



Hawai'i State LGBTQ+ Commission

June 2026 Meeting Minutes

Date: June 1, 2026

Time: 2:00 PM

In-person meeting location:

1390 Miller Street

2nd Floor Conference Rooms 1 & 2

Honolulu, HI 96813

RECORDED MEETING LINK: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6gBYui_zLk

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 2:03 PM

I. Introduction and Roll Call (0:00-3:35)

A. Officers (voting members)

1. Chair Sandy Harjo Livingston, PhD (he/him/they/them)- *C&C Honolulu*
2. Vice Chair Michael Golojuch Jr. (he/him) - *C&C Honolulu*
3. Secretary - Vacant
4. Finance Director - Shanda Brack (she/her) - *SGM Working Group*

B. Commissioners (voting members)

1. Philip Steinbacher (he/him) - *Kaua'i County* – ABSENT
2. Kathleen O'Dell, PhD (she/her) - *C&C Honolulu*
3. Joe Tolbe (he/him) - *Maui County* – PRESENT AT 2:10 PM
4. Richard Velasquez (he/him) - *C&C Honolulu*
5. Christopher Luthy (he/him) - *Hawai'i County* – ABSENT

C. 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 Manoa (he/him)
3. Director of Labor and Industrial Relations designee David Rodriguez, State's Equal Opportunity Officer – LEFT AT 2:59 PM
4. Director of Human Resources Development designee Signe Nakamura-Dureza, EEO Administrator
5. Director of Human Services designee Jonathan Kimura, Executive Specialist
6. Director of Health designee Thaddeus Pham (he/him), MPH, Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator, Harm Reduction Services Branch – LEFT AT 2:57 PM

- D. Staff
 - 1. New Administrative Assistant, Department of Human Services – Hanne Bulagay
- E. Guests (56:37)
 - 1. Janel Fujinaka, a māhū community member and candidate for the Hawai'i State Legislature - JOINED THE MEETING AT 2:59 PM
- F. Comment on receipt of written testimony
 - 1. None

II. **Member Shares, Concerns, and Reports (allow 1 minute) (3:43-18:12)**

Note: Any item brought up during this session not agendized below cannot be discussed or debated – for informational purposes only.

- A. Commissioners and Ex-Officios (See Board Packet)
 - 1. Chair Harjo Livingston expressed concern regarding recent leadership developments within the state Democratic Party and their potential impact on transgender rights; and announced the upcoming Rainbow Film Festival in July, featuring local and international LGBTQ+ films and stories.
 - 2. Vice Chair Golojuch encouraged voter registration and participation in upcoming elections. He also noted the pending U.S. Supreme Court decision regarding transgender student participation in sports and discussed the potential impact of the ruling.
 - 3. Commissioner Brack thanked the Governor, legislators, advocates, and community members involved in the passage of the Gender-Affirming Care Shield Act. She also encouraged community education regarding LGBTQ+ and transgender issues through reliable informational resources.
 - 4. Commissioner O'Dell shared concerns regarding recent political developments affecting transgender rights. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the Commission during the past two years.
 - 5. Commissioner Tolbe provided an update on preparations for the upcoming Maui Pride Festival. He requested positive thoughts and prayers for an event organizer who is currently hospitalized. He also thanked participants who attended the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony and acknowledged community representatives from Maui.
 - 6. Commissioner Velasquez reflected on his service as an inaugural commissioner and thanked fellow commissioners. He commented on the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony and expressed appreciation for those involved. He also shared optimism regarding recent leadership developments supportive of the LGBTQ+ community.
 - 7. Superintendent of Education designee Beth Schimmelfennig shared concerns regarding national developments affecting LGBTQ+ students. She reaffirmed the State's commitment to supporting and protecting LGBTQ+ students.
 - 8. University of Hawai'i System designee Camaron Miyamoto thanked the inaugural commissioners for their service. He announced that Gender Journey Days will be held on July 11, 2025, at John A. Burns School of Medicine and encouraged participation. He also celebrated passage of the Gender-Affirming Care Shield Act and thanked supporters.
 - 9. Director of Labor and Industrial Relations designee David Rodriguez reminded the public that disaster unemployment assistance applications related to the Kona Low storms were due June 15. He further noted eligibility for impacted workers, business owners, and self-employed individuals on O'ahu, Hawai'i Island, and Maui.

10. Director of Human Resources Development designee Signe Nakamura-Dureza shared appreciation for the Pride flags displayed outside her office window.
 11. Director of Human Services designee Jonathan Kimura noted seeing the Commission's "No Hate in the 808" bus advertisement and commended the effort.
 12. Department of Health designee Thaddeus Pham acknowledged the Commission's "No Hate in the 808" bus campaign. He reaffirmed the Department of Health's commitment to supporting the health of LGBTQ+ individuals and highlighted available resources on the Department's website. He also thanked the inaugural commissioners for their service and accomplishments.
 13. No public testimony.
- B. Finance Director's Report
1. Commissioner Brack reported that approximately \$17,752 of the Commission's \$18,000 budget had been expended, leaving a remaining balance of approximately \$248.
 2. Chair Harjo Livingston commended the Commission for its fiscal stewardship.
- C. Official Communications from State Officials
1. The Commission acknowledged receipt of the Governor's Pride Month Proclamation presented during the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony.
- D. Public Testimony
1. No public testimony.

III. Presentation (18:16-40:04)

- A. Kōkua Mau is a Hawai'i-based nonprofit and statewide coalition focused on improving care for people with serious illness, especially around palliative care, hospice care, advance care planning, and end-of-life decision-making. The name "Kōkua Mau" roughly means "continuous care" or "ongoing help" in Hawaiian. They're joining us to highlight the need and the options we have, especially for those of us who are members of the LGBTQ+ Community.
1. Presenter: Jeannette Koiwane, Executive Director, Kōkua Mau
 2. Ms. Koiwane provided an overview of Kōkua Mau, a Hawai'i-based nonprofit and statewide coalition dedicated to improving care for individuals with serious illness through education, advocacy, policy development, advance care planning, palliative care, and hospice services.
 3. Kōkua Mau has served Hawai'i communities for approximately 26 years and works to improve access to information, professional education, and policy development related to serious illness and end-of-life care.
 4. The organization maintains a comprehensive public resource website, conducts community presentations, and provides educational materials, including free advance directive forms available in multiple languages.
 5. Ms. Koiwane explained the distinction between:
 - a) Palliative Care – specialized care that addresses the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of individuals with serious illnesses while they continue receiving treatment.
 - b) Hospice Care – care focused on comfort and quality of life for individuals nearing the end of life who are no longer pursuing curative treatment.

6. She emphasized the importance of advance care planning, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals, noting that advance directives allow individuals to designate trusted decision-makers, including chosen family members, rather than relying solely on biological relatives.
7. Ms. Koijane discussed POLST (Provider Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) forms, explaining that they are medical orders used primarily for individuals with serious or terminal illnesses and are distinct from advanced directives.
8. She highlighted Hawai'i's leadership in palliative care services, including the state's Medicaid-supported palliative care benefit through Med-QUEST.
9. Kōkua Mau continues to seek inclusive resources and partnerships that support LGBTQ+ individuals and their families in advance care planning and end-of-life decision-making.
10. Commissioner Tolbe inquired about the possibility of Kōkua Mau providing presentations on Maui. Ms. Koijane indicated that the organization is open to in-person or virtual presentations, depending on staffing and travel resources.
11. Commissioner Velasquez asked whether Kōkua Mau accepts direct referrals and provides case management services. Ms. Koijane explained that the organization primarily focuses on education and capacity-building for healthcare professionals rather than direct client case management.
12. Thaddeus Pham requested clarification regarding advance directives, POLST forms, and funeral planning documents. Ms. Koijane explained the differences among these documents and emphasized the importance of discussing wishes with loved ones and designated decision-makers.
13. Commissioners discussed concerns regarding the treatment of LGBTQ+ individuals after death, including ensuring that gender identity and personal wishes are respected during funeral and burial arrangements. Ms. Koijane expressed interest in further discussions and potential collaboration to address these concerns.
14. Chair Harjo Livingston thanked Ms. Koijane for her presentation and for Kōkua Mau's ongoing work supporting individuals and families throughout Hawai'i.

IV. Ongoing Business and Updates

A. Update on Commission's website (40:10)

- <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/lgbtq-commission/>

1. Vice Chair Golojuch reported that the Commission website has been updated.
2. The website now includes the link to the Commission's legislative survey.
3. The Commission's "No Hate in the 808" bus campaign graphic will remain posted on the website.
4. Commissioners and community members were encouraged to submit suggestions for additional website content.
5. No public testimony.

B. Update on letter to Maui Preparatory Academy donors re: Maui Prep's anti-LGBTQIA+ policies for students (40:49)

1. Vice Chair Golojuch reported that no additional feedback had been received regarding the donor letter since the previous meeting.
2. The Commission plans to continue exploring ways to support students and families affected by Maui Preparatory Academy's policies.

3. Commissioners noted ongoing community concern and advocacy efforts related to the issue.
 4. No public testimony.
- C. Update on the next Rainbow Pau Hana: Queer Community Leaders Gathering (41:30)
1. Chair Harjo Livingston reported that a venue for the next Rainbow Pau Hana gathering had not yet been secured.
 2. Vice Chair Golojuch stated that efforts to identify a host location are ongoing and invited organizations with available meeting space to contact the Commission.
 3. No public testimony.
 4. During public testimony, Kōkua Mau Executive Director Jeannette Koiwane suggested the Church of the Crossroads as a potential venue and offered to help facilitate a connection.
 5. Commissioners noted that the venue must be able to accommodate approximately 30–60 participants and provide Wi-Fi access to support statewide participation through Zoom.
 6. Public Testimony
 - a) Ms. Koiwane offered suggestions regarding potential meeting space and community connections.
- D. Update on addressing the needs of our community's kūpuna, especially māhū, trans, non-binary, and intersex. (44:33)
1. Commissioner Brack reported ongoing collaboration with community partners, including Kōkua Mau.
 2. She provided an update on research being conducted to better understand the needs of transgender kūpuna in Hawai'i and to develop educational opportunities aimed at improving care and services.
 3. The project continues to gain momentum and community engagement.
 4. No public testimony.
- E. Review of the 2026 Legislative Priorities via the 2026 Legislative Tracker (46:22)
- <https://bit.ly/2026LegHILGBTQplus>
1. Vice Chair Golojuch reported that several bills supported by the Commission had been signed into law, including:
 - a) Act 59 (HB 1875) – Protecting access to gender-affirming care.
 - b) Act 25 (SB 2143) – Establishing an order of succession for the Chief Election Officer.
 - c) Act 56 (SB 2727) – Extending the statute of limitations for filing complaints with the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission.
 - d) Act 67 (SB 2239) – Establishing automatic voter registration.
 2. Updates were provided on additional measures awaiting gubernatorial action, including legislation related to universal changing accommodations and healthcare facility access protections.
 3. Vice Chair Golojuch thanked community advocates, legislators, and supporters who assisted in advancing the legislation.
 4. Vice Chair Golojuch reported that the legislative survey is available on the Commission website and is being promoted through social media.
 5. QR code flyers will be distributed at upcoming Pride events and the AIDS Walk to encourage participation.

6. Community members were encouraged to complete the survey and share it with others to help inform the Commission's 2027 legislative priorities.
 7. No public testimony.
- F. Update from Hawai'i Coalition for Civil Rights (50:54)
1. Commissioner Velasquez reported that the Hawai'i Coalition for Civil Rights is currently focused primarily on immigrant rights issues.
 2. The coalition continues to provide information and resources through its website and is conducting training related to trial observation and civic engagement activities.
 3. The coalition did not meet during June and expects to resume meetings in July.
 4. No public testimony.
- G. Update on statement condemning medical organizations abandoning māhū, transgender, gender non-conforming, QTPI+ community and/or meetings with medical organizations in Hawai'i (51:47)
1. Commissioner Brack reported receiving concerns from community members regarding barriers to obtaining gender-affirming surgeries, including insurance denials and obstacles that may not align with existing laws and requirements.
 2. Commissioner Brack suggested exploring ways to gather community feedback regarding experiences accessing gender-affirming healthcare and insurance coverage.
 3. Chair Harjo Livingston proposed inviting the State Insurance Commissioner to a future Commission meeting and discussing the possibility of issuing a letter reminding insurance providers of their obligations under Hawai'i law regarding gender-affirming care.
 4. Commissioners agreed to continue discussions at a future meeting.
 5. No public testimony.
- H. Update on "No Hate in the 808" ad campaign regarding HI's non-discrimination laws (55:18)
1. Vice Chair Golojuch reported that the bus advertisements were scheduled to conclude after one month of display.
 2. Preliminary campaign data showed community engagement through QR code scans associated with the advertisements.
 3. The Commission plans to follow up with the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission to determine whether there has been an increase in inquiries related to discrimination complaints.
 4. Additional outreach opportunities are being explored with Maui and Kaua'i counties using remaining campaign materials.
 5. No public testimony.
 6. Additional announcements (56:37)
 - a) Chair Harjo Livingston introduced Janel Fujinaka, a māhū community member and candidate for the Hawai'i State Legislature, who joined the meeting as a guest.
- I. Update on City and County of Honolulu [Proposed Charter Amendment to create a C&C Honolulu LGBTQIA+ Commission](#) (57:13)
1. Vice Chair Golojuch reported that the proposed charter amendment received unanimous approval during its most recent review and has advanced to the next stage of the charter commission process.
 2. The proposal is expected to return for one additional round of public testimony before final consideration.

3. Commissioners noted strong community participation through submitted testimony and expressed appreciation to supporters.
 4. The Commission will continue monitoring the proposal and encourage public engagement during the next phase.
 5. No public testimony.
- J. Update on developing written protocols/procedures and record keeping for the Commission (58:49)
1. Commissioner Brack reported that an initial draft of Commission protocols and procedures was included in the Board Packet.
 2. She noted that the document represents the beginning of a broader effort to formalize Commission policies and recordkeeping practices.
 3. Commissioners were encouraged to review the draft and provide feedback regarding format, priorities, and areas for future development.
 4. No vote on Proposed Manual was conducted during this agenda item.
 5. No public testimony.
- K. 2026 Pride Events (59:35)
1. Report on Governor Green Flying Pride Flags at the State Capitol and Issuing a Pride Month Proclamation
 - a) Chair Livingston reported that Governor Green authorized the raising of Pride flags at the State Capitol and issued a proclamation declaring June as Pride Month in Hawai'i.
 - b) Vice Chair Golojuch noted that copies of the proclamation would be provided to Kaua'i Pride, Maui Pride, and Hawai'i Island Pride organizers.
 2. Pride Schedules for the State of Hawai'i
 - a) Chair Harjo Livingston reviewed upcoming Pride Event Schedules for the State of Hawai'i, including: [Kaua'i Pride: June 6th](#), [Maui Pride: June 13th](#), [Honolulu Pride: October 17th](#), [Hawai'i Island Pride: June 27th](#), and [Kona Pride: September 19th, 2026](#).
 - b) Commissioners noted that several Pride celebrations include events occurring over multiple days or weeks.
 3. Commission Representation at Pride Events
 - a) Vice Chair Golojuch reviewed travel and participation plans for upcoming Pride events.
 - b) Kaua'i Pride representation will include Commissioners Golojuch, Velasquez, Tolbe, and Luthy.
 - c) Maui Pride representation will include Commissioners Golojuch, O'Dell, and Luthy, with Commissioner Tolbe participating onsite.
 - d) Hawai'i Island Pride representation will include Commissioners Golojuch, O'Dell, and Luthy.
 - e) Logistics, transportation, parade participation, and event setup needs were discussed.
 4. Update on Swag for Pride and Tabling Events
 - a) Vice Chair Golojuch reported that promotional materials, including Commission-branded fans and tabling supplies, had been prepared and distributed for upcoming Pride events.
 5. No public testimony.

- L. Discussion on attending the [2026 Gender Journey Days](#) (1:05:48)
1. Commissioner Brack reported that the Commission would again support Gender Journey Days.
 2. Commissioners Brack and Velasquez, along with incoming Commissioner Crissi Doyle, confirmed their attendance.
 3. Additional registration slots remained available for interested commissioners.
 4. Information regarding registration, dietary needs, and event logistics was shared.
 5. No public testimony.
- M. Finalize tabling at the 2026 Honolulu AIDS Walk (1:07:09)
1. Commissioners Brack and Doyle confirmed participation in the Honolulu AIDS Walk, with Commissioner Golojuch also planning to attend.
 2. Commissioners discussed tabling materials, banners, signage, and equipment needed for the event.
 3. Logistics for transporting and assembling display materials were reviewed.
 4. Commissioners confirmed that registration begins at 8:00 a.m. and the walk begins at 10:00 a.m.
 5. No public testimony
- N. Review draft of the required 2026 Report to the Legislature (1:10:26)
1. Vice Chair Golojuch reminded commissioners that individual commissioner reports remained outstanding from several members.
 2. Commissioners Tolbe and Velasquez agreed to submit their updates by the requested deadline.
 3. Commissioners were encouraged to review the draft report and provide any additional content for inclusion.
 4. Future additions to the report will include summaries of the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony, Pride events across the state, and the Honolulu AIDS Walk.
 5. The final report is scheduled for Commission review and approval at the July meeting before submission to the Legislature and Governor.
 6. No public testimony.
- O. 2026 Campaign to encourage voter registration and voting in the Primary and General Elections from members of mähū, LGBTQI+, and QTPI+ community. (1:13:37)
1. Vice Chair Golojuch provided an update on voter engagement efforts discussed in the Board Packet.
 2. Commission outreach materials, including Pride event fans, include QR codes linking directly to Hawai'i voter registration resources.
 3. Coordination is underway with community organizations to support voter registration activities at Pride events across the state.
 4. Commissioner Brack suggested engaging trusted community influencers and incorporating voter registration links and QR codes into Commission outreach materials whenever possible.
 5. Commissioners emphasized the importance of voter participation and civic engagement within LGBTQIA+, mähū, and QTPI+ communities.
 6. No public testimony.

V. New Business

- A. None

VI. Future Meeting Topics or Speakers (1:17:09)

- A. Discussion on inviting government and Non-Government Organization to present to the Commission
1. Commissioners discussed potential presenters for future meetings.
 2. The possibility of inviting the Hawai'i Insurance Commissioner to present to the Commission was discussed.
 3. Commissioners agreed to conduct outreach regarding a potential presentation.
 4. Commissioners were reminded that Commission elections are scheduled for the July 2026 meeting.
 5. No public testimony was received.

VII. Adjournment (1:18:02)

- A. Discussion
1. Commissioner O'Dell expressed appreciation to Commission staff, including Erin Lau, Kristen Takushi, and Hanne Bulagay, for their support and assistance throughout the year.
 2. Chair Harjo Livingston thanked guest Janel Fujinaka for attending the meeting.
 3. Chair Harjo Livingston acknowledged Commissioner Kathleen O'Dell's upcoming departure and thanked her for her service. Commissioner O'Dell stated she would remain available to support the Commission as needed.
 4. Commissioners reflected on the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony and thanked those who participated.
- B. No Public Testimony
- C. Vote on Adjournment
1. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded.
 2. With no objections or abstentions, the motion passed unanimously.
 3. Chair Harjo Livingston adjourned the meeting and wished attendees a successful and enjoyable Pride Month.
 4. The meeting was adjourned at 1:20:18.