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YJackie Shen <yjackieshen@gmail.com>

S.B. No. 1 Hearing Registration Number

1 message

House Special Session No Reply <hss456@capitol.hawaii.gov>

Tue, Oct 29, 2013 at 7:45 PM

Reply-To: House Special Session No Reply <hss456@capitol.hawaii.gov>

To: "yjackieshen@gmail.com" <yjackieshen@gmail.com>

To: Yautat Jackie Shen

Your comments for S.B. No. 1 have been received. The registration number noted below indicates your place on the testifiers list for the October 31, 2013, Committees on Judiciary and Finance hearing. Please bring your number to the hearing so you will know your place in line. You do not need to sign in at the hearing.

For additional information or for assistance on the day of the Committee hearing, go to the special House information desk near the hearing room entrance.

Please do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance, please email JUDSS@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Registration Number: 631

Yautat Jackie Shen
yjackieshen@gmail.com
oppose

Please note that I would like to provide verbal testimony and would like to be assigned a number. This is the third time I am submitting my written testimony. I was told via phone call this morning that my first email was not received, and told a few minutes ago that my second email was spammed.

For House Hearing on October 31, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

October 29, 2013

To: House Judiciary and House Finance Committees
From: Sue Felix
Re: Testimony in Opposition to SB1 Relating to Equality

Honorable Chair Karl Rhoads, Chair Sylvia Luke, and members of the House Judiciary and Finance Committees,

This legislation is part of a culture war against marriage and family, and I join my voice with the hundreds of thousands of Hawaii residents who want to see Senate Bill 1 defeated.

I am opposed to the legalization of same-sex "marriage" for many reasons, and I pray that my comments will be seriously considered. I will try to explain briefly my most urgent concerns.

- This legislation is about giving same-sex couples "equal rights" or the same right to marriage as opposite-sex couples. Yet both the Hawaii Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court have ruled that same-sex couples do not have a civil right to marriage. Marriage is not merely about benefits, feelings, the "pursuit of happiness," or autonomy. The dignity of this institution, which has been the norm in civilized societies since antiquity, lies in the importance of its social function for the common good of society, not just for the good of the married couple. This social function has traditionally been supported by the government because of the benefits to society, and because there is an inherent expectation of responsibility and obligation when people marry, even past a marriage if the legal relationship ends. Societies have recognized this social good to be the procreation and parenting of families, the building of character and thus stabilization of society, and the provision of future generations and thus the very existence and continuation of society. The complementarity of opposite-gender spouses has been taken for granted as a necessity and a norm for marriage throughout the ages, until recent decades. And we have seen the social and economic costs of weakened marriages and broken families in recent decades, due to the government's various legal and policy decisions. Same-gender sexual relationships are not for the greater good, outside the couple; they are unable to procreate. I oppose efforts by our government leaders to reduce the focus of marriage to the couple rather than to the greater purpose, and to "de-genderizing" marriage. Re-defining marriage will only serve to weaken and de-construct marriage, to the detriment of society.
- The authority and right of parents and families to pass on their values to their children will be stomped on by the newly-mandated teacher of values, the state education system. The nations and states with same-sex "marriage" have mandated that even the youngest of children be taught that same-sex "marriage" and homosexual behaviors are normal and good. One legislator has told me he thinks different legislation could prevent schools from including the LGBT agenda in the schools. This would be an absolutely unrealistic expectation, as evidenced by the number of "discrimination" lawsuits, judicial decrees, and

LGBT-friendly policies of government and employers in jurisdictions with same-sex "marriage." The traditional role of government is to support parents and families in building character and moral strength; proponents of same-sex "marriage" want to take that job away from parents. When children are taught at school that various sexual behaviors, attitudes and lifestyles are good and normal, and that two dads or two moms are okay, and then are taught different values at home, the parent's parental authority, and family cohesiveness and stability, are compromised. Legalizing same-sex "marriage" would rob parents and families of their foundational role in building a civilized and healthy society. I object to the inevitable and unwanted indoctrination of our keiki by the state of Hawaii, if this bill is passed.

- Some of the negative consequences of same-sex "marriage" as shown in jurisdictions which have legalized it are the significantly higher rates of sexual confusion, sexual experimentation and promiscuity among youths. Our keiki will be taught, oftentimes without appropriate regard to their stage of psychological, social, cognitive or spiritual development, that all gender choices are equally acceptable and desirable. The message will be that marriage is only about love, feelings and autonomy, and in fact, both gender and marriage will be rendered meaningless. Children would learn, at least subconsciously, that gender complementarity and procreation no longer matter in marriage. In our over-sexualized culture, our youths already struggle to understand that marriage necessarily involves a sense of obligation and responsibility, and of permanence and fidelity, for the protection of spouses and especially of children. Marriage itself will matter less, as has been demonstrated by plummeting rates of marriage in the jurisdictions with same-sex "marriage."
- An increasing number of same-sex couples are raising children. Research has shown that the relationships of same-sex couples are significantly shorter in duration and have greater infidelity than married heterosexual couples. Research has shown that children raised by a married mother and a father thrive in a number of ways at significantly higher rates, and have fewer cognitive, emotional and social problems, than do children of single parents or of same-sex couples. Contrary to what the LGBTQ activists proclaim, gender roles do matter when it comes to the raising of children; it is a reality that fathers and mothers are innately different in their roles, to the benefit of their children. Children have a right to have a male father and a female mother, to have proper role models. Again, I object to our state re-defining marriage as gender-irrelevant, and promoting a family structure which serves to deconstruct true marriage and family.
- Studies in Canada, Norway, Massachusetts and other jurisdictions have shown a higher prevalence of health and mental health problems, significantly higher relationship break-ups, children from broken families, child abuse, and domestic violence among "married" same-sex couples. The resulting increase of public health and social problems within this population has placed heavier economic burdens upon the government. I do not know the statistics as to the percentage of Hawaii's population receiving public assistance; I only know that we are the "#1 Welfare State." I think our lawmakers have not fully considered the increased health and social costs that same-sex "marriage" and promotion of homosexual behaviors will impose on our already-unhealthy, debt-ridden economy.
- I do not understand why any legislator would want to allow a minor to marry without parental consent or judicial decree. Section 3 of this bill is irresponsible; teens aged 16 and 17 (and 15 with a judge's decree) should not be allowed to marry on whim. The age of consent for sexual activity is 16, but marriage is not merely about having sex. Again, the government has traditionally supported marriage because it recognizes that marriage is associated with parenting and responsibility, a constructive and common societal

good. Long-term research has shown that 30% of marriages by minors end in divorce within five years; at least 70% of under-age marriages ultimately end in divorce. Studies show that under-age marriages produce significantly high rates of long-term poverty, domestic violence, mental health problems, criminal acts, involvement of Child Protective Services, and other social problems requiring government intervention and care, thus producing greater social and economic burdens upon society. Parents should be allowed to parent, including denying permission for their teenage children when they, the parents, know their teens are not ready for marriage.

- It is simply impossible to adequately protect religious and conscience rights of individuals, parents, organizations and businesses, and religious institutions (whether churches or non-churches) if same-sex "marriage" is legalized. The fact that there needs to be any religious exemption provision at all demonstrates to me that same-sex "marriage" is an attack on religion, personal conscience, and societal ethics. Proponents of this legislation are disregarding the ethics of hundreds of thousands of Hawaii residents; they do not seem to care that beliefs about marriage and sexuality which are currently our norm, and which have been deeply rooted in the civilized world since ancient times, would be turned upside down if this bill is passed. The fact that the word "liability" is contained in the bill demonstrates its coercive intent. Proponents of same-sex "marriage" believe that it is okay to penalize or punish those of us who believe that only a man and a woman can be married, that we cannot condone sexual behaviors outside of marriage, and that we do not want to compromise our moral beliefs or violate our consciences. We will be subject to punishment in various ways if we cannot conform to a new, state-mandated moral belief that gender is irrelevant to marriage and that same-gender sexual behaviors within marriage or outside of marriage are normal and okay.
- Although our State Supreme Court has ruled that same-sex "marriage" is not a civil right, with the enactment of this bill, the rights of same-sex couples would trump the right to express the way we live out our religious expression, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. This bill masquerades as an equality bill, yet stomps on the rights of conscience and religious freedom. It does not offer equal rights. For example, second grade teachers would be forced to either defy policy and lose their jobs, or painfully violate their consciences when they are instructed to read "King and King" to their students. A devout Christian photographer, who for reasons of conscience does not want to participate in any celebration of homosexual behaviors, can be sued as an act of punishment, even when other photographers are available to provide the service. A faith-based organization which chooses not to violate its moral code by renting its facilities for same-sex weddings or celebrations, can also be sued, or penalized by the state. Baptist, Catholic and other faith-based schools are vulnerable to expensive legal challenges when they will not, for the sake of their students' authentic formation in faith, hire or retain teachers who choose lifestyles which violate the tenets of faith. I find it extremely sad that any lawmaker would condone these unjust attacks on religion and on an individual's right to live according to his or her conscience without threat.
- I am not a constitutional expert, but common sense shows the impracticability of this bill's provision allowing Hawaii's courts to adjudicate divorce/separation/child custody cases of non-resident same-sex "married" couples. It will produce serious interstate quagmires for the couples involved, and it will impose upon Hawaii taxpayers the judicial costs incurred by non-residents. If the purpose of this provision is to market Hawaii as a "gay marriage friendly" state rather than a "family friendly" state, then I am ashamed.

I encourage proponents of same-sex "marriage" to become informed about the multiple

negative social and fiscal implications and consequences of same-sex marriage, as evidenced by long-term research in jurisdictions that have legalized it.

I am hoping that our lawmakers will respect the moral code held by a significant majority of Hawaii residents. I also hope that they will not condemn those of us who do not condone the sexual behaviors involved in same-sex marriage. I have relatives, friends and acquaintances who have same-sex attraction, some of whom maintain a chaste lifestyle, and some of whom have suffered greatly because of their choices. We love and respect each other. They accept that my moral code requires me not to condone sexual behaviors outside of marriage. LGBTQ activists who promote same-sex "marriage" have called us opponents derogatory names and demanded that we accept them. That is conflating issues – I can accept them as people with dignity and treat them with respect without condoning their lifestyle or agreeing with their opinions. I do not personally condone many behaviors -- such as pornography, adultery, stealing, and violence -- but I still try to respect the people who commit these acts.

With regard to this special session, so many of us oppose it. It has been a rushed process. We were informed by the news media that most of our lawmakers made up their minds about Governor Abercrombie's bill long before we could be heard. It has been clear during the last two months that the Legislature is ignoring the will of the people. The democratic process has been negated, because we the people are not truly being listened to. Earlier this week, about 100 same-sex "marriage" proponents attended the four-hour "Marriage Equality" rally at the capitol. About 7,000 people later attended the "Let the People Decide on Marriage" rally, and with several smaller concurrent rallies on the neighboring islands. The Senate blatantly disregarded the will of the people by not rejecting SB1. It seems almost fruitless to express our concerns and objections, and it is easy to question whether the will of the majority of people in Hawaii matters. I hope this perception is not true when it comes to our House members. Please hear us – that the overwhelming majority of Hawaii voters have clamored that a "yes" vote on SB1 is a clear "no" vote to democracy.

In 1998, the people of Hawaii asked the state Legislature to limit marriage to opposite sex couples. I respectfully and earnestly ask our legislators to reject SB1 and to work toward allowing the people to decide on marriage by Constitutional Amendment

Sincerely,

Sue Felix, LSW

A few resources

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This legislation is part of a culture war against marriage and family, and I join my voice with the hundreds of thousands of Hawaii residents who want to see Senate Bill 1 defeated.

I am opposed to the legalization of same-sex "marriage" for many reasons, and I pray that my comments will be seriously considered. I will try to explain briefly my most urgent concerns.

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couple rather than to the greater purpose, and to "de-genderizing" marriage. Re-defining marriage will only serve to weaken and de-construct marriage, to the detriment of society. -The authority and right of parents and families to pass on their values to their children will be stomped out by the newly-mandated teacher of values, the state education system. The nations and states with same-sex "marriage" have mandated that even the youngest of children be taught that same-sex "marriage" and homosexual behaviors are normal and good. One legislator has told me he thinks different legislation could prevent schools from including the LGBT agenda in the schools. This would be an absolutely unrealistic expectation, as evidenced by the number of "discrimination" lawsuits, judicial decrees, and LGBT-friendly policies of government and employers in jurisdictions with same-sex "marriage." The traditional role of government is to support parents and families in building character and moral strength; proponents of same-sex "marriage" want to take that job away from parents. When children are taught at school that various sexual behaviors, attitudes and lifestyles are good and normal, and that two dads or two moms are okay, and then are taught different values at home, the parent's parental authority, and family cohesiveness and stability, are compromised. Legalizing same-sex "marriage" would rob parents and families of their foundational role in building a civilized and healthy society. I object to the inevitable and unwanted indoctrination of our keiki by the state of Hawaii, if this bill is passed.

Some of the negative consequences of same-sex "marriage" as shown in jurisdictions which have legalized it are the significantly higher rates of sexual confusion, sexual experimentation and promiscuity among youths. Our keiki will be taught, oftentimes without appropriate regard to their stage of psychological, social, cognitive or spiritual development, that all gender choices are equally acceptable and desirable. The message will be that marriage is only about love, feelings and autonomy, and in fact, both gender and marriage will be rendered meaningless. Children would learn, at least subconsciously, that gender complementarity and procreation no longer matter in marriage. In our over-sexualized culture, our youths already struggle to understand that marriage necessarily involves a sense of obligation and responsibility, and of permanence and fidelity, for the protection of spouses and especially of children. Marriage itself will matter less, as has been demonstrated by plummeting rates of marriage in the jurisdictions with same-sex "marriage."

An increasing number of same-sex couples are raising children. Research has shown that the relationships of same-sex couples are significantly shorter in duration and have greater infidelity than married heterosexual couples. Research had shown that children raised by a married mother and a father thrive in a number of ways at significantly higher rates, and have fewer cognitive, emotional and social problems, than do children of single parents or of same-sex couples. Contrary to what the LBGTQ activists proclaim, gender roles do matter when it comes to the raising of children; it is a reality that fathers and mothers are innately different in their roles, to the benefit of their children. Children have a right to have a male father and a female mother, to have proper role models. Again, I object to our state re-defining marriage as gender-irrelevant, and promoting a family structure which serves to de-construct true marriage and family.

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It is simply impossible to adequately protect religious and conscience rights if same-sex "marriage" is legalized. The fact that there needs to be any religious exemption provision at all demonstrates to me that same-sex "marriage" is an attack on religion, personal conscience, and societal ethics. Proponents of this legislation do not seem to care that beliefs about marriage and sexuality which are currently our norm, and which have been deeply rooted in the civilized world since ancient times, would be turned upside down if this bill is passed. The word "liability" contained in the bill demonstrates its coercive intent. Those of us who believe that only a man and a woman can be married, and that we cannot condone sexual behaviors outside of marriage, do not want to compromise our moral beliefs or violate our consciences. We will be subject to punishment in various ways if we cannot conform to a new, state-mandated moral belief that gender is irrelevant to marriage.

Although our State Supreme Court has ruled that same-sex "marriage" is not a civil right, with the enactment of this bill, the rights of same-sex couples would trump the right to express the way we live out our religious expression, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. This bill masquerades as an equality bill, yet stomps on the rights of conscience and religious freedom. It does not offer equal rights. For example, second grade teachers would be forced to either defy policy and lose their jobs, or painfully violate their consciences when they are instructed to read "King and King" to their students. A devout Christian photographer, who for reasons of conscience does not want to participate in any celebration of homosexual behaviors, can be sued as an act of punishment, even when other photographers are available to provide the service. A faith-based organization which chooses not to violate its moral code by renting its facilities for same-sex weddings or celebrations, can also be sued, or penalized by the state. Baptist, Catholic and other faith-based schools are vulnerable to expensive legal challenges when they will not, for the sake of their students' authentic formation in faith, hire or retain teachers who choose lifestyles which violate the tenets of faith. I find it extremely sad that any lawmaker would condone these unjust attacks on religion and on an individual's right to live according to his or her conscience without threat.

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I encourage proponents of same-sex "marriage" to become informed about the multiple negative social and fiscal implications and consequences of same-sex marriage, as evidenced by long-term research in jurisdictions that have legalized it.

I am hoping that our lawmakers will respect the moral code held by a significant majority of Hawaii residents. I also hope that they will not condemn those of us who do not condone the sexual behaviors involved in same-sex marriage. I have relatives, friends and acquaintances who have same-sex attraction, some of whom maintain a chaste lifestyle, and some of whom have suffered greatly because of their choices. We love and respect each other. They accept that my moral code requires me not to condone sexual behaviors outside of marriage. LGBTQ activists who promote same-sex "marriage" have called us opponents derogatory names and demanded that we accept them. That is conflating issues – I can accept them as people with dignity and treat them with respect without condoning their lifestyle or agreeing with their opinions. I do not personally condone many behaviors -- such as pornography, adultery, stealing, and violence -- but I still try to respect the people who commit these acts.

I am opposed to both this special session and to SB1 itself. I ask our lawmakers to allow the people to decide on the issue of marriage, because it has been clear during the last two months that the Legislature is ignoring the will of the people.

With regard to this special session, so many of us oppose it. It has been a rushed process. We were informed by the news media that most of our lawmakers made up their minds about Governor Abercrombie's bill long before we could be heard. The announced plan to not even consider any amendments to the bill during the special session has effectively negated the democratic process. It seems almost fruitless to express our concerns and objections, and it is easy to question whether the will of the majority of people in Hawaii matters. I hope this perception is not true. Many of us voters have clamored that a "yes" vote on SB1 is a clear "no" vote to democracy.

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Sincerely,

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Oct. 31, 2013

Dear Members of the House of Representatives of the State of Hawaii,

I work for the State of Hawaii and I would like to present my testimony from that perspective. I am somewhat aware of the challenges we have as public workers to see ~~and~~ that we bring laws that are fair & equitable for all citizens. We really appreciate the time to seriously consider this bill as well as all the hundreds, if not thousands of testimonies given already. Thank you for taking the time to listen and deliberate over a bill that touches many.

I know you've heard many personal stories that speak on an emotional level. But as legislators you often have to look beyond just that and anticipate what kind of impact a particular will have on society, particularly this bill. As legislators you also have to make sure that you are being responsible with the laws you set and the taxpayer money being spent. Thank you for being accountable to that.

Right now I'd like to direct your attention to the tax burden on the government. "As noted by Eugene Tian, acting administrator for the Research and Economic Analysis Division of the State Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, Hawaii's "young age" population (those 14 and younger) account for 18.5 percent of the total population, down from 20.3 percent in 2000. Meanwhile the "old age" population (65 and older) accounted for 14.3 percent of the total population, up from 13.3 in 2000. The shift is expected to become more ^{pronounced} ~~permanent~~ starting this year as the first of the baby boom generation turns 65. - (Star Advertiser August 15, 2011.) You know, ^{full well} that in order for our elderly to continue to receive full benefits of retirement, the ~~state~~ government relies on taxes of the younger working class to pay for the older generation's expenses which often fall on the government. When these elderly have no children or younger family to take care of them.

Essentially this is what ^{will} happen to same sex marriages simply because they cannot have children. Same sex couples ^{will} must rely on the government to provide benefits when they age. Yes, they can rely on friends or adopted children. But in reality, those friends and adopted children came from some heterosexual couple that bore them. You see, "historically, childlessness was a rare occurrence and had limited demographic consequences at a time when most families were large. Today, with smaller families, the demographic impact childlessness is more consequential. Childlessness contributes to ~~keep~~ reducing the size of the future labor force, boosts the proportions of elderly thereby increasing old-age dependency ratios. In turn, this can lead to more program support for the elderly, less support for education funding and other community programs for children and other demographic changes like domestic labor force, immigration levels, voting patterns, taxation, pension expenditures,

education funding of healthcare costs."

You see we reward ~~marriages~~ marriages

Traditional marriages create families and children that grow old enough that they become a part of the labor force, contribute to society and pay taxes. On the contrary, ~~that~~ with states that face decline in population they suffer because they lack a strong workforce to pay for the infrastructure of a strong city or state. Perhaps what's most damaging is when governments are forced to tax the shrinking workforce for the soaring retirement & health benefits of an increasingly doddering population. ^{an obligation} ~~responsibility~~ This is already occurring in Germany & Japan. - reference. You see the government has a need to ^{don't} treat both homosexual & heterosexual marriages differently simply because they ~~don't~~ contribute in ways that families with children can. Rather than reducing taxes we ought to be charging them more like Russia between 1941 and 1992 childless women age 20 to 40 and men age 25 to 60 paid an extra percentage of their monthly salaries to the government. Simply being married solemnized by a clergy or judge doesn't make one ready for the responsibilities of marriage. Some young couples have no clue. I propose that we increase rewards & tax incentives for couples that stay married for more years. Perhaps 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25. I also propose we reward couples who have children and increase for those who have none by retirement age or some other time. ^{in the first} Why are rewarding couples that do not or cannot carry out the privileges and responsibilities of marriage plac I challenge you to consider who will be paying for the homosexual couples when they retire? It will not be their ~~children~~ children. All the burden will ultimately fall on the children & generations to come and they only come as a result of heterosexual families. We don't treat equal because they are different. Yet all still receive equal dignity & respect simply because they are people. Let's start rewarding families positively for what they do and not just because a minority group ~~has~~ demands rights and privileges. Special rights and privileges ~~are~~ of marriage were given for a reason. Let's respect those reasons and ~~reward~~ reward those who will take the responsibilities that come along with those privileges. By doing so, we will save our government a lot needless worry and save our taxpayer a lot more money!

Thank you for the opportunity to share my voice.

Sincerely,

Paul Ruddle

510 Palawiki St.

Kailua, HI 96734

Oct. 31, 2013

11:31pm

Dear Representatives,

4876

Thank you for taking the time to listen to so many people! I'm sure, by now, you feel like you've heard it all and don't want to hear anymore. I can definitely understand that, but this is just such a monumental issue, and it's at risk of being decided in such short time!

Perhaps the reason people are so riled up about it is because its approval can lead to so many consequences. If we give into this issue, it will give leeway to a host of other issues in the future. Amongst these may be the reintroduction of polygamy and marriage between family members, or even disputes about whether gay men who dress as women are allowed to enter female locker rooms, fitting rooms, and restrooms. Why not? If we approve of giving homosexuals equal rights, of course people will expect us to give them all sorts of rights.

I urge you to consider all the possible ramifications. This is really not just one issue on one bill. Let's not risk becoming like the frog who never realized it was being boiled to death because he didn't notice that the temperature was being turned up on it slowly and incrementally, but very surely! We must pay attention and stop it now!

Even more importantly, what will giving equal rights to homosexuals - essentially validating their lifestyle - do to our children? The family unit has already broken down so much that depression, violence and suicide rates amongst teens are higher than ever. They have no sense of identity. We're giving them fewer & fewer guidelines to live by as we become more "open-minded" and liberal. How helpful will it be for our government - our authority & leader - to encourage throwing another source of confusion into the mix? Why would we support something that brings more identity crisis and confusion to our children who are already lost and suffering? Thank you for taking my input into consideration. May it resonate with you.

Joyce Ruddell

October 31, 2013

610 Palawiki Street
Kailua, HI 96734

No
Written
Testimony

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Testimony

No
Written
Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Fern Dalton	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I previously submitted testimony on this, but as I sit and watch ongoing testimony on this bill I felt compelled to add more to my testimony. The question that keeps running through my head is, If you take out the religion from the argument in opposition, what are you left with? The answer is nothing. The freedom of religion is paramount. The freedom to believe in whichever God I chose is my constitutional right. So when all these people talk about how "God" said this, "God" said that, who gives them the right to speak for all faiths? There is no state or national religion that has been chosen so why do these people feel that their Religion contains the truth on this matter? Secondly, let's get this straight. There are two parts to marriage. The ceremony and the license. The ceremony is the only part that is religious. The licensing aspect is all contract. Anyone can go down and have a civil ceremony and their marriage is a valid as anyone who chose to have a ceremony in addition. This argument should not be about religion in any form.

ROBERT K. MATSUMOTO
Attorney at Law
345 Queen Street, Suite 701
Honolulu, HI 96813
Telephone: (808) 585-7244
Facsimile (808) 585-7284
Email: rkmbengoshi@hawaii.rr.com

DATE: October 31, 2013 No. of Pages: 5

TO: Representative Karl Rhoads
Chair, House Judiciary and Finance Committee

FACSIMILE: 586-6401

RE: Testimony Against S.B. No. 1, Relating to Marriage Equality
Date and Time of Hearing: October 30, 2013 @ 10:00 a.m.
Place: Auditorium

ARGUMENTS AGAINST S.B. No. 1

- 1. If enacted, S.B. 1 would be unconstitutional because Article I, Section 23 of the Hawaii State Constitution limits marriage between a man and a woman and nothing else.**

All political power is inherent in the people, not the legislature.

The Hawaii State Constitution, Article I, Bill of Rights, Political Power, Section 1 states, “ **All political power of the State is inherent in the people and the responsibility for the exercise thereof rests with the people. All government is founded on this authority.**”

In November, 1998, the “marriage amendment” to the State Constitution, Article I, Section 23, was ratified by an overwhelming 2/3 majority of the voters of the referendum placed on the November, 1998 ballot giving the legislature “the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples.” With the passage of the “marriage amendment” and the validation of the concomitant statute, HRS §572-1, the State Supreme Court ruled these actions took “the statute out of the ambit of the equal protection clause of the Hawaii Constitution.”

Note that the “marriage amendment”, Article I, Section 23, empowers the State legislature “to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples” and gives no other empowerment. Arguably, because the people has spoken on the matter of reserving

marriage to opposite sex couples by virtue of the "marriage amendment", once again the people should be given the opportunity to vote whether to extend marriage to same-sex couples.

Even the State legislature recognized the right of the people to decide how marriage should be defined when the State legislature passed the "Reciprocal Beneficiaries Act, "RBA," on July 1, 1997, HRS §572C-2 , That body stated "The legislature finds 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. The legislature further finds that because of its unique status, marriage provides access to a multiplicity of rights and benefits throughout our laws that are contingent upon that status...." (Emphasis added)

Accordingly, the legislature should defer to the people once again to decide whether marriage should be extended to same sex couples. To do otherwise, would not only besmirch the integrity of the legislative process but would undermine the very finding that "the people of Hawaii" chose to preserve the tradition of marriage as a unique social institution based upon the committed union of one man and one woman. For the legislature to vote on this crucial issue without leaving that important issue to the people to decide would be an arrogant display of power and shake the very foundation of the State Constitution.

In fact, for the legislature to vote on that issue and not allow the people to decide would contradict the principles set forth in also undermine the Preamble to the Hawaii State Constitution which reads: "We, **the people of Hawaii**, grateful for Divine Guidance, and mindful of our Hawaiian heritage and uniqueness as an island State, dedicate our efforts to fulfill the philosophy decreed by the Hawaii State motto, "**Ua mau ke ea o ka aina I ka pono.**" Of course, the Hawaii State motto is translated to read, "**The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness.**" (Emphasis added).

2. Marriage between same sex couples is not a "civil right".

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would not support same sex marriage as a "civil right", nor endorse the new concept of "marriage equality" as being espoused currently.

The late eminent Civil Rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., would not support same sex marriage as a "civil right". In his remarkable "Letter from a Birmingham jail", he expounded on the difference between a "just" law and an "unjust" law when pondering over the issue on whether to advocate breaking some laws and obeying others as follows:

"The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey

just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that 'an unjust law is no law at all.'

Further on, Dr. King expounds on the difference between the two (just v. unjust) as follows:

"A just law is a man made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law."

Both Sts. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas have taken the position that marriage between a man and a woman is founded on the "eternal" law of God and is based on "natural law." But both of them would take the position that same-sex marriage is not rooted in the "eternal" law of God and not based on "natural law", and therefore, is an unjust law.

3. Even the Hawaii State Supreme Court has recognized that same sex marriage is a recent phenomenon and not supported by long held traditions and the consciences of the people of Hawaii.

The Hawaii State Supreme Court in the case of *Baehr v. Lewin*, (later *Miike*) 74 Haw. 530, 645, (1993) held that: "We do not believe that a right to same-sex marriage is so rooted in the traditions and **collective conscience of our people** that failure to recognize it would violate the fundamental principles of liberty and justice.... Accordingly, we hold that same-sex couples do not have a fundamental constitutional right to same-sex marriage. (Emphasis added).

Moreover, in *Baehr v. Lewin*, the dissenting opinion written by Judge Walter Heen presciently pointed out the error of the self-designated plurality of the State Supreme Court that attempted to validate same-sex marriages when he opined:

"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.”
(Emphasis added).

4. The approval of same-sex marriage will have far-reaching and grave repercussions on the finances and policies of this state.

A. Allowing same-sex marriage would open a Pandora's box by redefining traditional marriage.

By redefining “marriage,” which is now the exclusive province of opposite sex couples, to include same sex couples would open a Pandora's box of societal problems, which Judge Heen correctly alluded to in his dissenting opinion. For example, if the definition of marriage can be changed to include same-sex couples, why limit such a change to same-sex couples only? Why not allow polygamous or “polyamorous” relationships that involve more than two (2) persons to enjoy the same benefits, rights, and obligations of civil marriage in addition to same-sex couples?

Therefore, with enactment of same-sex marriage, new “civil rights” will be created for same-sex couples. With such a drastic creation of a novel institution in Hawaiian society, it will be only a matter of time when such “civil rights” will be granted to other relationships such as polygamous or polyamorous ones to the severe detriment of the traditional one man-one woman marriage state with deleterious effect on society as a whole.

B. The validation of same-sex marriage would ultimately infringe upon the rights of parents to educate their children regarding human sexuality.

While some may argue that allowing same-sex marriage would not be so pervasive as to require the teaching of homosexuality as just one phase or part of human sexuality, such an argument is without merit. Soon after the state of Massachusetts recognized same sex marriages as being valid, an U.S. District court judge in the case of *David Parker, et. al., Plaintiffs, vs. William Hurley, et. al., Defendants*, C.A. No. 06-1071-MLW, 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.’” That same 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 IT OR LEAVE IT’ stance. He said, rather cavalierly, 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. Given these difficult economic times, it would be impossible for most parents to “opt” out of taking their children out of public schools and to place them in private schools or to teach them at home.

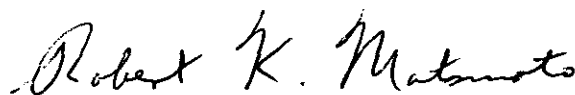
C. **Same-sex marriage would have a chilling effect on religious personages to preach about their views regarding the risky behavior of homosexual conduct.**

While priests, pastors, rabbis, and other religious leaders could now preach freely about the prohibition of homosexual behavior and relationships from their pulpits and in other forums, based on the Bible and other religious sources, their freedom to speak freely would be chilled if same-sex marriage is allowed in Hawaii. This would come about with the later passage of "hate crimes" legislation if homosexual behavior is "normalized." The passage of such "hate crimes" laws would have a "chilling" effect on these priests, pastors, rabbis, and other religious leaders from preaching about the prohibition of homosexual behavior and relationships since homosexuality would be deemed as "normal", and any statements against such "normality" would be considered "homophobic" and "hateful" speech.. While it may be argued that these same religious personages have the right to speak freely about the dangers of the homosexual lifestyle that appears to be protected by Hawaii Constitution, Article I, Section 4, Freedom of Religion, Speech, Press, and Assembly, and Petition, this is not an ironclad guarantee. Already, in parts of Canada and Europe, for example, the ability of religious persons to speak freely about homosexual behavior and relationships as being forbidden by the Bible and other religious sources has been sorely tested and challenged, by among other claims, that such preaching is a "hate crime" and subject to arrest, fines, and incarceration.

5. Conclusion:

Your support of the right of the people of Hawaii to decide for themselves whether same-sex marriage should be permitted in Hawaii vindicates the intent of the State Constitution that recognizes that it is the people who have been vested with the authority to exercise political power for the State of Hawaii and would uphold the motto of this great State, "**The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness.**" Anything less would be a legislative usurpation of power the likes of which have not been seen in Hawaii in a long time and worse may even be a transgression of the Hawaii State Constitution, Article I, §21, which states, "The power of the State **to act in the general welfare shall never be impaired** by the making of any irrevocable grant of special privileges or immunities," and Article I, §22, which states, "The enumeration of rights and privileges shall not be construed to impair or deny others **retained by the people.**"

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert K. Matsumoto". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Robert K. Matsumoto

Representative Isaac W. Choy & others:

This is an important issue. Governor Abercrombie certainly believed so when he called a nearly unrepresented special session just to address this issue. So did the thousands of people who were here Monday, throughout the week, and have returned today for their chance to testify and have their voice be heard.

Although I believe to the core of who I am that marriage is and should remain only between a husband and a wife, I am here today to appeal to your logical mind, because this bill is about so much more than what you or I believe.

I work under the judiciary branch for this state. I understand that our country was founded with three distinctive branches- the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary. I would assume that as the judiciary committee, you are aware of the distinct responsibilities of each of these branches, and you know that once you pass a bill, especially without the ability to add amendments, you no longer have any say in how the law is interpreted. May I ask- I'm curious if you, having passed any bill, were then contacted by any judge or member of the judiciary to clarify what you meant by any wording within a law that you had helped to pass once a lawsuit was filed. No? That is because that is not how the government runs. As lawmakers, you have tremendous weight to make sure that you approve of every word, every piece of punctuation in any bill, but particularly this bill before passing it, as it will be read, studied, dissected, and interpreted by countless legal scholars and judges who will do their best to try to keep the integrity of whatever you pass. I would hope, that as our elected officials, by the time this bill is ready for vote, knowing the importance that the governor and thousands upon thousands of your constituents who are here to voice their opinions place on this bill, that you can recite it forwards and backwards. That there is not one single word or piece of punctuation that you do not personally 200% stand behind. If you do not, then I urge you to reevaluate whether this is the right bill, whether you have personally had enough time to study the issues out that you are willing to put your name to THIS bill as an expert. The Judiciary won't question you when the lawsuits start rolling in- and they will roll in. You have to be sure that your intent is exactly what is written, or face the potential of passing an unalterable piece of legislation that has the potential to cause much more harm than you attempted to remedy.

There are hundreds of bills each year that seek to improve the situations of thousands of people and situations we get ourselves into. I am convinced that in your time as legislators that you have voted no to some bills that that you felt were just not the right answer, and you have done so without malice or dismissing the seriousness of the issue that the bill would seek to remedy. Maybe these bills contained the wrong wording, maybe it was the wrong time for the solution proposed, maybe it was too short a time to debate and research the issue, or maybe, just maybe your constituents voiced their opinions, you listened, and chose to accurately represent them at the time of the vote. Why is it ok to have hundreds of bills on education, homelessness, tourism, etc., that are delayed, discussed, killed in meetings or by vote, researched, amended and whatever other process they go through, and it is not ok for this very serious issue to follow that same course? Why are you meeting in special session? Why did the Senate limit the number of individuals who were allowed to testify? Why is this only a 5 day process? Why is it so hard for you to say that this is not the right bill, this is not the right time, this is not

the right judicial process, and that changing the definition of marriage, and including only weak religious protections are **not** what the people are demanding. Why is it so hard to admit to those statements boldly and without feelings of shame or political pressure that are so evident in this session in the same manner as you would vote against any other bill that you are asked to vote on? You were elected to make hard choices. I urge you to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong. Vote "no" on this bill.

If this is truly about rights, then let's discuss rights. This bill is **not** the bill that will address those rights equally for those on both sides of this debate. This is not the right bill for anything. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Candice", followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line extending to the right.

Candice Gonsalves

2211 Metcalf Street, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96822

To: House Committees on Judiciary and Labor
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, October 31, 2013, 10:00 a.m.
Place: Capitol Auditorium
Re: Strong Support of SB1, Relating to Equal Rights

Dear Chair Rhoads, Chair Luke and members of the Committees on Judiciary and Finance,

I am writing in very strong support of SB 1. I submitted testimony previously but am resubmitting as the deadline to submit testimony for being allowed to testify in person was lifted, so please do not count this testimony as an additional one in support as my previous testimony should have been already counted, but I have added some argument to the body here so please consider it.

My name is Philip Tumbaga from Mo'ili'ili a UH Manoa graduate, a straight male, and a law student. But most importantly to me I am a Christian. There are those who would question my faith for my position on this issue, fortunately for me they are not the final evaluators of my faith Jesus Christ is. Similarly this government is not the final evaluator of what God's will is, nor has anyone in this government suggested that it is, therefore this government is not deciding what God's will is.

Some of my fellow Christians are opposing this bill on the grounds of God's will with regards to marriage, this suggests a belief that the government has the power to grant the blessing's of the Lord on a marriage so I cannot join in a position that I feel is disrespectful to the sovereignty of God.

This government has no power to bestow the blessing's of the Lord on any union, so the only question on the table is what benefits, rights and privileges this government will bestow upon same sex couples by granting or denying them the ability to be married. As a Christian I have been taught that Jesus calls us to love people and to provide for their needs, and same sex couples have the same medical, economic and social needs as opposite sex couples. So as a Christian I strongly support this bill.

I also oppose any additional amendments to this bill with regards to some of the requested religious exemptions. I feel that any exemptions that go beyond the solemnization of a marriage goes against The Great Commission that calls upon Christians to share the Gospel or Good News with anyone and everyone we have the opportunity to.

My fear is that some Christians will use any such exemptions as a chance to say to the LGBT community "I don't want to serve you until you stop being gay." Jesus tells us to love people, to serve, to forgive, some people claim that by serving people in relation to their marriage granted by the state they would be solemnizing that marriage. That misunderstanding might be true if someone served in silence, however that is not what we are called to do, we are to take every opportunity to share and fellowship in love with everyone who will let us in order to spread the love of the Lord.

If we do not want someone to think that we are solemnizing their marriage then we should say so, we should share our beliefs about what we think a marriage is instead of putting up a sign on our door and hoping they don't come in. So I oppose any amendments to this bill and strongly support it as it exists now.

Please pass the marriage equality bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Philip Tumbaga

October 31, 2013

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair, and Members
House Committee on Judiciary
The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair, and Members
House Committee on Finance
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representatives Rhoads, Luke, and Committee Members:

My name is Debbie Luning. I am writing to express my strong opposition to S.B. 1 as drafted.

First of all, I do not want my opposition to this measure to be misconstrued as my dislike toward any of those who choose alternative lifestyles. I also do not want anyone to think that I am trying to pass judgment on anyone because I believe that we are *all* sinners in the eyes of the Lord. There are no exceptions. We need to be more loving and compassionate as a society if we want to see the kingdom of God come to our island State and for our land to be perpetuated in righteousness.

However, I do believe that S.B.1, as currently drafted, is flawed and does NOT provide the "equality" it seeks. While it provides equity to those of the LGBT community who desire to get married, it does not go far enough to protect the constitutional rights of those who desire to express their freedom of religion. I would prefer deferral of this bill, but if it is passed, the Legislature needs to ensure that it also provides equality and protection to those who desire to be God's "remnant," i.e. those who desire to follow His commandments and who strive to do His will. S.B. 1 in its current form does not provide this protection.

I am especially opposed to section 572-F of the bill relating to public accommodations. The exemption currently provided in the bill is far too narrow and should be broadened in scope. I believe that churches and places of worship should be able to decide on whether the marriages to be performed in their facilities fall in line with their religious beliefs. The public accommodations provision in this bill is weak, is patently unfair and is an open invitation to lawsuits. I urge you to consider amendments to the bill that would provide much broader exemptions to churches and religious institutions and which would provide a more balanced resolution to this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Debra M. A. Luning', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Debra M. A. Luning

From: John Heidel
Date: 10/29/2013

To: House Committees on Judiciary and Labor
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, October 31, 2013, 10:00 a.m.
Place: Capitol Auditorium

RE: **Strong Support of SB1**, Relating to Equal Rights

Dear Chair Rhoads, Chair Luke and members of the Committees on Judiciary and Finance,

I am writing in strong support of SB1.

As a Christian minister in the islands for over 50 years and as the former president of The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii, I've observed that there is considerable support for marriage equality from religious leaders and lay-people from many faith traditions: Christian, Jewish, Buddhist and Hindu. We aren't as organized or vocal as religious people who oppose this bill but we are there in the thousands.

My personal understanding of a loving compassionate God supports the basic right of all loving couples to have the full benefits of marriage.

This freedom is guaranteed by the U. S. constitution and is consistent with religious teachings. The first amendment clearly states that government shall not deny religious freedom and that religion shall not manipulate government. SB1 has language that is congruent with the constitution. Every person can follow his or her personal religious beliefs without coercion.

Regarding the argument that same-sex marriage would destroy or harm the family or society, it can easily be documented that the serious dangers to family life, marriage and our social fabric are found in the areas of conflicting values, money management and violence - to mention a few. This is where we should be working together.

Therefore I urge you to pass this bill to the full House for a vote. Thank you for hearing this testimony and for your consideration of this bill.

Rev. Dr. John R. Heidel
Minister, United Church of Christ
Former Chaplain, Punahou School
Former President, The interfaith Alliance Hawaii
Member, Christ Church Uniting in Kailua

John Heidel
1341 Manu Mele St.
Kailua, HI 96734

No
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Testimony

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To: Chair Karl Rhoads, Judiciary Committee and Chair Sylvia Luke, Finance Committee

Re: SB1 Relating to Equal Rights

Hearing Date: Thursday, October 31, 2013 at 10:00a.m.

From: Harold Jackson

City, State: _____

Subject:

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SPECIAL SESSION AND SAME-SEX MARRIAGE BILL,
SB1 Relating to Equal Rights**

Dear Chair Rhoads & Chair Luke:

As a concerned citizen, I am submitting testimony against this special session and the bill that would legalize same-sex marriage, SB1 Relating to Equal Rights. I oppose the special session because it rushes the democratic process and does not give we, the people, sufficient input in the legislative process.

I oppose this bill because it will infringe upon our freedoms protected under the First Amendment and will have far reaching consequences that nobody seems to be discussing. Whether it is freedom of speech, education or employment, this bill will impact our future and forever change our history, customs, and culture. Finally, we voted on a constitutional amendment in 1998 giving the legislature the power to limit marriage between opposite sex couples. The only legitimate way to change this is to let we, the people, decide. Please do not circumvent the democratic process!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify against this special session and against this bill.

Signature: _____



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Karl Rhoads, Chair,
House Judiciary Committee

Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Finance Committee

October 31, 2013

Re: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB1 RELATING TO EQUALITY

Dear Honorable Chair Rhoads and Luke and Members of the House Judiciary and Finance Committees:

As a registered voter, I am submitting testimony against this special session that is allowing the "special treatment" for a group that wants "Equal Rights" while denying me, my "equal rights" with this improper legislative process.

As a registered voter, I am against this special session that wants to pass a bill that would legalize same sex marriage, and by using false terminology to prevent a timely response from the public.

As a registered voter and a Christian, I am against this special session that would like to impose upon my religious beliefs, inconvenience my pastor and trespassing upon my church's mission.

And finally as a daughter of a retired Air Force Master Sargent, a mother of nine children, a wife of a man whom I have been married to for 12 years, and a woman of Hawaiian ancestry, I am against this special session that does not allow me, my constitutional right to vote and leave a legacy of historical and cultural liberties to my family and their future.

Our government and the people of Hawaii had already defined marriage as stated in our Constitutional Amendment that was voted upon in 1998.

Therefore, we must continue to lead the country as a socially moral state and not give up our personal liberties and religious freedoms.

This committee needs to come to understand that same-sex marriage is considered a religious-based issue and that this body not be allowed to interfere or mix a civil matter, in with religious rights (pg.2 of S.B. NO.1 Section 1.3).

This bill is unconstitutional and should not be allowed to dictate beliefs through legal jargon to religious organizations or individuals, as per the "separation of church and state."

I am tired of other organizations or groups getting away with taking my God out of our historical places and traditional context. This committee needs to take a stand, and "just say NO." Because if you do pass this bill, I expect a "special session" to ensure that "GOD" be placed backed in the Department of Education and in our state's chambers for daily prayer, along with other areas in our state.

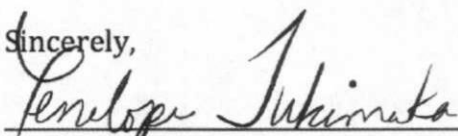
This is a civil matter (pg. 1 of S.B. NO.1 Section 1.1) that our state government just needs to enforce as per the IRS Notice 2013-61.

By eliminating entire lines (pg. 12 of S.B. NO.1 Section 8.Findings), you are making available opportunities for unforeseen relations that are not traditional or culturally "pono" in our state.

Although Hawaii was last to join the union, it should be the first to ensure unity with the people and uphold the Constitutional Amendment of 1998, and say "yes" to traditional marriage.

Mahalo for your time and understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,



Penelope Tukimaka
PO Box 283147
Honolulu, HI 96828
#808-384-7364

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Kathleen Sands	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: There's only one remaining argument against marriage equality in Hawai'i and it is, quite simply, wrong. In fact, it's been wrong for nearly a quarter of a century. Lawmakers should know this, but many appear not to. In the 1990 case of *Oregon v. Smith*, the U.S. Supreme Court addressed the question of whether the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment entitles citizens to religious exemptions from general laws. The Supreme Court's answer was a definite NO. The author of this opinion was hardly a liberal secularist. He was, and remains, the Court's most socially conservative member - Justice Antonin Scalia. Since 1990, religious exemptions are at most a legislative accommodation, not a constitutional right. In the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) of 1993, Congress did decide to construct its laws so as to accommodate religious objectors to the extent possible. But that does not mean there is a constitutional right to religious exemptions. It just means that legislators are allowed provide citizens with more liberty than the Constitution guarantees, just not less. Moreover, RFRA applies only to federal laws (*Boerne v. Flores*, U.S.S.C., 1997). Hawaii's proposed Marriage Equality Act, obviously, will be a state law. At the state level, therefore, the *Smith* decision dictates what Free Exercise does and does not mean. Citing *Smith*, the Hawai'i Supreme Court repeatedly has clarified that nobody is entitled to religious exemption from state laws (*State v. Harris*, [2013]; *State v. Sunderland*, [2007]).

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
nathaniel tom	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: I Nathaniel Tom, strongly oppose SB 1.

No
Written
Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Ewa Jachimczyk	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Chair Luke and members of the Committees on Judiciary and Finance,

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 1.

I would like to address two issues present in the dialogue thus far which this bill seems to hinge on, namely, EQUALITY and APPROVAL.

Despite being unsound and illogical, our society has begun to embrace same-sex marriage. "Equality" has been put forth as the driving force of the movement. However, the obvious underlying issue is "approval".

First, I will briefly address equality. This issue presents itself on two levels: the individual and the couple. Individually, the claim is that "homosexuals don't have the same legal liberties heterosexuals have". As couples, it is "homosexual couples don't have the same legal benefits as married couples"

My response regarding homosexual individuals: Any homosexual can marry in any state and receive all privileges and benefits of state-sanctioned matrimony. He/she cannot marry someone of the same sex. These rights and restrictions all citizens share equally. Though this is an extremely unsatisfactory response, it is legitimate. There is no legal inequality, only an inequality of desire, but that is not the state's concern.

My response regarding homosexual couples: It is true that homosexual couples do not have the same legal benefits as married heterosexuals regarding taxation, family leave, health care, hospital visitation, inheritance, etc. But, neither do other non-marital relationships between individuals. It has been said,

"The government gives special benefits to marriages and not to others for good reason. It's not because they involve long-term, loving, committed relationships. Many others qualify there. It's because they involve children. Inheritance rights flow naturally to progeny. Tax relief for families eases the financial burden children make on paychecks. Insurance policies reflect the unique relationship between a wage earner and his or her dependents (if Mom stays home to care for kids, she--and they--are still covered)."

The second issue is approval. For the sake of time and space I will simply make reference to two of SSM's biggest advocates - Evan Wolfson and Andrew Sullivan. These two (and others who have brought marriage lawsuits in recent history) have expressly stated that they want nothing less than social equality and validation. Sullivan writes, "Including homosexuals within marriage would be a means of conferring the highest form social approval imaginable." The SSM issue is simply about what society is being forced to do by homosexuals: approve. I, along with many others (as made evident by public response), do not approve of the homosexual lifestyle.

In summary, it has been demonstrated briefly above that we DO currently have equality. Approval is the issue. If legislators want to fast-track approval (seemingly against the majority opinion), this voter believes it would be wise to make more careful provisions for those who disapprove. Abercrombie has said, "It's time for marriage equity to take place, and it's also time to recognize that it can take place without violating the religious principles of anybody in this state." This is why many religious and non-religious folk of all stripes are taking up arms against this bill. That is, the protection of people's convictions in regards to this issue are inadequate.

Thank you for allowing this opportunity to submit testimony.

Very Respectfully,

Nohea M. Pangkee
Kaimuki, HI 96816

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Clifford Wassman	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Delray Cheah	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: I oppose SB1 on the grounds that same sex marriage is not natural and should not be legislated into law. We need to draw the line when our morality is at stake. We cannot afford to call something unnatural, natural, and then force everyone to accept it. I strongly oppose SB1 and ask that you do the same.

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Ashley Simpson	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: I strongly oppose same-sex marriage

No
Written
Testimony

I oppose SB1. Why are we here, why are we in special session Governor. Gov Abercrombie is a skilled politician, and he is treating Hawaii as if he were in Washington. What needs to be driven home and what Hawaii residents must not lose sight of in this entire process is the original **intent** of the 1998 amendment, marriage between a man and women.

What the governor and attorney general have done is wrong. This dog and pony show he has put on is just that – a charade.

Gov Abercrombie and his political apparatus in the senate cunningly made the 1st draft of the legislation really bad...it stinks. He backed those of us 'opposed' into a corner so we would complain about how the original draft of SB1 would affect churches, the schools, families, etc and then, naturally, begin a quasi behind the scenes negotiating process...They then offered to take the public accommodations law out of SB1 to appease the churches, religious objectors, etc...and now with modification as the attorney general addressed you yesterday, they are presenting us a final offer, and forcing us to accept SSM

or be labeled uncompromising, bigots, homophobes or as the Governor calls us...the drama. This is Washington politics, bait and switch, as with Obamacare authoritarian leadership. It wasn't long ago that the governor attempted to tax state pensions and only when the hue and cry became overwhelmingly negative, did he back off.

SB1 counters the intent of the 1998 amendment and this governor and legislature has taken it upon themselves to dictate policy to the people of Hawaii who overwhelmingly oppose it. To the People of Hawaii, how much longer will you accept this form of leadership? You voted them in, VOTE THEM OUT. I ask all people of Hawaii to petition their legislators to enact legislation ---Now--- to recall and impeach Governor Abercrombie and enact legislation to do the same of all legislators that do not abide by the will of the people of Hawaii.

No
Written
Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
dameon Launert	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Chair Rhoads, Chair Luke and members of the Committees on Judiciary and Finance, Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify. I am a straight man and a Christian. If anyone were to oppose this bill, it would be me. But I don't, because I couldn't care less who marries whom. It's quite frankly none of my business what anyone else does, as long as they're not hurting me. And same sex marriage doesn't hurt me because I'm not trying to impose my personal, subjective morality onto others. To the opponents of this bill, I say: if you don't like same sex marriage, then don't marry someone of the same sex. But you have no right to deny them marriage. I'm also a dedicated husband and a loving father. I can't even fathom what it'd be like to not have the freedom to marry. If you're also straight, can you image not having that right that we take for granted? Yet that is exactly what gays and lesbians have had to endure, and that is why I strongly support SB 1. My wife is a local girl from Maui, and we were blessed with the opportunity to raise our children in Hawaii. We want them to grow up in a world free of discrimination and intolerance, and that is why the Aloha State is the perfect place for our ohana. When my daughters are old enough to ask, I will be proud to tell them that we stood in solidarity with ALL Hawaiian families. This is the civil rights struggle of our time. Marriage equality is inevitable, and history will record which side you stood on. You don't have to be homosexual, or even agree with homosexuality, to pass this bill. I strongly urge you to pass this bill. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Kimo Kaleohano	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: You are to represent the will of the people

No
Written
Testimony

Date: 10/31/13

To: The House Judiciary Committee

The House Finance Committee

Re: Strong Opposition to SB1

Dear Chairs Rhoads and Luke, and Members of both the House Committees on Judiciary and Finance:

I am writing to voice my opposition to Bill SB1. I believe the legislature is going against the will of the people in Hawaii. We the people should have the right to voice their opinion and decide directly on the issue of marriage.

The fact that this Bill wants to decide the most important social issue of human life in a week is against the principles of democracy and the democratic process. The bill should be given due process during the regular session where it can properly be vetted and examined as all other bills.

Please remember that the people who elected you to serve as their voices should have a say in public policy. Please stand strong and vote "NO" to this bill and let the people vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Fenfang Li

Honolulu, Hawaii

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Johnette K. Maielua, Ph.D.

629 Kapaia Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

October 25, 2013

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
The Honorable Maile S. L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
Senate Judiciary and Labor Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

*Re: In **Opposition** to S.B. 1: The Hawaii Marriage Equality Act of 2013*

Hearing Date: Monday, October 28, 2013 at 10:30 am

I will be present to personally deliver my testimony.

Dear Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor,

My name is Johnette Maielua. I am opposed to SB1, The Hawaii Marriage Equality Act of 2013, because I have several concerns regarding the great impact that this bill will have on our State. At first glance, the language used in SB1 seems to be okay to the average citizen. But upon a close read, there are hidden problems embedded into the document that, I believe, would cause subtle and irrevocable damage to our communities. My hope is to convince those of you who are unsure about supporting this bill to voice your opposition, and those who are in favor of this bill to rethink your support. I will discuss each point separately below.

Public Voice Limitations

I understand that, from time to time, a special session of the legislature is necessary to discuss and make decisions about certain issues. I do think, however, that the issues regarding SB1 are too important and volatile to cram into such a short time period instead of waiting for the regular legislative session in January. Constituent concerns are disregarded because of the short time frame. There are limited opportunities to attend public hearings, to make and submit amendments, to be very sure that what is written in the bill is a true representation of what we, the people, want it to state.

I believe that you, the Legislature, are being pushed into decision making without adequate time to explore the Marriage Equality Act thoroughly, thus limiting the authentic public voice of the people. Hear my voice: I do not support SB 1, the Marriage Equality Act.

Disregard for Voters' Decisions

Another way that our public voice regarding this issue is being ignored is because of the fact that this issue was already voted for and settled upon by the people in 1998. The 1998 amendment defined marriage as between a man and a woman. We, the people of Hawaii, made our choice clear. However, as voters, we gave the legislature limited authority with a specific directive to define marriage for opposite sex couples.

You are our elected officials, yet in this short "special session" you are 1) choosing to limit our public voice via time constraints; 2) limit our opportunities to be heard via one public hearing; and then, just as in 1998, when we are asked for input, you, 3) ignore our voices/decisions. Your actions show arrogance and contempt for your constituents. Remember, you represent us!

Hear my voice: I do not support the SB 1, the Marriage Equality Act. I will support legislation to let the people decide *again* but only without any added amendment that gives reserve power to you, the legislature, to *redefine* marriage and undermine our public voice. Please let the people decide!

Religious Freedoms & Public Accommodations

The First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees our religious freedoms. However, the current draft of SB1 does not give adequate protections to religious organizations that welcome the public into their midst for any reason whatsoever. This is the "public accommodations" that are hidden and come into play here.

The language of the bill (Sec.1, 3b) states that religious organizations who use their facilities "for a profit" must also solemnize same-sex marriages. This is a requirement that may go against the beliefs and practices of a religion if the bill is passed, resulting in religious restrictions, and not freedom.

I believe that this bill promotes economic hardship for religious organizations that, not only fulfill spiritual purposes in the community, but social ones as well, many times stepping in for government agencies to fill needs. And we know that the government cannot do everything for all of its citizens. Will the legislature be willing to fund more social and/or work programs that are currently served by religious organizations or provide more funding for unemployment benefits if SB1 is passed?

Impacts on education

Again, another hidden impact of SB1 is on education. The DOE and the state are already strapped for funding. If SB1 is passed, do these entities have the funding to purchase new materials, new texts that are rewritten to reflect the changes in the law? Again, our state can ill afford to do this.

And if a teacher has specific religious beliefs/practices, won't that teacher's religious freedoms be compromised if the law passes and he/she has to teach curriculum that encompasses same-sex marriage? I believe that to pass SB1 would be wrong.

572-C "Parentage Presumptions" Impacts Native Hawaiian Entities

Embedded in section 572-C of the Marriage Equality Act, SB1, is the following phrase, "parentage presumptions based on marriage". To me, this means that all rights, benefits, and protections afforded to Native Hawaiians as the indigenous people of these islands may be also be given to others based upon marriage under SB1, and not just on paternity or maternity—the blood quantum. My people are still having struggles socially and economically in many areas, and now to deal with one more thing, one more layer, one more stroke against us is tantamount to betrayal—again.

Moral Courage vs. Popular Vote

What has been interesting to watch leading up to this special session is the amount of legislators that are now in support of the Marriage Equality Act, SB1. It is interesting because I wonder how many of you are supporting this bill to gain the popular vote instead of doing otherwise. Who has the moral courage to stand and do what is right and good for our state versus to cave in and do what is popular?

Finally, aside from all the items I listed above, I believe that marriage between a man and a woman is a God-given law. The laws of man, as you know, are subject to interpretation, revision, and/or reversal. Proponents for SB1 point to the social ills of abuse and high divorce rates in traditional relationships as a reason to pass this law. I contend that the social ills are due to the individuals and not the institution of traditional marriage itself.

I sincerely urge you: PLEASE, VOTE NO on SB1. Mahalo for your time and commitment to doing what is right for the people in this state.

Johnette K. Maielua, Ph.D.
Hawaii Voter

No
Written
Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Feliciano Veal	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I support SB1 in its entirety and ask you to please raise me up so that I may be a first class citizen, an equal member of this state. Oh how quick my taxes are taken, used by those very people who discriminate against me for their sake and betterment. i want to marry and enjoy the same rights and benefits given to heterosexual couples as well. I applaud all of the senators and house members who support SB1 I know its hectic times for all involved. I love god too, I have a personal relationship with him and speak to him each day via prayer however, I would never force my beliefs on another in the name of a "god" because my views are just that mine, another person may not share my view. I'm very sick of people invoking their god to run my life! I would like the state to end this gross discrimination immediately! mahalo and aloha, F.A. Veal

Any elected governing body in the United States of America does not have the right to take it upon themselves to determine what the definition is of such a sacred institution as marriage, with out, at the very least, following the desires of the people. Government officials are elected to represent the will and desires of the people who have given them the authority in which to govern. The people should not look to the government to define institutions such as marriage; the government should look to the people whom they represent to define these terms. Do not give yourself authority that you do not have. Take this matter to the public to vote as to how they feel convicted toward defining marriage.

“The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government, and to protect its free expression should be our first object.” – Thomas Jefferson, 3rd President of the United States of America.

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
jenine	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: Will speak testimony at Capitol

No
Written
Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
james buchanan	RG2	Support	Yes

Comments: I lead a volunteer group of over 200 that consists of mostly young adults. The vast majority of the group is straight including myself. This is a polarizing issue between Gay and straight people in a time where America is polarized. This legislation is a step in the right direction to fix this problem We support equal rights for marriage for all. I would love to speak to this. Lets be on the right side of history. Its going to happen anyway and its the right thing to do. Many straight people support this as well as the LGBT community.

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Testimony

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Justin	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I support SB1!

No
Written
Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Cycelia Hooper	Anointed Financial Solutions LLC	Oppose	Yes

Comments:

To Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am here tonight in strong opposition to SB1. Hearing the testimonies over the last few days has shown how passionate the people of Hawaii are in reserving the marriage covenant between one man and one woman. My wife and I have watched the testimonies since Monday and have been encouraged by the call to stand for what is pono. As a fourth grade teacher I try to instill in my students the call to do things pono even when it is a difficult thing to do. I understand the decision to be made by you may be one that you find very difficult. But as you prepare to make a decision remember the testimonies you've heard over the last few days and of the overwhelming majority who have spoken to uphold traditional marriage. I urge you to please listen to their hearts that truly love Hawaii and all who live here. I pray that you take your time and do what is pono as you hear and act on all you've heard.

Thank You & God Bless,
Leonard & Sandra Suan

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5090

Name: Dion Deluca

To: House Judiciary Committee & House Finance Committee

Date & Time of Hearing: Thursday, October 31st at 10 am

Re: Strong OPPOSITION to SB1, relating to "Equal Rights"

(Check one) ☐ I will ☒ I will not be testifying in person.

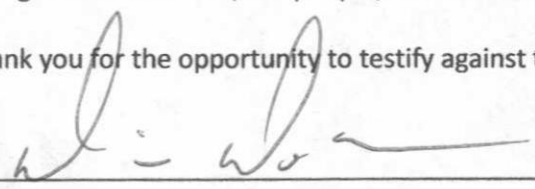
TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SPECIAL SESSION AND SB1, RELATING TO "EQUAL RIGHTS"
Also known as the same sex "marriage" bill

Dear Chair Rhoads and Chair Luke:

As a concerned citizen, I am submitting testimony against this Special Session and the proposed bill that IF passed would legalize same sex "marriage," SB1, relating to Equal Rights. I oppose the Special Session because it rushes the democratic process and does not give we, the people, sufficient input in the legislative process.

I oppose this bill because it will infringe upon our freedoms protected under the First Amendment and will have far reaching consequences that nobody seems to be discussing. Whether it is the freedom of speech, education or employment, this bill IF passed would impact our future and forever change our history, customs and culture. Finally, we voted on a Constitutional Amendment in 1998 giving the legislature the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples **only**. The only legitimate way to change this is to let we, the people, decide. Please do not circumvent the democratic process!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify against this Special Session and against this bill, SB1.

 10/31/13
Signature Date

DELUCADD@YAHOO.COM (808)979-1575
Email (optional) Phone number

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Dear Judiciary Committee members;

My name is Hiroshi Chinen, I am 87 years old and reside in Kaneohe and I definitely oppose SB1. This past Monday I heard number of people share their testimony in regards to the subject matter. My impression on those who spoke, those who opposed and those who were in favor of HB1 spoke eloquently, clear and precise.

I was appalled by the chair person conduct and dictatorial attitude of the senate public hearing. Originally, that the people who testified was told they will be given 2 minutes to speak and when it started they were told they had only one minute. Is this the way our elective official conduct their business in the legislative session. Bullying the people to get their point across. But tonight as I listened to the Judiciary Committee of the House I was so pleasantly surprised. This committee members showed so much courtesy and respect to the public that I am sure the participant enjoyed sharing their testimonies. The Committee members did not mocked those who participated but showed so much courtesy and aloha.

I was a staunch Democratic for many years. I was a staunch Democrat because of people like Gov. Burns, Senator Daniel Inouye, Representative Spark Matsunaga, Gov. George Ariyoshi, Patsy Mink. These elected official really represented the people of Hawaii. Than about 8 years ago I felt the Democrats were more interested about themselves then the people of Hawaii. they did not represents the people of Hawaii. Lets go back to the roots of the Democratic Party original intent.

I believe that marriage is between a man and a woman as God intended it to be. Homosexuality is not God ordained but the individual who made the choice.

Hiroshi Chinen
45-402 Koa Kahiko Street
Hono., HI 96744
phone #294-7156.

No
Written
Testimony

Please respectfully consider the following:

- 1) Being gay is not "natural". Real Americans always reject unnatural things, like eyeglasses, polyester, liposuction, and air conditioning.
- 2) Legalizing gay marriage will open the door to all kinds of crazy behavior. People may even wish to marry their pets because a dog has legal standing and can sign a marriage contract.
- 3) Straight marriage has been around a long time and hasn't changed at all; women are still property, blacks still can't marry whites, and divorce is still illegal.
- 4) Straight marriage will be less meaningful if gay marriage were allowed; the sanctity of Brittany Spears' 55-hour just-for-fun marriage would be destroyed.
- 5) Straight marriages are valid because they produce children. Gay couples, infertile couples, and old people shouldn't be allowed to marry because our orphanages aren't full yet, and the world needs more children.
- 6) Obviously gay parents will raise gay children, since straight parents only raise straight children.
- 7) Gay marriage is not supported by religion. In a theocracy like ours, the values of one religion are imposed on the entire country. That's why we have only one religion in America.
- 8) Children can never succeed without a male and a female role model at home. That's why we as a society expressly forbid single parents to raise children.
- 9) Gay marriage will change the foundation of society; we could never adapt to new social norms. Just like we haven't adapted to cars the service-sector economy, or longer life spans.
- 10) The Bible says that being gay is wrong; the Bible also says that a man should have as many wives as he can support, women should not be allowed to speak in public, having sex with your maid is perfectly OK, if you aren't a virgin when you marry, you should be killed, and being divorced is the worst sin imaginable as far as marriage goes.

Please vote to pass SB1.

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Jill Yoshicedo	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Brandon Marc Higa	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I didn't initially intend to provide testimony for this law, but I feel compelled to do so after watching others speak on the matter. I have never been so thoroughly disappointed in the residents of this state before, especially the younger generation. Without manipulating my children who can't even form opinions, I would like to express my strong support for this bill using my own vocal chords.

No
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Testimony

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Testimony

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Sharene Taba	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: i want to show my support for SB 1.

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My Name is Charleigh Petersen I am 25 and I am opposed to the government redefining marriage. I shared with the senators my story and I'm going to share it again.

My experience of the foundation of the family

I raised a little boy for 5 years without the influence of a man for a father figure.

As I fought the statistics of the future outcomes from a single family, I began to realize they are statistics for a reason.

Although I put my best efforts in, my son still suffered, Three months ago I chose to sign my rights as a single mother, to another mother and a father. Because I understood the statistics of the best possible situation for a child.

My son now has a more promising future because I could recognize the importance of my child's future.

Have you seen the studies and statistics? Can you recognize them? What are you willing to sacrifice? What are you willing to sacrifice for your children and their future? Read the statistics. 5 days is not long enough time to make that decision.

I came down here earlier and listened trying to be unbiased and really listen to the concerns and pleas of both people, I saw the body language and the bitterness in the room. I listened to harmful words, I saw pride and I saw you as the leaders and representatives respond through body language, the way you presented yourself. You could see agenda, you could see concerns, and you could feel a sense of "I've already made my decision". My Heart aches for the people here.

There will never be a sense of equality in any place. But where we find this equality and peace in the safety of our homes, this is where our children find a sense of peace. Where they can come home without teachings that may be unnecessary and harmful to the soul. We have the freedom to raise our children how we want, and teach them a foundation of certain beliefs, understandings, and can answer questions the way we find most respectable to teach at certain ages. This should not be enforced on our families. Give us that respect, if you're going to throw a one sided bill out on the people show some respect give us a refuge by allowing protection on our beliefs. By taking away our religious freedom you will cause more harm on families and the state of Hawaii will suffer.

Charleigh Petersen
2211 metcalf street 96822

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Testimony

No
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Testimony

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Jaiseen Bell	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments:

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ASUH

Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i

YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT

October 31, 2013

Aloha Chair Luke, Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committees on Judiciary and Finance:

My name is Richard Mizusawa and I am a fourth year undergraduate student double majoring in Communication and Communicology with a minor in Business Administration at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). I currently live in Aiea, Hawai'i, and also serve on my neighborhood board and partake in what is important going on in my University and community. Additionally, I serve as President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (ASUH) as well as Chairperson of the University of Hawai'i Student Caucus (UHSC) this year, which is the representative body of the over 60,000+ students of the University of Hawai'i (UH) System.

I also want to strongly note that although I serve in these capacities representing students of the UH, I want to testify on behalf of my office and myself, as a citizen of Hawai'i who pays a lot of attention to what goes on in our State Legislature. As someone exposed to the various religious perspectives as well as the stances of those in support of marriage equality, I see both sides to the argument and I see the pros and cons of whether or not Senate Bill 1 passes.

I wanted to testify today in support of Senate Bill 1. I believe strongly in marriage equality, and I am supportive of the language of the bill that gives a lot of attention and concern for Churches in our State. I am thankful for the Governor's and our legislators' attention to this major concern that many of those in opposition have. With this said, I believe that this bill has gone through a fair process and I believe in not discriminating against anyone, no matter what their sexual orientation is. If marriage with its benefits is a right we have, it should be a right anyone can have, and I speak out of my empathy for those who feel they have been discriminated against in their lives.

I also would like to announce that the ASUH did approve ASUH Senate Resolution 10-14: In Support of the Special Session on the Topic on Marriage Equality. The ASUH Senate may not have taken a united stance on same sex marriage, but we believe that the Legislature should discuss this topic in this current special session to give it the attention it needs due to the nature of its importance to the people of Hawai'i. As mentioned previously, if this were to be brought up in a regular session, the attention for this bill would be at a minimum – the amount of attention, thought, public input and participation this bill has received over the past few months has been extremely great and I am thankful for this. Without the special session, we would not have this opportunity to include all of the public testimony we are receiving today. In sum, ASUH supports the special session on the topic on marriage equality, and look forward to its progression over the next few days. Thank you for your time and have a good night.

Sincerely,

Richard Mizusawa
President
Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
101st Senate

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10/31/2013

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of SB1.

This past Monday I attended the Senate hearing of SB1, and I heard many comments on how the island LGBT couples can go to other states to get married and return here to live. It's interesting to note that people from all over the world fly to their dream destination in Hawaii to get married, and yet island LGBT couples, some of whom were born and raised here and are of Hawaiian ancestry are not currently afforded that same opportunity. This feels like discrimination to me.

I have many friends and some relatives in same sex relationships who desire to get married, and it would be a financial burden on them to fly to the mainland. I also would like to attend their weddings, and it is definitely not in my budget to be traveling to the mainland to experience these very special occasions.

I respect and honor other people's beliefs about marriage equality, however, I do look to the government to give the same marriage opportunities, rights and benefits to LGBT couples as are offered to heterosexual couples

Thank you so much for your time, and I humbly ask for your support of SB1 for marriage equality.

Mahalo nui loa,

Anne Valeron

92-726 Aoloko Place

Kapolei, HI 96707

760-498-5705

apassionflower@gmail.com

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
Jacob Nihipali	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: I ask, does this state deem people mentally incapable to stand trial? As it does, it excuses criminals who were born with an illness from prison. Why can we not similarly find another solution for SSM with redefining marriage? If this bill passes it might as well be like letting the Xerox Killer loose in the Capitol and say he was born that way and continue to let him run wild without any hard time. Clearly we know murder is wrong, and how do we know that? We were taught it by our predecessors and learned from the Bible. Allowing SSM is just like murder as same-sex couples alone cannot produce children. We also learn sexual sin is an abomination from the Bible. We still love those who are mentally ill but they have a place in society, whether contained in a facility or cared for by family. We can still love homosexuals and they should have their place in society but it is not in marriage. I OPPOSE SB1.

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testifying in Person
haleaka iolani pule	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: I am here to bear my testimony. I believe in the sacredness of marriage. I am here to share my manao on my belief .. Please hold off on making this hasty a decision.. And let the people decide.. Mahalo...