

HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

Thursday, February 10, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference/ Room 329

To: The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
The Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on health, Human Services & Homelessness

From: Liann Ebesugawa, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.B. No. 1576

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state funded services (on the basis of disability). The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights. Art. I, Sec. 5.

H.B. No. 1576 amends the HRS to add a new chapter to establish the Hawai‘i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission. The bill also permits, but does not require, each county mayor to appoint a county committee on the status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus affairs.

The HCRC supports H.B. No. 1576.

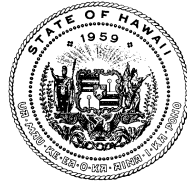
The purpose of this chapter is to provide for a statewide program, on a permanent and continuing basis, on the status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus people in Hawai‘i.

The civil rights laws that the HCRC enforces prohibit discrimination based on sex, including gender identity or expression, and sexual orientation in employment (HRS chapter 378, part I), public accommodations (HRS chapter 489), and housing (HRS chapter 515). Indeed, the HCRC’s statutory purpose reads: “**§368-1 Purpose and intent.** The legislature finds and declares that the practice of discrimination because of race, color, religion, age, *sex, including*

gender identity or expression, 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...”

This bill would allow each county to have a committee, appointed by its mayor, that submits a plan and proposal affecting the status of the LGBTQ+ community in the county, but does not require it.

The HCRC supports H.B. No. 1576.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1576
THE HAWAII STATE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER,
PLUS COMMISSION

THE HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR,
THE HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVE ADRIAN K. TAM, VICE-CHAIR

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, AND HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date: Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022 Room Number: VIA
VIDECONFERENCE

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (Department) **SUPPORTS** this Measure for
2 the following reasons:

3 **Department Testimony:**

4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1576, which would
5 establish a Hawaii state lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus (LGBTQ+) commission;
6 permit each county mayor to appoint a county committee on the status of LGBTQ+ affairs; and
7 provide funds for the commission's operative costs.

8 This bill is important because it supports equity for the LGBTQ+ community, many of whom are
9 vulnerable and whose needs are unknown, overlooked, or discriminated against. The "Hawai'i
10 Sexual and Gender Minority Health Report" (2017

11 [https://health.hawaii.gov/surveillance/files/2017/05/HawaiiSexualandGenderMinorityHealthRep
12 \[ort.pdf\]\(https://health.hawaii.gov/surveillance/files/2017/05/HawaiiSexualandGenderMinorityHealthReport.pdf\) and 2018](https://health.hawaii.gov/surveillance/files/2017/05/HawaiiSexualandGenderMinorityHealthReport.pdf)

13 [https://health.hawaii.gov/surveillance/files/2018/09/HawaiiSexualandGenderMinorityHealthRep](https://health.hawaii.gov/surveillance/files/2018/09/HawaiiSexualandGenderMinorityHealthReport.pdf)

1 [ort2018.pdf](#)) presented data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, showing that Hawaii
2 LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately affected by suicidality, depression, anxiety and other
3 deleterious health outcomes due to discrimination, harassment and violence as a result of
4 homophobia and transphobia. Advancing equity for LGBTQ+ people through the formation of
5 the LGBTQ+ commission is an important step in continuing to gather information and
6 decreasing stigmatization, oppression, and other minority stressors that LGBTQ+ people in our
7 communities face. Similar commissions in other states (e.g., Washington, Massachusetts) have
8 shown success in addressing the needs of this community.

9 For these reasons, the Department strongly supports HB1576, which will create a commission of
10 state and county employees devoted to addressing the needs of the LGBTQ+ community, thereby
11 increasing equality and decreasing stigma, which can lead to significant improvements in
12 LGBTQ+ mental health.

13 **Offered Amendments:** None.

14 **Fiscal Implications:** None for DOH.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, &
HOMELESSNESS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1576

February 10, 2022
9:00 a.m.
Room 329 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER,
QUEER, PLUS COMMISSION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1576 adds a new chapter to the HRS to: 1) establish the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission (Commission) within the Department of Human Services (DHS); 2) set parameters for the Commission's membership and appointments; 3) authorize the appointment of an Executive Director to be exempt from civil service; 4) outline the powers and duties of the Commission; 5) require each county to establish a county committee on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus affairs (County Committee); and 6) set membership guidelines and duties for the County Committees. The bill also appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to DHS in FY 23 for the Commission.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that

states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1576 with comments

TO: Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Tam, & Members – House Committee on Health,
Human Services and Homelessness

FROM: Trisha Kajimura
Deputy Director - Community

DATE: February 10, 2022 at 9:00 AM

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **supports with comments**, HB 1576, which establishes the Hawaii state lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus (LGBTQ+) commission, and county committees.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals who are adversely impacted by poverty, housing instability, discrimination, healthcare inequity and other social determinants of health. HHRC's roots are in the LGBTQ+ community with a transgender health program, an LGBTQ+-specific smoking cessation program and more than 500 participants of other programs who identify as LGBTQ+. One of our biggest lessons learned over the past 30 years is the importance of hiring and engaging with people who identify as LGBTQ+ to ensure that all decisions, programs and policies are inclusive and reflective of the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community.

The Hawaii State Department Health was the first health department in the country to publish both a sexual and gender minority health report (2017) and a follow-up report which focused on transgender youth (2018). These reports and the resulting Sexual and Gender Minority Work Group have highlighted the need for a statewide comprehensive strategy for our LGBTQ+ community to address related health disparities and social inequities in Hawaii.

We respectfully suggest that HB 1576 be amended to further specify commission composition:

- One member should represent the Hawaii Sexual and Gender Minority Work Group
- Commission members should reflect the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community by including individuals from different LGBTQ+ identities.

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

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 6:53:46 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Rainbow Family 808	Support	No

Comments:

We strongly support the establishment of the Hawaii state lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus commission. Please pass HB1576.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member, Rainbow Family 808

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESSThursday, February 10, 2022
9:00 AM

Videoconference and Conference Room 329

in consideration of

HB 1576**RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER, PLUS COMMISSION.**Chair YAMANE, Vice Chair TAM, and Members of the
House Health, Human Services, & Homelessness Committee

Common Cause Hawaii provides comments in support of HB 1576, which (1) establishes the Hawaii state lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus commission and (2) permits each county mayor to appoint a county committee on the status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus affairs.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening our representative democracy - one that works for everyone and not just the special, monied interests.

Common Cause Hawaii understands that the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus community is at an elevated risk of societal inequality and disadvantage through bullying and ostracism. Understanding how to address and remedy this inequality and disadvantage will lead to a more successful democratic society and effective democratic government, which is the effect of HB 1576. The Commission will reduce barriers that have made it more difficult for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus community to participate in our democracy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 1576. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 10:26:28 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and HHH Committee Members,

As a public health professional and concerned community member, I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1576 which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This measure is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities among LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Data from the Department of Health shows poorer health outcomes among these communities. As made clear by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health disparities in any communities lead to strains on healthcare systems, social networks, and economic infrastructure.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 7:16:54 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kunane Dreier	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1576 which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This measure is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities among LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Data from the Department of Health shows poorer health outcomes among these communities. As made clear by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health disparities in any communities lead to strains on healthcare systems, social networks, and economic infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kunane Dreier

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 7:50:23 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Breanna Zoey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hi there. My name is Breanna Zoey, my pronouns are she/her, and I am a transgender individual who resides on O'ahu. I am writing in ***STRONG SUPPORT*** of HB1576, which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This measure is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities among LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Data from the Department of Health shows poorer health outcomes among these communities. As made clear by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health disparities in any communities lead to strains on healthcare systems, social networks, and economic infrastructure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 8:38:28 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Anika Martin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB1576, which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities our LGBTQ+ communities currently face. The presence of even a small number of those who identify as LGBTQ+ can significantly assist with the passage of enhancing gay rights. It is clear that our current government values the importance of addressing the public's concerns. Therefore, the implementation of an LGBTQ+ commission would drastically aid in taking action for the LGBTQ+ community.

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 11:08:19 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Maddalynn Seseapasara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of [insert bill number], which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This measure is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities among LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Data from the Department of Health shows poorer health outcomes among these communities. As made clear by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health disparities in any communities lead to strains on healthcare systems, social networks, and economic infrastructure.

I would also like to add that the LGBTQI+ community should have a vote as to who should be sitting on these LGBTQI+ chair. The LGBTQI_ community should have a say who will be best suited for these LBTQI+ roles.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maddalynn Seseapasara

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 4:52:10 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jaime Stevens, MD, MPH	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Jaime Stevens
1177 Queen St #2707
Honolulu, HI 96814

February 8, 2022

Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: HB 1576

Aloha Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

I am a child, adolescent, and adult psychiatrist writing in support of HB 1576, which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This measure is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities among LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Hawai'i has 3 of the 4 counties in the US with the highest number of same-sex couple API households and the highest per capita number of adults identifying as transgender.

Despite being such a large portion of our communities, LGBTQ+ people in Hawai'i have poorer health outcomes than non LGBTQ+ kama'aina. Better understanding of the community through the commission proposed is a first step toward health equity in our State.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration in protecting the health and welfare of all of your constituents.

Jaime Stevens, MD, MPH, FAPA

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 7:25:55 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Danielle Sato	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1576 which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State. This measure is vital to address the needs of LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Data from the Department of Health shows poorer health outcomes among these communities. As made clear by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health disparities in any communities lead to strains on healthcare systems, social networks, and economic infrastructure.

Mahalo nui for your consideration.

HB-1576

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 8:28:14 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Renee Pedersen Rumler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1576, which would establish an LGBTQ+ Commission within the State.

This measure is necessary to address the specific needs and disparities among LGBTQ+ communities in Hawai'i. Data from the Department of Health shows poorer health outcomes among these communities. As made clear by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health disparities in any communities lead to strains on healthcare systems, social networks, and economic infrastructure.

Working with this population over several years, this is a critical need for our state.

Thank you for your consideration.