

LATE TESTIMONY

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [JDLTestimony](#)
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Subject: Submitted testimony for SB123 on Jan 31, 2017 09:00AM
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SB123

Submitted on: 1/30/2017

Testimony for JDL on Jan 31, 2017 09:00AM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Grady	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I'm 47 years old and this is my first time submitting testimony for any legislative bill. I write in enthusiastic support for this measure because the law was not on my side when I got married 10 years ago. I wanted my wife and me to have the same name because we planned to be parents, but none of the options seemed fair. I didn't want her to take my name, which seemed sexist and patriarchal. And I wasn't willing to take her name, because it felt unfair from the opposite perspective. We also rejected hyphenating as a temporary solution, that the next generation would have to clean up when they got married. Some of my friends actually merged names, so Mr. Kneser and Ms. Addison became the Knaddisons. But to us that felt unnatural, as a loss of all ethnicity and lineage. So instead we chose to take my mother's maiden name as the best way to honor lineage, gender equality, history, ethnicity, and our union. While unusual at the time, this practice is more broadly applicable than ever before. Beyond gender equality, there are different practices such as ethnic Latino hyphenation, religious Sikh surnames, and hyphenated-name children coming of age and needing to decide which parents names must go. Same sex marriage especially challenges these gendered, traditional practices. Which man should give up his name for his spouse or which woman for hers? Such non-traditional unions seek and inspire a more thoughtful approach to surnames which the law should reflect and allow. In the 19th century, Hawaii forced westernization by mandating women have the same name as their husband. Even to 1968, Hawaii Rev Stat § 574-1 required "Every married woman shall adopt her husband's name as a family name." Just as it was wrong then to mandate such a personal decision, it's wrong now to limit what names are allowable. It's worth note that changing one's surname is always hard. You have to submit endless forms with social security, voting rolls, employers, DMV, passport agency, post offices, mortgage officer, recorder of deeds, state tax authority, banks, utility companies, credit cards, insurance policies, and of course Facebook - not to mention correcting letters and references with family and friends. It's never going to be seamless, so will likely remain a minority practice. But with the marriage license providing a straightforward record ratified with social security numbers and each change to government-issued IDs, a clear trail follow any name you take. I appreciate your consideration in this matter and hope that through your actions uniting couples can enjoy greater freedom, simplicity, and equality.

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