



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

February 3, 2012

To: Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Health

L A T E

From: Jeanne Ohta, Co-Chair

RE: HB 2227 Relating to Birth Certificates
Hearing: Friday, February 3, 2012, 9:00 a.m., Room 329

Position: Support

The Hawai'i State Democratic Women's Caucus writes in support of HB 2227 Relating to Birth Certificates. HB 2227 would streamline current law regarding how people born in Hawai'i can receive an updated birth certificate.

HB 2227 would allow people to use a simplified process that requires medical certification from a physician that the individual has undergone appropriate treatment for them to obtain a new birth certificate to reflect their gender. This change conforms Hawai'i's standards to the standards set by the United States Department of State for federal birth certificates given to U.S. citizens born outside of the U.S. (known as Consular Reports of Birth Abroad) as well as gender marker changes on U.S. passports. HB 2227 also ensures that medical privacy is respected.

For transgender people, recognition of their gender is a matter of basic human dignity. They need identification that represents who they are. Nationally, individuals who showed ID in their daily life that did not match their gender presentation, 40% reported being harassed, 3% reported being assaulted, and 15% reported being denied entry or asked to leave.

Hawai'i has long had a law that allows people to obtain a new birth certificate reflecting who they truly are. Unfortunately this law contains procedural barriers that make the process onerous and confusing, and it has become out-of-date with current medical standards relating to transgender people. This bill would alleviate the confusion around what needs to be shown to update one's birth certificate, while also updating the medical requirements as well. In so doing, the bill should also reduce the anxiety - and real danger - that transgender people face when they have identity documents that do not reflect who they are.

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 supports this measure. We respectfully ask the committee to pass it out.

LATE

Ryan I. Yamane
Chairman of the House Health Committee

HB2227

Friday, February 3, 2012

House Conference Room 329, 9:00AM

Aloha Chairman Yamane and the members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Rebecca Kushins and I am a resident of the island of Maui. I am currently a graduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa's Myron B. Thompson School for Social Work, in the Distance Education Option for Neighbor Island Residents. I am here submitting testimony regarding HB2227, Relating to Birth Certificates. I strongly support this measure.

As a student of social work, I have been taught to respect the worth and dignity of all human beings, regardless of their class, race, ability, gender, and other marks of diversity. I believe that men and women who identify as transgender, intersex, or other gendered are also worthy of our society's acceptance, respect, and concern. In particular, as a social worker, I have learned to be especially concerned with the rights of individuals to live freely and with self-determination within our democracy. Again, such rights must extend to all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The passage of this critical bill, like the recent passage of civil unions in Hawaii, will once again demonstrate that our state cares deeply about protecting our citizens' equal rights, and about taking a stand against unnecessarily discriminatory policies. By permitting citizens to change their gender identification on their birth certificate (and thereby change all other identifying documentation), our legislature could hereby take a strong stand against the many problems faced by transgendered individuals in our community. It is no secret that women and men who identify as the opposite gender to which they were born struggle significantly from a young age. School and workplace bullying, homelessness, verbal and physical harassment, substance abuse and prostitution are only some of the negative effects which stem from the social stigma or discrimination which these individuals face on a regular basis.

Can you imagine what it is like to apply for a job, only to be asked for your ID, which states that you should look like someone else? Transgender women and men are immediately made vulnerable to discrimination by employers, law enforcement, TSA agents, and many others as a result of the fact that their ID (a reflection of their birth certificate) does not match their gender identity.

Given these and other difficulties, it is simply unfair to further require that women and men must have the very expensive and potentially dangerous surgical sexual

reassignment in order to qualify for a change to their birth certificates. Surgery is only one method by which gender is changed, and it is not an option for a majority of people who might wish to live in their preferred gender category.

By giving these women and men, and their expert physicians, the power to assess and describe gender identity, this bill takes personal power away from the state and places it in the hands of the people most affected by such descriptions, where it belongs. Under HIPAA, access to protected health information is restricted to only those people who provide treatment for the individual. In most cases, this does not include the government or its offices. As such, it does not follow that the government should be able to control or prevent individuals from changing their gender or sexual identity on their personal and private legal documents.

With respect for the worth and dignity of all women and men, a belief in everyone's right to self-determination, a desire to eliminate discrimination of all kinds, and with the plea for protection of confidential health information, I respectfully request that this committee pass HB2227.

Rebecca Kushins
rkushins@hawaii.edu
808-344-3808

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 7:33 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: noraschubert@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

L A T E

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Nora Schubert
Organization: Individual
E-mail: noraschubert@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/2/2012

Comments:

I am in full support of this bill. Each of the individuals within our transgender community deserves to have the legal mechanism to live out their lives in the gender in which they identify with. While many of us are born into the gender in which we are able, willing, and comfortable to remain, there are many who from a very young age have realized they have no connection to their birth gender. The bill outlines the appropriate documentation, verification and steps needed to ensure the process is handled correctly. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony in full support of HB 2227.

LATE

February 2, 2012

To: Hawaii State Capitol

From: Andy South
Andy South LLC
83 North King Street
Honolulu, HI 96817

Re: HB 2227

Aloha,

I am writing this testimony as a business owner and as an active individual in the GLBT community in support of HB 2227. I am widely known as Andy South, the boy from Waianae, Hawaii who represented the state of Hawaii on season 8 of Project Runway. But to my close friends and family, I am also known as Ari. I am transgender.

Since returning home to Hawaii, I have established my business and my own clothing line, Andy South. I made the decision to produce my clothing in Hawaii, supporting our own economy and creating jobs. I have been very fortunate that my clothing is now carried in Neiman Marcus and specialty Boutiques with a national audience. I also teach at Honolulu Community College and continue to look for opportunity to provide work for our talented youth that allows them to grow and learn while in Hawaii. My career goal is to revive our garment industry and I understand that to see it come to fruition, I must be a pioneer.

I mention these accomplishments and goals, as they are the result of unyielding support from my community and state. I have been blessed to be able to contribute to the betterment of lives here in Hawaii, something I am so grateful for. Today I ask for you to continue to support me as I open up my life to you in hopes that you will be open to understanding me.

I am making this contribution to my life goal. That is to be an advocate for human life and fairness; for human and civil rights. Today I make a stand and make my first public statement as a transgender female in the process of transition. I was taught to speak for those who can't and need your help and to be involved in change and to follow my convictions.

House Bill 2227 would allow me the ability to change the sex on my birth certificate before having a full Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS). I am never one to be ashamed of my past and will never forget it, but having the comfort of my birth certificate stating that I am female is a dream I

LATE

am working toward. For transgender individuals that live their lives as their core identified genders, who is to determine who they are?

There is nothing more painful than the sting of a simple "M" or "F" deeming you not who you know you are. The issue of gender identity and transgender acceptance is what is at the core of this bill.

Only after full GRS with the documentation granting permission from a doctor can one change their gender on his or her birth certificate. Transition takes years and is very expensive, but necessary for those who are born to the wrong body. Some of us will never be able to afford the full GRS or will only be able to in the last phases of our lives leaving little time to really be who we are.

Though not post-operative, we live our lives as contributing members of society. Supporting a community always with the hope that those looking into our lives will support us. We have careers, raise children, lead others, inspire youth and live to share our talent and gifts for a better world. We live our lives the same as those born into the genders we identify with, yet we need to undergo the knife for it to be recognized. We live in fear of a haunting reminder that the world does not see us as legitimate men or women based on our birth certificate.

Many who are not familiar with transgender people may only see the physical changes and do not understand the sheer need and war that takes place within. I write this in earnest desire for the comfort of being one step closer to the complete me.

Seeing is not believing, for it is the intangible sense of identity that tells us who we are. I am asking for your support, allowing this bill to pass.

Aloha Nui,

Ari (Andy South) Southiphong

L A T E

Testifying in Support of HB2227

Aloha, Chairman Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Health Committee:

My name is Cyrus Naone and I testify in strong support of HB2227, regarding birth certificates.

It is the responsibility of the state to protect and ensure the well-being of all its citizens, including transgender individuals. Allowing this bill to pass will give people like me the opportunity to live our lives to the fullest by having important legal documents, such as a birth certificate, reflect our true selves. I am under the care of loving and competent medical professionals who can attest to the fact that I am of sound mind and judgment. Please trust in their expertise as they trust you in yours.

Gender identity may seem like a vague, abstract concept to many people, but it is as tangible and pertinent as a person's ethnic and cultural background. This bill recognizes that people are more than documented physical attributes. It acknowledges a transgender individual's right to live freely without discrimination.

I humbly request that this committee pass HB2227 and do so knowing my eternal gratitude, respect, and aloha for you all.

Mahalo,

Cyrus Naone
94-406 Kapuahi St. Apt 43
Mililani, HI 96789

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 9:18 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: theede@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Teri Heede
Organization: Individual
E-mail: theede@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/2/2012

Comments:
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Friday, February 3, 2012
9:00 a.m.
Room 329

STRONG SUPPORT for HB 2227 - RELATING TO BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committee,

My name is Teri Heede and I am requesting that you support this legislation.

Our current policies are discriminatory and cruel. I cannot imagine the feeling of not being able to present documentation that matches the gender you feel you are and are presenting to the world.

Please support HB 2227 and end this discrimination.

Mahalo ahead of time for your support!

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 6:52 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: nioi.kalua@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

L A T E

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Nioi Kalua-Heleloa
Organization: Individual
E-mail: nioi.kalua@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/3/2012

Comments:

In 1963 titled: "S.B. 870 'Disorderly Conduct, Act 175 was passed as follows:

Be it Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1: Section 314-2 of the Revised Laws of Hawaii 1955, as amended, is hereby amended by adding subsection (k) to read as follows:

'(k) Wear clothing of the opposite sex in any public place with intent to deceive other persons by failing to identify his or her sex.'

SECTION 2: This Act shall take effect on its approval.

With Act 175 in effect for nearly a decade, the Honolulu Police Department had every legal right to arrest Transgender individuals who dressed in the clothing of their choice, that of the opposite sex within the years of 1963 to 1972. That Act violated a U.S. citizen's right under "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964...to protect constitutional rights in public facilities". Additionally, "discrimination against transsexual and Transgendered individuals...is in fact classic sex discrimination and should be recognized as such under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the federal statute discrimination on the basis of sex". In other words, five years after Hawai'i became a recognized 50th State of the United States of America, Act 175 disempowered Transgender individuals from freely expressing their gender identity and sexuality in public. This Act, by penalty, an individual could be "fined up to \$1,000 or a year in jail, or both."

However that's the past. In 2011 with a new Governor in seat to protect further sex discrimination against Transgender individuals, thankfully, there has been an increase of Legislative Bills passed in the State of Hawai'i.

According to "H.B NO 546", [t]he purpose of this Act is to clarify existing law with regard to sex discrimination and provide that discrimination based upon gender identity or expression constitutes a form of sex discrimination"

Another Bill, "H.B. NO. 688" was passed in Hawai'i to prevent students who, with intent, caused physical and/or mental harm in relation to "bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment" toward LGBT (Lesbian, gay, Bisexual, and Transgender individuals) students.

Lastly, a third Bill had finally passed, "S.B.232", had its challenges for almost two decade as same-sex couples in Hawai'i have been trying to pass an Act for equal rights with that of a traditional marriage, which went into effect January 01, 2012.

Together, as we move collectively into the year 2012 onward, with the help of Hawai'i's Legislatures, Transgender individuals' identity and sexuality has finally been legally recognized. Since 1971 to 2011, it has been an uphill struggle for gender equality in Hawaii, as well as throughout the nation.

Already, the Government allows any transgender individual in pursuit of sex reassignment surgery in the future to allow then a to obtain a US PASSPORT for which I presently applied for.

If HB 2227 was to pass, I believe our State of Hawai`i will end the dichotomy of gender identity and expression on a supporting level between the Government and State.

Today, I am here to recognize that today's testimony is not the end, rather a continuum for advocating equality for all peoples, regardless of sex and gender identity/expression. Mahalo for your time. Aloha nui.

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 6:07 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: clairegearen@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

L A T E

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Claire Gearen
Organization: Individual
E-mail: clairegearen@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/3/2012

Comments:
Please pass HB2227.

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 5:29 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: kahanakitty@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kahana ho
Organization: Individual
E-mail: kahanakitty@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/3/2012

Comments:
Testifying in Support of HB2227

Aloha, Chairman Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Health Committee:

My name is Kahana Ho, and have been a life-long resident of Hawaii. As a transgender resident of Hawaii who supports true principles of democracy, I testify in strong support of HB2227, relating to birth certificates.

The birth certificate is the fundamental document of identity throughout this state and nation. It is what people use to define and verify the identity of others for everything from getting a Social Security account to obtaining employment to getting married. For most people, this is fine. However, for transgender and transsexual people like myself, our internal identity does NOT match the arbitrarily assigned gender marker on our birth certificates. For us, birth certificates can be a "Scarlet Letter" that can condemn us to discrimination, abuse, violence, and even death.

As a transgender/transsexual person, for many years, I was unable to get a driver's license, state ID, or US Passport that correctly reflected my true gender, my true identity, because of the current rules regarding the requirement that changing the gender marker on my birth certificate required notarized documentation of genital reconstructive/corrective surgery. I lived in constant fear that my ID would reveal my transgender identity, until I exhausted my life savings on genital corrective surgery. At times, this contributed to a profound sense of despair. I finally have been able to change my driver's license gender marker, but even then, in the course of changing my driver's license, I was subject to inappropriate questions about my medical history and status. I was subject to what can be characterized as nothing less than deliberate humiliation. I have not gone through the bureaucratic tangle to change my birth certificate, in part because I do not wish to subject myself to more invasion of my private life, more harassment.

My personal experiences aside, Transgender people do not always seek surgical treatment, sometimes because of financial reasons, sometimes because of health restrictions, sometimes because it simply is not a step that they feel is necessary. Sometimes, as in my case, we simply do not wish to disclose amounts of information that are privileged, private information. But under current rules, if we do not 1) have genital reconstructive/corrective surgery, 2) have notarized documentation of that, and 3) disclose extremely personal and private information, we cannot obtain a change in our birth certificate marker. However, when a person decides to live "full-time" in a gender that is not represented on her/his

birth certificate, she or he faces incredible hardship. In some cases, those hardships actually are barriers to successfully transitioning to living in our correct gender identity.

This bill represents critically important legislation to our community. It seeks to remove unfair requirements that encumber a transgender individual's ability to change the gender designation on his or her birth certificate.

This bill acknowledges that gender identity is not limited in scope to a surgical sex change and puts more trust in physicians and individuals, rather than in the state, to make such assessments and to substantiate them. I would also like to point out that HB 2227 reflects the US State Department's amended requirements for gender markers on US passports.

HB2227 will give transgender individuals more control over their own personal and private legal information.

I respectfully request that this committee pass HB2227.

Mahalo a nui loa, a me ke
Aloha Pumehana

Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

From: Sina Sison [sina@lifefoundation.org]
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 3:18 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: Bill HB2227

LATE

Aloha, Chairman Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Health Committee:

My name is Sina Sison and I testify in strong support of HB2227, relating to birth certificates.

This bill represents critically important legislation to our community. It seeks to remove unfair requirements that encumber a transgender individual's ability to change the gender designation on his or her birth certificate.

This bill acknowledges that gender identity is not limited in scope to a surgical sex change and puts more trust in physicians and individuals, rather than in the state, to make such assessments and to substantiate them.

HB2227 will give transgender individuals more control over their own personal and private legal information.

I respectfully request that this committee pass HB2227.

Mahalo,

**Sina Sison
Prevention Specialist
677 Ala Moana Blvd. #226
Honolulu, HI 96813
808 853 3248
sina@lifefoundation.org**

Honolulu AIDS Walk 2012 - General Donation

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 3:52 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: jvp@spacecraft.net
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Jesse Valentine Portz
Organization: Individual
E-mail: jvp@spacecraft.net
Submitted on: 2/2/2012

Comments:

Please pass this important bill to protect individuals who have undergone a gender change. All in our society must be able to provide a birth certificate for many purposes. Many transgender people, while they may wish to change their birth certificate to reflect the gender the world sees them as cannot, due to overly complex language in the current law. The previous language for issuance of a new birth certificate excludes many transgender individuals due to an outdated understanding of the medical issues regarding gender transition. Please modernize and streamline this essential law. Mahalo nui loa.
Jesse Valentine Portz

L A T E

Aloha, Chairman Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Health Committee:

My name is Nancy Kern and I testify in strong support of HB2227, relating to birth certificates.

I am a member of the Hawaii Safe Schools Coalition and have worked with the transgender community in Hawaii for more than 20 years. It is critical that this bill is passed so that transgender individuals have the same access to fair and equal treatment relating to their birth certificate designation as other Hawaii residents. This would afford transgender individuals the dignity and respect that they deserve in Hawaii.

This bill represents critically important legislation to our community. It seeks to remove unfair requirements that encumber a transgender individual's ability to change the gender designation on his or her birth certificate.

This bill acknowledges that gender identity is not limited in scope to a surgical sex change and puts more trust in physicians and individuals, rather than in the state, to make such assessments and to substantiate them.

HB2227 will give transgender individuals more control over their own personal and private legal information.

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 5:17 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: Firefly0006@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Lisa Huffman
Organization: Individual
E-mail: Firefly0006@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/2/2012

Comments:

I support this bill. I believe everyone has the right to happiness and to be fully their authentic self. Thank you.

LATE

Aloha,

I am a 22 years old transgender individual who supports HB 2227 (changing gender on birth certificates).

Before I was ten i knew that i was different. Trapped in a body that i didn't feel like was my own. Something was missing, something that held me back for most of my childhood and teenaged life. Up until a few years ago i acknowledged the difference that i felt and I made a decision. The decision to ultimately be "HAPPY". No longer would I feel insecure and ashamed of who I "AM". I am a transgender woman.

Kalama Shannon Perkins

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 10:18 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: nioi.kalua@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2227 on 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for HLT 2/3/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2227

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Nioi Kalua-Heleloa
Organization: Individual
E-mail: nioi.kalua@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/3/2012

Comments:
My name is....

In 1963, S.B. 870, Act 175, section (k) under "Disorderly Conduct" was unanimously passed.

Under that section, anyone who chose to wear clothing of the opposite sex in any public place with intent to deceive other persons by failing to identify his or her biological sex, illegal.

With Act 175 in effect for nearly a decade, the Honolulu Police Department had every legal right to arrest Transgender individuals who dressed in the clothing of their choice, that of the opposite sex within the years of 1963 to 1972.

In other words, five years after Hawai'i became a recognized 50th State of the United States of America, Act 175 disempowered Transgender individuals from freely expressing their gender identity and sexuality in public. That Act, by penalty, an individual could be "fined up to \$1,000 or a year in jail, or both."

However, that's the past. In 2011, with the help of Hawai'i's State Legislators, along with our new Governor in seat, protection from further sex discrimination against Transgender individuals are increasing in the State of Hawai'i.

For instance:

H.B. 546 is to clarify an existing law with regard to sex discrimination and provide that discrimination based upon gender identity or expression constitutes a form of sex discrimination.

H.B. 688 was passed in Hawai'i to prevent students who, with intent, caused physical and/or mental harm in relation to "bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment" toward LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender individuals) students.

Lastly, S.B. 232, went into effect on January 01, 2012, which now legally recognizes Civil Union.

Together, as we move collectively into the year 2012 onward, Transgender individuals' identity and sexuality are finally being legally recognized.

Currently, the Government recognizes any transgender individual in pursuit of sex reassignment surgery to allow them to obtain a US PASSPORT, which I recently have applied for.

If HB 2227 passes, I believe our State of Hawai`i will end the dichotomy of gender identity and expression on an Equal Rights Protection level between the Government and State.

In closing, I am here to state that today's testimony is not an end, rather a continuum for advocating equality for all peoples, regardless of sex and gender identity or expression. Please consider recognition and passage of HB 2227.

Mahalo nui for your time.

I am strongly in support of increasing the ability for transgendered and gender non-conforming individuals to choose the gender designation on their birth certificates. It unnecessarily complicates life for everyone in the community not to allow individuals to designate their gender.

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LATE

Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Morikawa, and
Members of the House Committee on Health:

Mahalo for inviting and hearing my testimony on HB 2227. As a licensed social worker, graduate of a theological school, wife, mother, grandmother, hula teacher, and friend, I have more than enough responsibilities, activities, and relationships waiting for my attention today. The fact that I am prioritizing this testimony is a sign of the crucial importance of the decision you are charged with making on this issue.

I choose to be the life partner of a woman who has been living through a gender transition over the past several years, I have learned, with painful listening, how essential it is to possess the basic, accurate documentation of who we are as a female, male, or any other gender identification. This designation, which most of us take for granted, becomes absolutely critical to a person who finally realizes that he or she has been living a untrue identity.

Birth certificates are the absolute starting point for so many common procedures required as we live our lives, such as: applying for a State ID, drivers license, library card, bus pass, picking up prescription medication. Possessing documentation which is congruent with one's gender is essential for day-to-day functioning.

I have watched my partner undergo intense anxiety as she approached each instance where a birth certificate,(or other documentation) was required. The stress placed on individuals in this position is extremely debilitating, and should be needless.

I urge you to pass HB2227, which will simplify the process of changing the gender designation on a birth certificate to match the transgendered or transitioning person's identity.

Respectfully,
Cheryl Ogawa Ho, LSW

2933 Pāhoehoe Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96817
Ph: 808-651-2303

February 3, 2012

LATE

To:
**The State of Hawai'i House of Representatives
Committee on Health**

From:
Kahana Ho
kahanakitty@gmail.com

Re:
HB2227: Relating to Birth Certificates

Testifying in Support of HB2227

Aloha. Chairman Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Health Committee:

My name is Kahana Ho, and have been a life-long resident of Hawaii. As a transgender resident of Hawaii who supports true principles of democracy, I testify in strong support of HB2227, relating to birth certificates.

The birth certificate is the fundamental document of identity throughout this state and nation. It is what people use to define and verify the identity of others for everything from getting a Social Security account to obtaining employment to getting married. For most people, this is fine. However, for transgender and transsexual people like myself, our internal identity does NOT match the arbitrarily assigned gender marker on our birth certificates. For us, birth certificates can be a "Scarlet Letter" that can condemn us to discrimination, abuse, violence, and even death.

As a transgender/transsexual woman, for many years, I was unable to get a driver's license that correctly reflected my true gender, my true identity, and I lived in constant fear that my ID would reveal my transgender identity, until I exhausted my life savings on genital corrective surgery. At times, this contributed to a profound sense of despair. I finally have been able to change my driver' license gender marker, but even then, in the course of changing my driver's license, I was subject to inappropriate questions about my medical history and status. I was subject to what can be characterized as nothing less than deliberate humiliation. I have not gone through the bureaucratic tangle to change my birth certificate, in part because I do not wish to subject myself to more invasion of my private life, more harassment.

My personal experiences aside, Transgender people do not always seek surgical treatment, sometimes because of financial reasons, sometimes because of health restrictions, sometimes because it simply is not a step that they feel is necessary.

Sometimes, as in my case, we simply do not wish to disclose amounts of information that are privileged, private information. But under current rules, if we do not 1) have genital reconstructive/corrective surgery, 2) have notarized documentation of that, and 3) disclose extremely personal and private information, we cannot obtain a change in our birth certificate marker. However, when a person decides to live "full-time" in a gender that is not represented on her/his birth certificate, she or he faces incredible hardship. In some cases, those hardships actually are barriers to successfully transitioning to living in our correct gender identity.

This bill represents critically important legislation to our community. It seeks to remove unfair requirements that encumber a transgender individual's ability to change the gender designation on his or her birth certificate.

This bill acknowledges that gender identity is not limited in scope to a surgical sex change and puts more trust in physicians and individuals, rather than in the state, to make such assessments and to substantiate them. I would also like to point out that HB 2227 reflects the US State Department's amended requirements for gender markers on US passports.

HB2227 will give transgender individuals more control over their own personal and private legal information.

I respectfully request that this committee pass HB2227.

Mahalo ā nui loa.
ā me ke
Aloha Pūmehana

~Kahana Ho

February 3, 2012

LATE

Testimony in Support of HB2227 Relating to Birth Certificates
Hawaii House Health Committee Hearing
Friday, February 3, 2012
Testifying in Support of HB2227

To House Health Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and Committee Members:

My name is Gene Corpuz and I am testifying in strong support of HB2227, relating to birth certificates.

I support this bill because it would remove the unfair requirements that transgender individuals face when they attempt to change the gender designation on his or her birth certificate.

This bill acknowledges that gender identity is not limited in scope to a surgical sex change and puts more trust in physicians and individuals, rather than in the state to make such assessments and to substantiate them.

HB2227 will give transgender individuals more control over their own personal and private legal information so that they can live full productive lives according to their core gender identity. This will eliminate the embarrassment of having a birth certificate that reflects an incorrect gender identity when applying for a job, seeking health care and pursuing other personal business.

I'm a member of Dignity Honolulu, the local chapter of Dignity USA, an organization for LGBT Catholics. This organization supports transgender people and has demonstrated that with the formation of the Transgender Caucus in 2009 and support for the Transgender Day of Remembrance.

I respectfully request that this committee pass HB2227.

Sincerely,

Gene Corpuz
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L A T E

Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Morikawa, and
Members of the House Committee on Health:

Mahalo for inviting and hearing my testimony on HB 2227. As a licensed social worker, graduate of a theological school, wife, mother, grandmother, hula teacher, and friend, I have more than enough responsibilities, activities, and relationships waiting for my attention today. The fact that I am prioritizing this testimony is a sign of the crucial importance of the decision you are charged with making on this issue.

I choose to be the life partner of a woman who has been living through a gender transition over the past several years, I have learned, with painful listening, how essential it is to possess the basic, accurate documentation of who we are as a female, male, or any other gender identification. This designation, which most of us take for granted, becomes absolutely critical to a person who finally realizes that he or she has been living a untrue identity.

Birth certificates are the absolute starting point for so many common procedures required as we live our lives, such as: applying for a State ID, drivers license, library card, bus pass, picking up prescription medication. Possessing documentation which is congruent with one's gender is essential for day-to-day functioning.

I have watched my partner undergo intense anxiety as she approached each instance where a birth certificate,(or

other documentation) was required. The stress placed on individuals in this position is extremely debilitating, and should be needless.

I urge you to pass HB2227, which will simplify the process of changing the gender designation on a birth certificate to match the transgendered or transitioning person's identity.

Respectfully,
Cheryl Ogawa Ho, LSW

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morikawa2 - Grant

From: Dana Constable [dcons001@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 8:59 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: In support of HB2227

LATE

Testifying in Support of HB2227

Aloha, Chairman Yamane, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Health Committee:

My name is Dana Constable and as a social worker, I testify in strong support of HB2227, relating to birth certificates.

This bill represents critically important legislation to our community. It seeks to remove unfair requirements that encumber a transgender individual's ability to change the gender designation on his or her birth certificate.

This bill acknowledges that gender identity is not limited in scope to a surgical sex change and puts more trust in physicians and individuals, rather than in the state, to make such assessments and to substantiate them.

HB2227 will give transgender individuals more control over their own personal and private legal information.

I respectfully request that this committee pass HB2227.

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