

About Us:

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii is a spiritual community which shares the living Teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism so that all beings may enjoy lives of harmony, peace and gratitude.

Established in 1889, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii is a Pure Land Buddhist community that will celebrate our 135th Anniversary in 2024. We are the largest Buddhist denomination in Hawaii with over 30 temples across the state.

The Committee on Social Concerns is composed of ministers and laypersons who research and study contemporary social issues relevant to the Shin Buddhist community in Hawaii.



NAMO AMIDA BUTSU
I take refuge in the Buddha of
All-Inclusive Wisdom and
All-Embracing Compassion



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Marriage Equality: A Shin Buddhist Perspective



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SHARING THE DHARMA: Supporting the Rights of Same-Gender Couples

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii represents the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha denomination of Buddhism in Hawaii. In 2010, A resolution supporting rights for same-gender couples was adopted by our 98th Annual Legislative Assembly. The resolution affirmed our belief that same-gender couples should have access to equal rights and quality of life as conferred by legally recognized marriage.

This resolution shares our perspective on the rights of same-gender couples in light of the Dharma (universal teachings). We believe that our society should be inclusive of all sentient beings and be free from all forms of discrimination.

In 2013, we proudly supported full marriage equality in the State of Hawaii. We affirm the dignity and worth of all people and that everyone deserves to be treated equally within our society.

ESTABLISHING THE RIGHTS OF SAME-GENDER COUPLES

WHEREAS, the Dharma (universal teachings) provides guidance on how to live mindfully with an awareness of universal compassion which embraces and uplifts each and every person; and

WHEREAS, in order to truly realize universal compassion, we need to cultivate a profound sense of responsibility for the welfare of all beings; and

WHEREAS, the Buddhist ideal of universal compassion does not discriminate between good and evil, young and old, rich and poor, gay and straight; and

WHEREAS, Buddhism affirms the inherent worth and dignity of all persons independent of gender; and

WHEREAS, families today are composed of many combinations and what connects individuals as a family is a conscious commitment to share in the responsibilities of life; and

WHEREAS, the Dharma (universal teachings) affirms and celebrates human expressions of love and partnership, guiding us to strive for responsible, faithful, and committed relationships that recognize and respect the Buddha-nature (potential for Enlightenment) in all people; and

WHEREAS, Shakyamuni Buddha, the founding teacher of Buddhism, encouraged people to carefully reflect on all situations and to find truth for themselves by teaching that all beliefs, even the Buddha's own words, should not be accepted unless they have been tested through objective observation, careful logical analysis and positive life experiences; and

WHEREAS, Shinran Shonin, the founder of Shin Buddhism, affirmed the inherent equality among all people whose lives are karmically (causally) bound and interconnected by teaching that the great Wisdom and Compassion of Amida (ultimate reality) embraces all

beings equally and unconditionally without exception; and

WHEREAS, some Shin Buddhist ministers and Sangha (congregations) have held commitment services to honor the relationships of gay and lesbian couples for some time; and

WHEREAS, the rights of same-gender couples is an issue deserving of serious and mindful discussion by faith communities;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, a Shin Buddhist organization, affirms that same-gender couples should have access to equal rights and quality of life as conferred by legally recognized marriage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that same-gender unions shall be considered equal to opposite-gender unions in ceremonies officiated by its ministers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii shall pursue opportunities through which its members, friends and the general public can better understand Shin Buddhist teachings in relation to same-gender unions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to all temples and organizations affiliated with the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, other Buddhist organizations in Hawaii, the Governor of the State of Hawaii, members of the Hawaii State Legislature, and members of the Hawaii news media.