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DOH States Commitment to Transgender Rights
Official statement recognizes discrimination as threat to public health

HONOLULU, HI – In response to increasing attacks on transgender communities in the U.S., the Hawaiʻi Department of Health (DOH) recently released its "Statement on Transgender Rights and Public Health." In alignment with the DOH mission, the statement denounces discrimination, including transphobia and transphobic action, which is recognized as a threat to public health.

According to local health reports, transgender and gender-diverse communities in Hawaiʻi experience several health disparities, compared to cisgender people. These issues include access to healthcare, bullying, interpersonal violence, depression, suicidality, and substance use, all of which are causes for significant public health concern.

"We support our gender-diverse community in Hawaiʻi," said Dr. Diana Felton, Chief of the Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Branch. "We also acknowledge the resilience and strength of gender-diverse people in the face of discrimination and honor the valued role of gender-diverse people in traditional Hawaiian culture."

"The Department of Health believes that all people of Hawaiʻi should have an equitable opportunity to achieve their optimal state of health and well-being," said Director Kenneth Fink. "This includes our māhūwahine, māhūkāne, transgender, gender-diverse people, and other communities experiencing discrimination."

DOH staff will also participate in the Honolulu Pride parade and festival in October to support the LGBT community and promote public health.

For local health resources, go to https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/sexual-gender-minority/sexual-and-gender-minorities-sgm-in-hawaii/

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