Civil Unions)

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today in strong support of HB 444 and urge you to support this Civil Unions bill. I am writing not as a gay or religious individual, but as a concerned American citizen. This issue has segregated our nation for far too long. It has continued to breed hate, violence and even death. I could name a few nationally known individuals who have died due to hate crimes, such as Mathew Shepard and Charles Howard. However, working among homeless, runaway and street identified youth, I have already heard my share of local stories surrounding gay hate.

By passing HB 444, the state will do three things: allow same-sex couples to receive the same rights and benefits as committed heterosexual partners, begin to bridge the gap of a segregated nation and ensure equality for same-sex couples. Gays, lesbians and transgendered are your aunties, uncles, cousins, brothers and sisters. It is I. We are civilians. To allow a civil union is to allow a civil right.

By electing Barack Obama as our President, a new generation has risen and spoken for change. Civil unions reflect that change toward a better, more secure and equal nation. As part of this generation, I humbly ask for your support of HB 444.

Respectfully,

Kiana Rivera

Private Citizen

2333 Palolo Ave.  
Honolulu, HI 96816

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:49 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** jazzyevening@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tim Sutton  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 45-550 Kiani St Kaneohe, HI  
Phone: (808) 744-2001  
E-mail: [jazzyevening@hotmail.com](mailto:jazzyevening@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I oppose the bill HB 444. We should never forbid people from choosing their own actions. However, that does not require that an entity be created by government called a civil union. The unique and natural relationship between man and woman should be preserved through marriage.



---

**From:** Keith Tasato [keithtasato@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 12:32 AM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to House Bill 444

Testifier: Keith M. Tasato  
Subject: House Bill 444 HI1 Relating to Civil Unions  
Committee: Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee  
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Hearing Location: Auditorium

To the Honorable Senate and It's members,

I am a lifelong citizen of the State of Hawaii and a constituent of the Honorable Senator Brian Taniguchi and I am writing this testimony to express my fervent stand against House Bill 444.

Although I am a man of faith, I will express my opinion on grounds other than religious idealism. As a man, I have many males in my life that I love, cherish, seek emotional comfort from and would literally give my life for. I believe this distinction is the basis for sexual equality advocated by those supporting HB 444. The males I speak of are people such as friends, work acquaintances, work-out buddies, cousins, uncles, my father and especially my sons. The only difference between the deep emotional feelings I fell for these males and advocates of HB 444 are, and I will be graphic, is that I don't have the sexual tendency to have their penis in my mouth, or mine in theirs, insert my penis in to their anus, or vice vesa, or express myself in other explicit sexual acts with them. If, as a legislator, you step outside the political arena and apply the specific behaviours distictive to this movement , you will see this issue as a right of passion and not a civil right. Should rights be givin to those who want to express their sexual passion in a public forum and have that passion endorced, enforced and supported by the governmet? Would it be appropriate for heteralsexuals to hold parades dispaying explicit sexual conduct to express solidarity of identity? Should unmarried platonic friends or acquaintences such as roomates be given the same rights as stated in this bill, and if not, does sexual conduct define the relationship?

As early as thirty ago, this issue would have been the thing of distopia, science fiction insanity, as ridiculous as normalizing sex between father and child, aunty and niece, human with animal. As special rights are extended to those who have a need to validate, by law, a lifestyle based solely on an act of sex, we will reach a point where there are no boundaries to sexual behavior no matter what form it takes.

---

**From:** Barbara Denman [barbaradenman@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:30 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1 Relating to Civil Unions

Vote No on the Civil Union Bill...HB444 HD1  
Feb. 24, 2009

Walter G. Denman III  
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740



Welcome Caroline G Sinavaiana

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**Subject** Support HB444 - HD1 -- 2/24/09 - 9AM - JGO Committee

**From** Caroline G Sinavaiana <sinavaia@hawaii.edu>

**Date** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:48 pm

**To** JGOTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

**Bcc** sinavaia@hawaii.edu , sina1@hawaii.rr.com

Honorable Senators:

I am writing in strong support of HB444, KD1.

As a lifelong educator, a tenured professor at UH Manoa, as a Samoan-American, as a US citizen, I believe in the basic equity, fair mindedness, and good sense put forth in this bill. In a crucial moment in the US and the world community, in fact on our very planet, the idea of denying families the legal right to care for each other makes little sense.

Clearly our community holds diverse views on this issue. Clearly all families disagree on something. But when we disagree with our own family members, do we then seek to deny them fulfillment of the most basic human needs for love? For health, education, fulfillment of their God-given talents? For the pursuit of happiness guaranteed to us by the founders of our republic? As citizens of and residents of our islands, country and planet, do we really choose to distance ourselves from each other in such a counterproductive way? At a time when our collective survival depends on our pulling together? Will we really choose fear over love? Over survival?

We have an opportunity here to choose good sense and community over fear and misrepresentation. We have the opportunity to discern between anxiety and courage. I sincerely hope we can move beyond our fears of the unknown and instead hold in our minds and hearts the faces of our own family members and friends who are asking our community to support all families, regardless of our differences with each others' choices.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Caroline Sinavaiana

Associate Professor of English, UH Manoa

Michele M. Golojuch  
92-954 Makakilo Dr. #71  
Kapolei, HI 96707  
672-9050

February 23, 2009

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations  
Hawaii State Senate  
State Capitol - Auditorium  
415 South Beretania Street

RE: HB 444 HD 1 - Civil Rights - STRONG Support

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and committee members,

In January 1996, I wrote my very first testimony for capitol business ever. I was asking for the House's support of a bill that would support my brother, Michael's civil rights so that he could have the equal marriage rights. It is unbelievable that after all these years, I'm still writing testimony asking for support for my brother's equal Civil Rights, but instead of marriage he now has to settle for Civil Unions.

I know in the US Constitution it states that we all have equal rights. My brother and my other GLBTIQ friends deserve the same rights I have to love the person I choose to marry. Anything less is discrimination.

Let's get the records and laws in line with the US Constitution and pass HB 444 HD 1 so that at least my brother will have the same rights, benefits and responsibilities that I have because I'm an US citizen.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

*M. M. Golojuch*

Michele M. Golojuch

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:27 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Cc:** couchjrc@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB444 on 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Charles Couch Jr  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 92-106 Ihi Place Kapolei, Hi 96707  
Phone: 808-672-8620  
E-mail: [couchjrc@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:couchjrc@hawaiiantel.net)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

This is a written testimony for Hb444. This bill is scheduled for hearing on Tuesday, February 24th at 0900 in the morning.

My name is Charles Couch Jr. and I am the Senior Pastor of Calvary Chapel West Oahu. I would first of all like to start off saying that I am in opposition to Civil Unions or bill HB444 and I would very strongly urge a NO VOTE. This issue has never been one of intolerance because I have loved ones who are living in this lifestyle and I love them dearly. I think we have tolerated this chosen lifestyle, or behavior whichever you would choose to call it. What they choose to do at home is their business. We have never had a problem with that issue, but when this issue of civil unions is brought to the public arena by way of asking us to accept this behavior as the norm, and by doing that having the potential of affecting everyone else in a negative way then it becomes an issue to refuse. I also believe they have rights just as everyone else covered under the same constitution as we all live under. There have been previously noted additional rights not needed to get into at this time, but Civil Unions is nothing more than seeking "SPECIAL RIGHTS" by those who have by choice chosen to live an alternate lifestyle and one that is morally wrong and not right for that matter.

I make that statement first of all based upon my faith and belief as a Christian. That is true. But I also have to say that even nature and natural law would declare the same truth. Let me offer a few simple examples.

- If you were trying to save a species of animal or birds, etc and all you had were two male animals or two male Bald Eagles for that matter the species would die and not survive because it does not work that way.
- If you only had two men or two women who survived by some miracle a catastrophic event and they were the only two left to repopulate then civilization as we know it would not survive because the natural human function does not work that way.
- If you who are making this vote had two moms or two dads only you would not be making this vote as well and in fact you would have never been born to consider this vote or even be elected because you would not exist.

Please hear my heart I do not say this sarcastically but lovingly. If you allow this group to have special rights based upon their wrong choice to live with two men or two women then where do you draw the line on what to allow next. What if two men want to be married to one woman then they would have a right too. What if one man wanted to marry 5 women then they would have a right as well. What if an older man wanted to marry a girl who is 11 years old or two 11 year old girls then they would have a right as well. Please answer me where then do you draw the line in determining what is right and what is wrong. The truth is that we would have no lines to draw any longer for

right or wrong it would always simply be determined by the popular vote or someone's view and that is not always the right thing to do. Please answer me truthfully one more thing and that is which of you as a parent making this determination to vote yes on this bill HB444 has told your son or daughter that you can't wait for that son of yours to grow up and bring home his husband or vice versa. Is that really where your heart is at, or can you honestly say that in your heart of hearts you know it is morally wrong and it just does not work. Where will this allowing special rights to special groups based solely upon a personal choice end? Truth is if you vote yes then the requests by others will be endless.

Please VOTE NO ON BILL HB444.

Charles Couch Jr.  
92-106 Ihi Place,  
Kapolei, Hi 96707

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2009 9:00:00 AM HB444

Conference room: Auditorium  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Paula Dozier  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [pacificrimconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:pacificrimconsulting@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

Honorable Chairman Taniguchi, Vice Chairman Takamine, Committee Members:

Re: Strong Opposition to HB444

This is to challenge you to take a courageous stand in voting against HB 444. Yes, there has been an extremely clamorous minority which has placed its special interests above the welfare of this community as a whole. Since you have been elected by a majority of the people in your districts, please consider the ramifications of the legislature codifying that which can create greater confusion among those most vulnerable: our children. HB 444 is not about equality. It is not about justice. At the age of consent, each person has equal freedom to choose the person with whom [s]he desires to spend the rest of her or his life. No one is forcing an individual to choose a person of the same or different gender. However, in both instances there are regulations and consequences that happen as a result of whichever choice is made.

Were an individual to choose to enter an adulterous relationship, it would be ludicrous to assume that legitimacy could be established if that individual were to seek governmental and then legal recourse for "rights." And, the same arguments that apply to "civil unions," might be applied in the case of adultery as well. Yet, we recognize that adultery is not in the best interest of a healthy community, even though participants in an adulterous relationship may claim the same type of "bond" that those seeking "civil unions" also would claim. Do we want to give governmental sanction to a relationship that all extant societies up to the present have deemed to be harmful to the public welfare? No! Please remember the *majority* of Hawaii's people continue to oppose these types of unions. Honor your constituency and vote "No" on HB 444. Thank you.

## Mental Health Professionals for Civil Unions

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations.  
Testimony in Support of Civil Unions HB444

Testimony submitted on behalf of the undersigned mental health professionals by  
Daniel Meier, Psy.D., Licensed Psychologist, 1917 Huea Place, Honolulu, HI 96819.

We, the undersigned, are expressing our **strong support for House Bill 444** which would provide equal legal rights to partners in civil unions. We are mental health professionals and are well aware of the impact of discrimination against people in same-sex relationships. Thank you for considering our testimony.

A wide body of **research**<sup>1</sup> indicates the following: homosexuality is not a choice, and homosexuality is indeed not a mental disorder. Further, it has been found that **lesbians and gay men want committed relationships**. It is estimated that between 40% and 60% of gay men and between 45% and 80% of lesbians are currently involved in a romantic relationship. Despite hostility towards such relationships, many gay men and lesbians form durable relationships. Such relationships can be enhanced if they receive the same support and recognition as heterosexual relationships.

Regarding **parents** who are in same-sex relationships and their **children**: "In the 2000 U.S. Census, 33% of female same-sex couple households and 22% of male same-sex couple households reported at least one child under the age of 18 living in the home."<sup>1</sup> Children of gay and lesbian parents do not have a higher rate of problems with sexual identity and/or sexual orientation, and research indicates that such children have normal peer relations. Further, "studies of personality, self-concept, and behavior problems show few differences between children of lesbian mothers and children of heterosexual parents."<sup>1</sup> Yet parents in same-sex relationships and their children do not have sufficient legal protection.

We believe that providing equal rights to same-sex relationships will **reduce discrimination and improve numerous lives** in the State of Hawaii. Thank you again for considering our testimony.

| Name                   | Title | Name                              | Title      |
|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Michael McCann, MD     | MD    | Daniel Meier, Psy.D.              | Psy. D.    |
| Michael Melendez, M.D. | M.D.  | Chase Spangler, Psy.D.            | Psy. D.    |
| Mark G. King, LCSW     | LCSW  | Nicholai M. Kh. Dezer, LCSW, DCSW | LCSW, DCSW |
| Yonah...               | MD    |                                   |            |

Richard, CSAC  
Hanni Watanabe, CSAC  
Sara E. Kakum, APRN, BC, CNS

<sup>1</sup>American Psychological Association. (2008). Answers to your questions: For a better understanding of sexual orientation and homosexuality. Washington, DC: Author. [Retrieved from [www.apa.org/topics/orientation.pdf](http://www.apa.org/topics/orientation.pdf)]



February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Doreen Kaleiwalua*

*RR3 Box 1081*

*Pahoa, HI 96778*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

*Jose Kaurai*

*293 Andrews Ave  
Hilo, HI 96720*

February 22, 2009

Dear Senate Judiciary & Government Operations Committee:

SUBJECT: STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB 444 HD1

I am asking for your support and aid to oppose bill HB 444 HD1 to legalize Civil Unions in our State of Hawaii. The term civil union is just another name for same sex marriage. The people of Hawaii have spoken and supported the vote against this in 1998, please help by representing the people of Hawaii and being our voice. I do not judge those that want this bill passed, however I believe marriage to be between one man and one woman. PLEASE vote against this bill.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jean Lallana Kew".

Page 1 of 1

David and Olive Houle  
95-1003 Hololea St.  
Mililani, HI 96789  
Cel (808)-783-4545

2/22/2009

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

This testimony is concerning HB 444 which will have a Public Hearing Scheduled on February 24, 2009 at 9:00 AM at the State Capitol Auditorium.

My family and I are absolutely 100% opposed to making legal so called "CIVIL UNIONS".

The people of Hawaii (OVER 70 PERCENT) voted to reject so called "homosexual marriage" in a referendum vote approximately ten years ago. The sentiment of the people of Hawaii HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE THAT AFOREMENTIONED VOTE .

THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII AS WELL AS THE PEOPLE OF EVERY STATE ( IN WHICH A SIMILAR REFERENDUM VOTE WAS TAKEN ) HAVE REJECTED HOMOSEXUAL MARRIAGE AND/OR HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS BY 70% OR MORE.

CLEARLY, THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII DO NOT WANT HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS OR HOMOSEXUAL MARRIAGE LEGALIZED.

Please act on behalf of the people of Hawaii, as is your sacred trust to do so as elected representatives of the people of Hawaii.

The people of Hawaii are watching this very closely and will remember (at the next election) exactly what their respective State Representatives and Senators did concerning this bill (HB 444).

PLEASE DO WHAT IS RIGHT A KILL THE ABOMINATION WHICH IS THIS BILL (HB 444) .

Regards,

*+ David Houle 2/22/09*

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**From:** Erin Yafuso [etfuso@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:53 PM  
**To:** JGO Testimony  
**Subject:** Stop - HB 444

I oppose the HB 444  
Erin Yafuso  
Donna Merchado Kim

Date : Feb. 25, 2009

To : Honorable Senator BRIAN T. Taniguchi  
Capitol, Hawaii

From: Lang V. Nguyen  
Loc T. Mai Loan

Address: 2185 Ahe St. #28E  
Hon. HI 96916

Dear Sir/Madam:

Our message to you is our strong opposition about social issue, that we are united to voice/vote against civil union (Same sex marriage).

Marriages are between man and woman (mutual relation between husband & wife).

Not man and man or woman and woman.

We hope traditional marriage stay strong and defeat the so called illegal marriages between both sexes.