

Important Clarification!

This notice is also an official public policy announcement of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii.

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Civil Unions Update: Misleading Media Report

The state House did NOT enact any form of civil unions yesterday, notwithstanding an extremely misleading front page headline and story in this morning's Honolulu Advertiser. ([Click here for article](#)). Instead, the House passed the contents of HB 1587, extending state employee health coverage to RECIPROCAL BENEFICIARIES, which are not based on sex partner status. We supported HB 1587. ([Click here to read our testimony](#).)

Again, as a refresher: **RBs are NOT based on sex partner status and are available to any two people ineligible to marry, such as elderly siblings.** In 1997, the Legislature passed the RB law in conjunction with the constitutional amendment to save traditional marriage. Traditional marriage proponents, then and now, support the RB approach to providing benefits since it doesn't jeopardize marriage or base public policy decisions on sex partner status. The original state employee RB health benefit provision expired several years back and it was not renewed. We've supported renewal, gay activists have not.

Many same sex marriage and civil unions supporters vehemently oppose the RB approach, calling it "low class and a slap in the face to gay people." For these activists, nothing will satisfy them short of state recognition that their relationships are 'just like marriage.'

Yesterday's House action doesn't get them anywhere near that standard and didn't even single out same-sex partners in any way.

For those of you wondering if the Senate could turn this bill into a full civil unions proposal – good question. Thankfully, the answer is no. The title of the bill passed yesterday is too narrow and too different to allow for insertion of a full civil unions bill and Senate Judiciary Chair Clayton Hee has said publicly that he wouldn't consider a civil unions bill unless the House sent it over.

Thankfully, the House didn't send it over.

This morning's Advertiser headline was terribly misleading. We hope this provides clarification. For more information about civil unions and reciprocal beneficiaries, [log on to our website](#).

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