

VOTE YES FOR
MARRIAGE EQUALITY

YES ON ONE

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Ballot Issue Committee Formed to Support Marriage Equality Amendment

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Honolulu, HI—A new campaign is being launched to champion a constitutional amendment to protect marriage equality in Hawai'i. Named "Vote Yes for Marriage Equality," the ballot issue committee has been formed by a number of local public interest groups and concerned citizens, including the ACLU of Hawai'i, Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, Hawai'i Legacy Foundation, and Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center.

The effort comes after state legislators passed House Bill 2802, which placed the following question on this year's general election ballot: "Shall the state constitution be amended to repeal the legislature's authority to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples?" If approved by voters, the amendment would rescind Article 1, Section 23 of the State Constitution.

"The ACLU of Hawai'i is thrilled about the formation of the Vote Yes for Marriage Equality campaign," said Salmah Rizvi, Executive Director of the ACLU of Hawai'i. "Currently, under Article 1, Section 23 of our Hawai'i State Constitution, the legislature has the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples. No legislature should have the authority to control such a sacred right and the ACLU of Hawai'i is invested in ensuring that everyone's civil liberties are protected, particularly during such dire political times."

The proposed constitutional amendment comes at a critical time in our nation's history, as members of the United States Supreme Court's conservative majority have expressed support for legal challenges to longstanding LGBTQ+ rights.

"This campaign is critical in aligning the State Constitution with our legislature's intent and, more importantly, Hawai'i's values," said Tyler Gomes, Kilohana Chief Administrator for the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement. "In 2019, I had the blessing of marrying my husband in front of our family and friends, something neither of us take for granted, especially in light of regular and recent threats to LGBTQ+ rights and protections. The success of this campaign will ensure that marriages like mine and those to come are honored by removing any basis for someone's gender to be a barrier to that union."

Article 1, Section 23 of the State Constitution is widely viewed as discriminatory against the LGBTQ+ community. Removing this language would send a strong signal that Hawai'i is steadfastly devoted to defending LGBTQ+ people from political attacks on their civil liberties and fundamental freedoms.

"We hope voters will recognize the importance of this issue and vote accordingly. A 'yes' vote repeals this language from our State Constitution," said Rizvi.

The general election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th. According to the Hawai'i Office of Elections, voters will begin receiving their general election mail-in ballot packages on October 18th.

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