



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

Advocating for the Hawai'i LGBTQIA+ Community



Mailing Address: LGBTQ+ Commission, c/o The Department of Human Services,
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March 17, 2025

House's Committee on Human Services and Homelessness
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Thursday, March 20, 2025

RE: Strong Support for House Concurrent Resolution 107 with Requested Amendment

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and committee members,

I am writing in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 107 on behalf of the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission, which was established by the 2022 Hawai'i State Legislature with the following purpose:

"...to improve the State's interface with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus community; identify the short- and long-range needs of its members; and ensure that there is an effective means of researching, planning, and advocating for the equity of this population in all aspects of state government."

The Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission submits this testimony in **strong support** of House Concurrent Resolution 107 (HCR 107), which requests the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women to convene a working group to develop measures to strengthen protections under Title IX.

Title IX remains a critical safeguard against sex-based discrimination, harassment, and violence in federally funded educational institutions. As the landscape of gender equity and safety continues to evolve, it is imperative that Hawai'i remain proactive in ensuring these protections extend to all students, particularly those who are most vulnerable to discrimination and marginalization.

The LGBTQIA+ community, particularly transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming students, often experience disproportionately high rates of bullying, harassment, and exclusion in educational settings. Strengthening Title IX protections is essential to ensuring that all students have equal access to safe and supportive learning environments.

To that end, **we respectfully request an amendment to HCR 107 to include a representative from the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission as a member of the proposed working group.**

Proudly established pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 369, as enacted through Act 41, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022

HI State LGBTQ+ Commission Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 99

The inclusion of the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission is vital to:

- Ensuring that the unique challenges and needs of LGBTQ+ students are adequately considered.
- Bringing an intersectional lens to the development of policies that strengthen protections under Title IX.
- Promoting inclusivity and representation in the decision-making process.

Our Commission is uniquely positioned to provide expertise and insight on issues impacting LGBTQ+ individuals and to advocate for policies that advance equity and justice. By including our representation, the working group can ensure that any proposed measures are reflective of the diverse experiences of all students in Hawai'i.

Should you or any member of your staff have any questions regarding this testimony you can reach the Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission at hawaiiistatelgbtqpluscommission@gmail.com.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to collaborating on these important efforts to safeguard and strengthen Title IX protections in Hawai'i.

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

Vice Chair

[Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission](#)



March 18, 2025

Position: Support of HR103/HCR107

To: Representative Lisa Marten, Chair
Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

From: Llasmin Chaine, LSW, Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support of HR103/HCR107, REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS UNDER TITLE IX.

Hearing: Thursday, March 20, 2025, 10:15 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

On behalf of the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to thank the committee for hearing these important resolutions. I would like to express my **support of HR103/HCR107**, REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS UNDER TITLE IX.

Given:

- sexual violence is a highly underreported crime¹,
- a common strategy amongst sexual offenders is to seek employment and positions of power at youth serving organizations or work with vulnerable populations, in order to facilitate abuse²,
- the detrimental effects of child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and assault on well-being^{3, 4}, and
- the multiple power disparities that exist between student/teacher, student/coach, and student/professor, which can be leveraged against children and young adults,

I respectfully **urge this Committee to pass HR103/HCR107**.

Sexual violence prevention (SVP) best practices⁵ include:

- the implementation of anti-harassment and SVP policies⁶,
- mandatory annual training on:
 - sexual violence (types and impacts upon survivors),
 - prevention strategies,

¹ The Criminal Justice System: Statistics. RAINN. <https://rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system>

² Child Sexual Abuse By K-12 School Personnel in Canada – Executive Summary. Canadian Centre for Child Protection. https://content.c3p.ca/pdfs/C3P_CSainSchoolsReport_en.pdf

³ About Sexual Violence. CDC – Sexual Violence Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/about/index.html>

⁴ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). CDC. https://www.cdc.gov/aces/about/index.html#cdc_behavioral_basics_outcomes-outcomes

⁵ About Violence Prevention. CDC – Violence Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violence-prevention/about/index.html>

⁶ Program: Rape Prevention and Education Program. CDC – Sexual Violence Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/programs/index.html>

- victim rights, and
- pertinent reporting methods (within an organization and via community providers),
- connecting survivors to local service providers who provide counseling, and assist with police reporting, medical treatment and evidence collection; and
- the provision of protective environments.

The implementation of trauma informed practices and survivor centered policies⁷, helps to ensure students thrive and **decreases the risk that they will develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after experiencing incidents of sexual violence**. The sooner they can be assisted with symptom management, emotional regulation, and healthy coping strategy options, the better it is for both their short and long-term recovery trajectories.

Subsequently, **students' safety and wellbeing could be improved as a result of these resolutions**.

I respectfully urge this Committee to pass HR103/HCR107. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

⁷ Sexual Violence Prevention - Resource for Action, A Compilation of the Best Available Evidence. CDC. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/SV-Prevention-Resource_508.pdf#:~:text=These%20strategies%20focus%20on%20promoting%20social%20norms%20that,protective%20environments%3B%20and%20supporting%20victims%2Fsurvivors%20to%20lessen%20harms.



HCR 107/HR 103, REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS UNDER TITLE IX

MARCH 20, 2025 · HSH HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: Imua Alliance supports HCR 107/HR 103, which requests the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women to convene a working group to develop measures to strengthen protections under Title IX.

The U.S Department of Education announced in early February that it will officially enforce the 2020 Title IX regulations, enacted during President Donald Trump's first term, weeks after a federal judge struck down new regulations the Biden administration finalized last April. At colleges that had moved forward with implementing the Biden regulations, "open Title IX investigations initiated under the 2024 Title IX Rule should be immediately reoriented to comport fully with the requirements of the 2020 Title IX Rule," according to the new guidance.

Numerous advocates for victims of sexual violence have said this decision puts students at greater risk of sexual violence and harassment. The 2020 regulations have been widely criticized for making it more difficult for victims to report sexual assault and harassment, as well as for implementing due process requirements that favor individuals accused of sexual assault, such as allowing them to cross-examine their accuser, a process that is extremely traumatizing for assault

survivors. Additionally, the regulations limit Title IX's jurisdiction to incidents that take place on campus and more narrowly define sexual harassment than the Biden rule.

As Emma Grasso Levine, senior manager of Title IX policy and programs at Know Your IX, a college sexual violence prevention organization, said in a statement, "The 2020 Title IX rule fails students, who are now at greater risk of harassment and discrimination. This is an incredibly disappointing decision that will leave many survivors of sexual violence, LGBTQ+ students, and pregnant and parenting students without the accommodations critical to their ability to learn and attend class safely."

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, 11.2 percent of all college students experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. Among undergraduate students, 23.1 percent of females experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation. This issue is not specific to women, either. Male college-aged students (18-24) are 78 percent more likely than non-students of the same age to be a victim of rape or sexual assault.

Imua Alliance is a service provider for survivors of sex trafficking. Over the past 10 years, we have provided comprehensive direct intervention services to over 200 victims, successfully emancipating them from slavery and assisting in their restoration, while providing a range of targeted services to over 1,000 victims and individuals at risk of sexual exploitation. Many of the victims with whom we work were first exploited while enrolled at of Hawai'i colleges or after experiencing sexual violence during their college years.

As the Trump administration rolls back safeguards for survivors of gender violence, our state has a responsibility to strengthen protections in the islands, so that no survivor is left without care, compassion, and a pathway toward healing and justice.

Contact us at imuaalliance.org/contact.



Anna Ezzy
State Director

March 19, 2025

Hearing Before the Committee on Human Services and Homelessness
Thursday, March 20, 2025

Testimony on HR103/HCR107

Requesting The Hawaii State Commission On The Status Of Women To Convene A Working Group To Develop Measures To Strengthen Protections Under Title IX.

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds and members of the Committee,

My name is Anna Ezzy, I am a recent alumni of UH Hilo and currently serve as State Director for Every Voice Hawai'i, a student- and survivor-led organization working to address gender-based violence on college campuses. In 2023, our organization supported drafting and successful passage of Act 76 which increases trauma-informed training and gender-based violence prevention measures to improve campus safety and support student survivors in accessing their education.

I am testifying in **SUPPORT of HR103/HCR107** requesting the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women to convene a working group to develop measures to strengthen protections under Title IX. However, we would like to request an amendment to include student body representation in the working group. Since Title IX encompasses gender identity, gender-based violence and pregnant and parenting students, we ask that at least three students with knowledge and lived experiences in these areas are included to represent these diverse needs in the Working Group.

It is important to have student perspectives at the table since negative impacts to education access due to sex-based harassment are often obscured and easily overlooked from the outside. For instance, 4 out of 5 students (81.9%) who experienced gender violence in 2023 did not access UH programs (including Title IX) for help, despite 83.3% of students reporting negative consequences after experiencing this violence. Understanding sex-based discrimination through students' eyes will enable this Working Group to successfully close the gaps where Title IX currently fails to protect students.

The U.S. Department of Education recently reverted to 2020 Title IX rules, making it more difficult for schools to address sex-based discrimination and for survivors to get the protections they need. State-level action is necessary to close gaps in enforcement and guarantee adequate support services for survivors. Strengthening Title IX at the state level through HR103/HCR107 will reinforce Hawai'i's commitment to upholding safe and inclusive learning environments for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and for your commitment to the well-being of Hawai'i's students.

Respectfully,

Anna Ezzy
State Director
Every Voice Hawai'i



To: House Committee on Human Services and Homeless
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, March 20, 10:15AM
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HCR 107/HR 103

Dear Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and the Members of Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HCR107/HR103 which requests that the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women convene a working group to develop measures to strengthen protections under Title IX.

The [CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) reports that 9.1% of high school students in Hawai'i during past 12 months experienced sexual harassment or violence, 17.1% for lesbian/gay/bisexual high school students. The [2023 Report of University of Hawai'i Student Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Harassment and Gender Violence](#) reports 11.4% of survey participants experienced sexual harassment at anytime while enrolled at University of Hawai'i, 9% experienced stalking, 17.1% experienced dating and domestic violence, 6.9% experienced non-consensual sexual contact.

We must strengthen and enforce the protections against sex-based harassment, sexual violence and discrimination in schools. This measure would convene the stakeholders together to strengthen Title IX protections in Hawai'i. **Students are key stakeholders and AAUW of Hawai'i requests that you amend HCR107/HR103 to include a representative from the student body for 7) 8) 9) in addition to a representative from a non-profit/public interest organization.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Younghee Overly
Chair, AAUW of Hawai'i Public Policy Committee

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawai'i is an all-volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaula'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward O'ahu. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity through research, education, and advocacy. Our goal is economic security for women in Hawai'i .

To: Committee on Human Services & Homelessness
Thursday, March 20, 2025

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of HCR107

Dear Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 107 (HCR107), which calls for the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women to convene a working group focused on strengthening protections under Title IX. This resolution is essential in ensuring that students are protected from sex-based violence and discrimination in schools, a critical human rights and public safety issue.

Sex-based violence in education settings is a pressing crisis. According to reports from the University of Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Department of Education, many incidents of sexual harassment and assault remain unreported due to fear of retaliation, lack of institutional support, and ineffective enforcement of Title IX protections. When schools fail to properly address these issues, survivors suffer mental health struggles, academic decline, and even housing instability, putting them at greater risk of homelessness, poverty, and long-term trauma.

Hawai'i must act now to close the gaps in Title IX enforcement and ensure that all students particularly women, girls, and gender minorities can access education free from violence and discrimination. HCR107 takes a crucial step in strengthening state-level protections by bringing together key stakeholders legal experts, educators, policymakers, and advocates to assess the failures in enforcement and develop stronger policies to keep students safe.

By passing HCR107, this committee can uphold Hawai'i's commitment to protecting human rights and ensuring equal access to education. I urge you to support this resolution and take meaningful action to prevent sex-based violence in our schools.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Amy Zhao