**In-person location:** 1390 Miller Street, 2nd Floor DHS Conference Rooms 1 & 2 Honolulu, HI 96813  
**Virtual meeting Zoom link:** <https://zoom.us/j/92198507509?pwd=hieXyWvs3IPkxKPWliHOlqUKuG7jbm.1>

Meeting ID: 921 9850 7509 | Passcode: 509173 | Waiting room opens 5 - 15 minutes before meeting

**Commission Purpose:** [From [Chapter 369, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol07_Ch0346-0398/HRS0369/HRS_0369-0001.htm)] The legislature finds that there is a need to establish a body to improve the State's interface with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus community; identify the short- and long range needs of its members; and ensure that there is an effective means of researching, planning, and advocating for the equity of this population in all aspects of state government. Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to establish a commission to provide for a statewide program, on a permanent and continuing basis, on the status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus individuals in Hawai‘i.

**CALL TO ORDER: 2:00 PM**

**Recording Link:** [**https://youtu.be/mATlnsOTDE8**](https://youtu.be/mATlnsOTDE8)

1. **Introduction and Roll Call (0:00-5:46)** 
   1. Officers (voting members)
      1. Chair Kathleen O'Dell, PhD (she/her) *- C&C Honolulu*
      2. Vice Chair Michael Golojuch Jr. (he/him) *- C&C Honolulu*
      3. Finance Director Shanda Brack (she/her) *- SGM Working Group*
   2. Commissioners (voting members)
      1. Sandy Harjo-Livingston, PhD (he/him/they/them)*- C&C Honolulu*
      2. Joe Tolbe (he/him) *- Maui County*
      3. Joseph "Rocco" Vick (he/him) *- Hawai‘i County*
      4. Richard Velasquez (he/him) *- C&C Honolulu*
   3. Ex-Officios or their designees (non-voting members)
      1. Superintendent of Education designee Beth Schimmelfennig, Director of the Department of Education, Civil Rights Compliance Office
      2. President of the University of Hawai‘i System designee Dr. Camaron Miyamoto, Director, LGBTQ+ Center, UH Mānoa (he/him)
      3. Director of Human Resources Development designee Signe Nakamura-Dureza, EEO Administrator
      4. Director of Human Services designee Jonathan Kimura, Executive Specialist
      5. Director of Health designee Thaddeus Pham (he/him), MPH, Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator, Harm Reduction Services Branch
   4. Staff
      1. Devyn Goo, Administrative Assistant
   5. Guests
      1. Ren
      2. Leanne Gillespie
      3. Josh Frost
      4. Andrew Ogata
      5. Isis Usborne
      6. Nicholette Kaopua
      7. Alissa Nelson
      8. Heather Lusk
      9. Carla Houser
      10. Janice Poetiray
      11. Dale VanderBrink
      12. Janice Berry
      13. Mike Golojuch
      14. Mecca Monson-Gere
      15. Nan Porterfield
      16. Maddalynn Sesepasara
      17. Mika
2. **Guest Speaker/Presentation (5:47-1:14:32)**
   1. Presentation: Addressing emergency shelters for homeless unaccompanied keiki including the Safe Spaces for Youth Program
      1. Leanne Gillespie,Executive Director for the [Office of Youth Services](https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/oys/) (5:47-30:39)
         1. Gillespie shares about the OYS, which focuses on preventing at-risk youth from entering the juvenile justice system, delinquency, and maximizing opportunities through community-based interventions. She shares that fewer youth are committed to HYCF, as well as the many programs and services from the OYS. A majority of youth served are aged 6-24, most being between 9-17 years old with a small percentage of non-binary youth being of Native Hawaiian and Micronesian descent. With HB613, OYS can serve youth up to 25 years of age who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness. OYS currently has 4 safe-locations on Oahu marked with a yellow safe place sign, with 11 other sites pending. They have also created a help line, where youth can text for help 24/7 (5:47-20:21).
         2. Commissioner Tolbe asks if there is a reason that there are no safe places on Maui. Gillespie says that the program has not rolled out to Maui and Kauai, and that part of the problem is that there needs to be an agency capable of 24/7 response and spaces that can shelter youth. Commissioner Tolbe asks what will happen to the youth at the job corps if it closes. Gillespie responds that she does not know, Commissioner O’Dell shares that it has already closed (20:22-22:54).
         3. Commissioner Golojuch asks how many beds are contracted out across each of the counties, Gillespie shares that she can only share from OYS’ perspective and that she will get back to him. She shares that there is a shortfall of beds for 18-24, and that will be the focus moving forward. She shares that they have received enough funds to open a new shelter. Commissioner Golojuch shares that service providers have said that many children are afraid to access these beds because they believe that they will be required to enter the foster care system or be put into the system of some kind, though Gillespie says she cannot speak for Child Welfare Services on that topic (22:55-27:09).
         4. Commissioner O’Dell asks what the qualifications or process is for an organization to become a safe space, which Gillespie shares that the organization would have to undergo training provided by HYSN after agreeing (27:10-28:03).
         5. Commissioner Velasquez asks for confirmation if there are many beds for 14 and under that are underutilized, Gillespie answers that in Hawaii, the beds are generally underutilized. Commissioner Velasquez asks who the service providers are for those beds, and Gillespie answers that she will send a list of contract providers (28:04-29:07).
         6. Commissioner Golojuch asks if OYS will consider collecting more data for others in the LGBTQ+ spectrum, Gillespie responds that there is a very complicated spreadsheet with more information and that OYS is working with providers to educate them and help them fill out more information (28:08-30:39).
      2. Carla Houser, Executive Director of [Residential Youth Services & Empowerment](https://www.rysehawaii.org) (30:40-52:22)
         1. Houser shares that about 32% of the youth that come to the shelters annually are LGBTQ+ with 7% identifying as trans, and that youth on average spend 120 days in the shelter, which is located on the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility campus. She shares the initial challenges that the location poses as well as other challenges that can snowball for homeless youth wo end up being incarcerated due to poverty. Houser also speaks about other transitional programs and houses for young adults, which cost around $200 a month and, in most cases, can be given back to the youth. She also shares about a house that will be allocated for LGBTQ+ specific youth in partnership with Gregory House (30:40-40:54).
         2. Commissioner Velasquez asks what happens to youth who first become homeless. Houser answers that per the street youth survey done in 2018, the average age of unaccompanied children who end up homeless are around 14 and end up partnering with an older male for shelter in exchange for various favors. She also shares that some children come from homeless families, and that RYSE works with these families. Commissioner Velasquez also comments that in 2019, it was impossible to find a bed for a 16-year-old. He asks if that has changed, and Houser responds that there are a number of community based non-profit organizations that are contracted, although sometimes they are told that those beds are held for Child Welfare Services. She adds that there are still several emergency shelters on island (40:55-46:30).
         3. Commissioner Golojuch asks Leanne Gillespie where youth 17 and under should be sent. Gillespie responds that it depends, as per the youth that Commissioner Velasquez previously spoke about, high behavioral health needs kids could only go to a contract bed if the shelter was empty so as not to put other kids at risk. She adds that Child Adolescent Mental Health Division of DOH has been trying to work at resolving this “gap” for youth with behavior health needs. Commissioner Velasquez comments that the children he previously referred to did not always have mental health or behavioral issues, and that sometimes they had just been kicked out or had gotten into trouble and they just needed a place for a night. Gillespie responds that there are group home settings for children who cannot go home for whatever reason, but that she cannot really say whether there are accommodations for specific cases. She adds that she does know that there are beds available and that contracts are underutilized (46:31-48:41)
         4. Commissioner Golojuch comments that something he would love to see is a 24/7 shelter where children don’t have to find the yellow sticker, it would just be a place they’d automatically know they can go to. He adds that the commission would like to know more data on the safe spaces, since allegedly there are many open beds but there are no data as to where or who is using them. He also asks Houser what she would like to see passed in legislation to help unaccompanied children. Houser responds that we need crisis stabilization beds for youth aged 14-24 to help them through difficult transitions and crises. Commissioner Golojuch asks if we need to make it easier for minors to become emancipated so that they can access services such as SNAP. Houser responds that emancipation can be a great pathway and tool for young people, and that they are working on making lease agreements possible for 16–17-year-olds and supporting them in court for emancipation (48:42-52:22).
      3. Heather Lusk, [Hawai‘i Health & Harm Reduction Center](https://www.hhhrc.org) (52:23- 1:14:32)
         1. Husk shares that HHHRC is the only program aimed towards LGBTQ+ specific youth, reducing houselessness, chronic diseases, mental health. They offer street-based services, medical mobile outreach, office and clinic services. She shares that in shelters, only 4% identify as LGBTQ+ and unsheltered, 12% identify as LGBTQ+ on Oahu and feels this is due to shelters not being safe for LGBTQ+. Husk shares testimonies from youth, who have shared experiences of being kicked out for being different as well as increased trauma and behavioral health challenges, especially youth who identify as trans or non-binary. She voices her support in crisis stabilization and more behavioral health focus and LGBTQ+ focus on Hawaii’s youth. She also shares about the specific housing made possible with recent legislation passing more funds, which she hopes will become an opportunity for youth to create a village and build connections (52:23-1:08:52).
         2. Commissioner Harjo-Livingston comments that RYSE was selected by KHON2’s Founder Day Charity and that there will be emphasis on homeless youth being talked about in the next couple of weeks. Commissioner Harjo Livingston adds that they will be accepting donations and making food for homeless youth and hopes to introduce this topic later to promote on the commission’s social medias so that people know where to donate to (1:08:53-1:09:41).
         3. Guest Carolyn from Rainbow Family 808 asks how many nightly unaccompanied youths there are. Houser responds that the number is 198, and annually, there are 400. Carolyn expresses frustration with legislators and the situation of homeless youths who cannot find shelter (1:09:42-1:14:32).
3. **Member Shares, Concerns, and Reports (1:14:56-1:19:45)**
   1. Commissioners (1:14:56-1:18:14)
      1. Commissioner Velasquez asks if the Maui Mayor sent a letter of commendation or support of pride this year. Commissioner Tolbe answers that yes, he read a proclamation. Commissioner Velasquez asks if Kauai did the same, Commissioner Golojuch answers that yes, both were posted to the commission social media and encourages the commission to follow the platforms (1:14:56-1:16:44).
      2. Commissioner Golojuch encourages the commissioners to take a look at the board packet, since there have been a few additions from the weekend. He congratulates Delaware, which starting June 1st, has a State LGBTQ+ Commission and shares that the safehouse.org has dropped the commission from 5th in the nation to 19th in safety for LGBTQ. Lastly, he adds that he put the Hawaii Human Rights Campaign’s 2024 State Equity Index for the commission to consider as they look into legislative priorities (1:16:45-1:18:14).
   2. Finance Director’s Report (1:18:22-1:19:45)
      1. Commissioner Brack shares that $16,400 was allocated, with about $16,000 spent with the $2,000 hard limit that could not be spent. She adds that there are a few outstanding charges that she does not have.
4. **Ongoing Business and Updates (1:19:52-2:05:26)**
   1. Update on the progress for hiring the Administrative Assistant II position
      1. Devyn Goo shares that she is still waiting on paperwork to process to become a permanent Office Assistant in Director’s Office (1:19:52-1:20:21).
   2. Update on Commission legislative priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session; Commission’s 2025 Legislative Tracker <https://bit.ly/2025LegHILGBTQplus>
      1. Update on the request for Commission representative for [SCR 145](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=SCR&billnumber=145) - DLIR; DHRD; Legislative Working Group; Labor; Paid Family and Medical Leave; Report
         1. Commissioner Golojuch shares that the letter was sent to the Director, and that the commission is waiting to hear if any of the requests for public signing for all the bills that have made it through have been granted (1:20:22-1:21:30).
   3. Update on Commission’s website - <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/lgbtq-commission/>
      1. Commissioner Golojuch shares the launch of the glossary on the commission website, which includes a form to add words/phrases. The press release went out on 6/6 (1:21:31-1:22:42).
   4. Update on letter to the governor requesting an Executive Order from Governor Green to turn Hawaiʻi into a sanctuary state for gender affirming care
      1. Commissioner O’Dell shares that there is no update, however Commissioner Golojuch shares that signatures are still being collected during pride events (1:22:43-1:23:25).
   5. Update on letter to Maui Preparatory Academy donors re: Maui Prep’s anti-LGBTQIA+ policies for students
      1. Commissioner O’Dell updates that the letters have gone out (1:23:26-1:23:53).
   6. Update on queer community leaders meeting & Community Calendar
      1. Commissioner Harjo Livingston shares that the next meeting is June 12 at HBRC and Andrew Ogata shares that 98 people are registered for the hybrid meeting. Commissioner O’Dell asks how people can sign up, Ogata shares the link in the meeting and shares that there is another link on all social media channels. Commissioner Golojuch asks if either Commissioner Harjo Livingston or Camaron Miyamoto can reach out to the UH Commission to start scheduling a meeting date for September, Miyamoto answers that he will reach out. Commissioner Golojuch suggests that since the meetings are quarterly, the meeting after September should take place in January rather than December since not many people will want to meet in December 1:23:54-1:28:25).
      2. Vote to establish the name for the meetings (1:28:26-

**Commissioner Golojuch moves to name the meetings “The Rainbow Pauhana – Queer Leadership Mixer,” seconded by Commissioner Harjo Livingston, unanimously approved 3:31 pm.**

* 1. Update on addressing the needs of our community’s kūpuna, especially māhū, trans, non-binary, and intersex
     1. Commissioner Brack thanks Commissioner Velasquez for organizing and shares that they both attended the ARCA event, where Commissioner Brack spoke for a few minutes sharing the SGM Kupuna Committee’s priorities and goals. (1:31:40-1:33:42).
     2. Vote - Dissolution of the PIG formed to create a coalition to address these needs (1:33:43-1:34:45)

**Commissioner Brack moves to dissolve PIG, seconded by Commissioner Golojuch, unanimously approved 3:34 pm.**

* 1. Update of the Commission’s 2025 Pride Participation
     1. Kaua‘i - [Saturday, June 7, 2025](https://www.kauaiprideparade.com/)
        1. Commissioner O’Dell shares that the event was wonderful, and that she along with Commissioners Golojuch and Steinbacher attended. She thanks Commissioner Steinbacher for his organization and help throughout the event and shares that they put out QR codes with a survey for things the commission should work on as well as the petition for gender affirming care. Commissioner Golojuch shares that they brought a proclamation to Kauai Pride, which was read on stage by the Governor and gave them the opportunity to address the crowd. He also shares that there were great responses from attendees (1:34:51-1:36:48).
     2. Maui - [Maui Pride on Saturday, June 14, 2025](https://www.alohamauipride.org/)
        1. Commissioner O’Dell shares that she and Commissioner Golojuch will be attending with Commissioner Tolbe, who shares aabout the Maui Pride Week events. The events include a barbecue beach party, boat cruise, hike, and then the pride parade (1:36:49-1:39:07).
     3. Hilo - [Hawai‘i Island Pride on Saturday, June 28, 2025](https://hawaiiislandlgbtqpride.org/),
        1. Commissioner Vick shares that the parade starts at 11:00 AM and asks for confirmation from Devyn Goo if the necessary participation forms were filled out, Goo clarifies that they have been filled and sent out. Commissioner Golojuch asks what the deadline is for the pride invoice to be sent to DHS, Goo says that the deadline is June 16th (1:39:08-1:41:19).
     4. Kona - [Kona Pride on Saturday, September 13, 2025](https://www.konapride.com/)
        1. Commissioner Vick shares that the sponsorship check was received from DHS and that he will ensure booth space for the commission. Commissioners Harjo Livingston, Brack, O’Dell, and Golojuch express interest in attending the event (1:41.20-1:43:16).
     5. C&C Honolulu - [Honolulu Pride on Saturday, October 18, 2025](https://www.honolulupride.com/)
        1. Commissioner Golojuch updates that the commission has sponsored Honolulu Pride and that the space is $300, not including tent, tables or chairs, which the commission will have to provide. He suggests partnering with another DHS commission to cover the space during the parade and asks the commissioners to consider how this might work. Commissioner Vick suggests the commission split up, so that two could hold the booth while the others participate in the parade. Commissioner Golojuch says he will reach out to Legacy Foundation for the layout and that they will continue the conversation in the coming months (1:43:17-1:47:48).
  2. Update on sponsoring [Gender Journey Day](https://genderjourneyshawaii.org/)
     1. Commissioner Brack shares that the check went out and that on June 28th, the training opportunity event will be taking place at UH Manoa. She encourages all to attend and shares that there are scholarships and transportation assistance to offset the cost of attendance. Camaron Miyamoto shares that registration to attend will be closing on Friday, 6/13 (1:47:49-1:49:30).
  3. Update on Collecting Hate Crimes Data Discussion
     1. Commissioner Golojuch tables the update until next meeting (1:49:31-1:50:10).
  4. Update on Hawai‘i Department of Education actions taken or to be taken in response to the required certification to end all Diversity Equity and Inclusion practices to receive federal funding
     1. Beth Shimmelfennig updates that there is a federal monitor keeping the DOE informed, such as the 700 marine troops deployed to Los Angeles for the immigration issues (1:50:11-1:51:30).
  5. Update from Genders & Sexualities Alliances - Advisors meet-up
     1. Thaddeus Pham updates that the meeting date has not been decided on, but the last meeting with DOE took place on the previous Tuesday. He explains that they are waiting on a few more emails as they are looking to expand beyond high schools (1:51:30-1:52:32).
  6. Update on request for Proclamation for June 2025 - Pride Month from the Governor
     1. Commissioner Golojuch shares that the proclamation has been released and is also on the website (1:52:33-1:53:05).
  7. Update tabling for Honolulu AIDS Walk on June 21st, 2025
     1. Commissioner Golojuch updates that the check was mailed out and that he will be in attendance. The event registration begins at 8:00 AM with the walk beginning at 10:00 AM and ending around 12:00 PM (1:53:06-1:54:02).
  8. Update on Pride flags to be flown from the auxiliary flag poles for Pride month
     1. Commissioner Golojuch updates that the pride flags are up in front of the Capitol and that a ceremony was held on 6/2. He also shares that there were mixed responses from the ceremony but good news coverage and attendance (1:54:03-1:56:33).
  9. Update on polling public for 2026 Legislative Priorities
     1. Commissioner Golojuch shares that there are 90 responses so far, with 87 sharing what island they are from; 66.7% from Oahu, 13.8% from Kauai, 17.2% from Hawai’i Island, and 2.3% from Maui. He encourages the commissioners to continue sharing the poll (1:56:34-1:59:55).
  10. Review DRAFT of 2025 Commission Fiscal and Legislative Report to the Governor and Legislators (see Board Packet)
      1. Commissioner Golojuch asks the commissioners to send their personal blurbs and blurbs from the Pride parades and shares that the draft will be finalized by next month. Commissioner Golojuch sets the deadline for submissions on Monday, July 7th at 12:00 pm due to changes in board packet due dates (1:59:56-2:05:26).

1. **New Business (2:05:27-2:19:25)** 
   1. Discussion and Vote - Sending a representative to the Hawai‘i Coalition for Civil Rights
      1. Commissioner Golojuch shares that the meetings will be on the first Friday of every month at 8:30-9:30 AM via Zoom (2:05:27-2:08:28).
      2. Vote on sending a representative

**Commissioner Golojuch moves to send Commissioner Harjo Livingston as the representative, seconded by Commissioner Velasquez, unanimously approved 4:09 pm.**

* 1. Discussion and Vote - ‘Ōlelo coverage of board meetings, submission to Hawai'i State Archives, and airing on ‘Ōlelo channels and app
     1. Commissioner Harjo Livingston shares that the Hawaii State Archives and ‘Ōlelo are in the process of receiving funding from the Governor to cover commission and council meetings to distribute on ‘Ōlelo and archive it in the historical archives (2:08:29-2:09:50).
     2. Commissioner Golojuch comments that the commission already archives the meetings on YouTube, Commissioner Harjo Livingston answers that this will be different from YouTube with no extra cost to the commission. Commissioner O’Dell asks where the meetings will be held, Commissioner Harjo Livingston answers that this will be determined closer to the start date in January. Commissioner Brack asks if this would just mean wider distribution and Commissioner Harjo Livingston says yes (2:09:51-2:11:56).
     3. Commissioner Harjo Livingston to find out if there will be time limits on the meetings and if this will cover all meetings. Commissioner Harjo Livingston clarifies that this will cover all meetings and suggests tabling voting pending approaching the start date in January (2:11:57-2:13:58).
     4. Commissioner O’Dell and Commissioner Golojuch question some of the logistics, such as broadcasting guests who may not want to be on such a channel (2:13:59-2:19:25).

1. **Future Meeting Topics or Speakers (2:19:26-2:22:07)**
   1. Discussion on inviting government and non-government organization LGBTQ+ liaisons
      1. Commissioner O’Dell shares that the governor was already invited and asks the commissioners to consider inviting other organizations. Commissioner Golojuch hopes that other organizations can bring in new topics to help people understand the community better. Commissioner Brack suggests inviting SGM Working Group. Commissioner Golojuch invites the guests to suggest organizations they want to hear from.
2. **Adjournment (2:22:08-2:23:41)**
   1. Discussion
      1. Commissioner Golojuch reminds the commission that there will be a movie showing of *Out In Paradise* and Q and A with filmmaker Sarah Banks put on by the Legacy Foundation and Lei Pua Ala on 6/10. Commissioners O’Dell and Golojuch will be attending (2:22:08-2:23:29).
   2. Vote on Adjournment (2:23:30-2:23:41)

**Commissioner Golojuch votes to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Velasquez, unanimously approved 4:24 PM.**

**Future 2025 Commission meeting dates: July 14**