

Chronology Of Mormon / LDS Involvement In Same-Sex Marriage Politics

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Richley H. Crapo, Utah State University

- 1988 - The Church contracts the Hawaii marketing agency, Hill and Knowlton, to monitor and promote the Church's stance on gay issues in state legislatures and the U.S. Congress. One function of working through a nonmainland marketing agency was that the name of the Church was separated from the legislative efforts that the firm undertook.
- Dec 1990 - Three same-sex couples apply for marriage licenses at the Hawaii State Department of Health and are refused. They file suit in a case now known as Baehr v. Miike (originally Baehr v. Lewin).. The Hawaii marriage law does not specify anything about the sex of the parties, because the Hawaii constitution forbids any laws that discriminate by sex. They argue that since the refusal to issue a license was because they are not couples of two sexes, this refusal is sex discrimination under the law. Nota bene: their suit does NOT raise any issue concerning discrimination based on their sexual orientation. Indeed, their sexual orientation is NOT indicated in their suit. So sexual orientation is not technically an issue in the case.
- Sep 1991 - Circuit court Judge Kevin Klein dismisses the case, and the couples appeal to the Hawaii Supreme Court.
- Oct 1992 - The Baehr case is heard before the Hawaii Supreme Court.
- 5 May 1993 - The Hawaii Supreme Court rules that the state's refusal to issue marriage licenses constitutes sex discrimination under Hawaii law. As such, the discrimination may only be practiced if the state can demonstrate a "compelling public interest" in denying marriage to same-sex couples. The Supreme Court returns the case to the circuit court to issue a new decision based on whether such a compelling interest exists.
- 5 May 1993 - Apostle Boyd K. Packer gives an address at a meeting of the All-Church Coordinating Council and refers to homosexuality as one of the three major social problems that represent a danger to members.
- 1993 - present - Following this court decision, the Hawaii legislature becomes embroiled in competing measures, including a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex unions. Generally, none of the proposed actions is successful because the Senate and House are unable to agree on whose version should be accepted. Typically, the House versions are the more conservative.
- 14 Feb 1994 - The First Presidency issues a statement that reads, in part, "We encourage members to appeal to legislators, judges, and other government officials to preserve the purposes and sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman, and to reject all efforts to give legal authorization or other official approval or support to marriages between persons of the same gender."

- ca Feb 1995 - Brigham Young University President and later Regional Representative Rex E. Lee allowed by LDS headquarters to serve as a legal counsel to aid the state of Colorado in its defense of its recently passed constitutional amendment forbidding laws which grant civil rights protections based on sexual orientation.
- 23 Feb 1995 - The Hawaii Public Affairs Council issues a news release under LDS Church letterhead. In it church spokesperson Ms. Napua Baker announced that the Church had decided to petition the court to be admitted as "codefendants" with the state in the Baehr v. Lewin case in order to "protect freedom of religion to solemnize marriages between a man and a woman under Hawaiian law." LDS Regional Representative Donald Hallstrom reinforced the importance of this move by the church, saying "There are times when certain moral issues become so compelling that the churches have a duty to make their feelings known."
- Feb/Mar 1995 - In the petition which was filed soon after the announcement by the Hawaii Public Affairs Council, the church argued that if same-sex marriage were legalized, (1) it feared that the state would revoke its ministers' licenses to perform marriages, (2) the church would become subject to lawsuits charging discrimination when its ministers refused to perform same-sex marriages, and (3) because the church could help the Attorney General's office to present a more complete case than would otherwise be done, given the limited time and resources available to the AG.
- Mar 1995 - The Circuit Court of Hawaii rejects the church's petition to become a party to the Baehr case. The judge ruled that the request was without merit, since nothing in the licensing law REQUIRES a minister to perform ANY marriage in behalf of the state, rather it merely PERMITS them to do so when it is in harmony with their religious practice and belief. Any requirement of the kind feared by the LDS church would be a violation of freedom of religion. The judge further pointed out that although the LDS church, like any individual or organization, might be the subject of a frivolous law suit, the grounds stated in the church's petition would be without legal merit and thus, this fear, did not constitute grounds for being considered a party to the case. The church had, in other words, failed to demonstrate that it had any "property" in the issues under consideration. Finally, the church, according to the judge, failed in its petition to demonstrate that its arguments against same-sex merit were ones that had not already been raised by the state. The Church appealed this decision to the Hawaii Supreme Court.
- Mar 1995 - Apostle Dallin Oaks begins work on an article on same-sex attraction (personal communication) that will be published in October.
- 17 Mar 1995 - Utah's LDS governor, Michael Leavitt, signs the country's first DOMA legislation which indicated that the state of Utah recognizes only marriages between persons of different sex, including those that might be performed in other states.
- early in 1995 - Hawaii Governor John Waihe'e organizes an eleven-member Governor's Commission on Sexual Orientation and the Law and specifically includes two LDS and two Roman Catholic members to represent their religions' views.

- Apr 1995 - Hawaii legislature rewords Revised Statute 572-1 to define marriage in terms of one man and one woman.
- Sep 1995 - Original Governor's Commission disbanded after the appointment of Mormon and Catholic members was successfully challenged as a violation of the separation of church and state, and a new seven-member commission is set up, using a different procedure.
- 23 Sep 1995 - The First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles issue a joint "Proclamation on the Family" in which they "solemnly proclaim that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children" and further declare "that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife."
- Oct 1995 - "Same-Gender Attraction" by Apostle Dallin Oaks published in the Ensign. The article makes the point that the concept of "homosexual" or "lesbian" as a kind of person is incompatible with LDS theology. Rather the terms should be reserved for use as adjectives that refer to kinds of behavior.
- Nov 1995 - General Authority Loren C. Dunn, member of the First Quorum of Seventy and president of the North America West Area, formally appoints a Salt Lake City advertising executive and his wife to do several months of volunteer work for Hawaii's Future Today. This is part of a process in which other families with expertise of use to political action campaigns are being "called" on short-term missions to support the work of Hawaii's Future Today. The date for the first of these "calls" is not clear.
- 8 Dec 1995 - Report of the Governor's Commission on Sexual Orientation and the Law is issued. The 400+ page report concludes that the state of Hawaii has no compelling interest in refusing to recognize same-sex marriages.
- late Dec 1995 - An announcement is made that Jack Hoag (the Church's lawyer in Hawaii, CEO of First Hawaiian Bank, the President and Chairman of Hawaii Reserves, Inc., and member of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Manoa) is working on something important, possibly the creation of Hawaii's Future Today (personal communication from Bill Woods, organizer of GLEA (Gay and Lesbian Education and Advocacy) FOUNDATION and the HAWAII MARRIAGE PROJECT that brought together the three couples that initiated the court case in behalf of same-sex marriage.)
- January 1996 - First press release from Jack Hoag and Debbie Hartmann (chair of Hawaii's Future Today and a staff member of BYU-Hawaii campus and prior member of the Board of Education, currently finishing her PhD in psychology with a focus on gay parenting) concerning legislative issues (personal communication from Bill Woods)
- 23 Jan 1996 - The Hawaii Supreme Court rejects the church's appeal of the circuit court's denial of the church's petition to become a party to the Baehr case, and the court reiterates the reasons given by the circuit court as valid.

- 28 Jan 1996 - North America West Area Presidency (Loren C. Dunn, President) sends a letter to be read in all California wards, urging members to express their support for legislation against recognition of same-sex marriages being considered in the state.
- Feb 1996 - President Hinckley travels to Hawaii and confers with Catholic bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo on plans for a common campaign against same-sex marriage. The meeting takes place on LDS property in Laie on the north shore of Oahu.
- ca. Feb 1996 - The LDS church instructs its contracted marketing agency in Hawaii, Hill and Knowlton, to develop a plan for setting up a group, now known as Hawaii's Future Today, to serve as the formal lobbying group which will approach the legislature, the courts, and the public on issues regarding same-sex marriage. Hill and Knowlton had been contracted several years earlier by the Church to monitor and promote its efforts in state legislatures and the U.S. Congress. Its top heads are now offered "unlimited funds" to develop and conduct the marriage campaign in Hawaii. The marketing agency completes the initial planning and then bows out of further work, fearing potential repercussions from its other clients, who include gay-rights interests. Linda Rosehill, a professional lobbyist and employee of another marketing agency was contracted to carry out the implementation of the original plan. Later, the agency itself disavowed any company connection, although the staff member had worked on the project using company office facilities. The staff person was also the National Committeewoman of the Hawaii Democratic Party. When her role in creating the Church lobbying organization came to light there was a move to find a replacement for her Democratic position. She lost the next election in about a 70-30 split of votes by the convention body. The sole issue in the race was her covert work in creating the lobbying organization, Hawaii's Future Today, an activity which was held to be unethical by her opponents.
- The costs for setting up Hawaii's Future Today and facilities for its use were provided by the church and by Hawaii Reserves, a property management company that is solely church-owned, and which took over the properties previously managed by Zion's Securities. Hawaii Reserves paid the initial bills from the first marketing agency and the consultant's fees from the Democratic party's National Committeewoman. One of the largest contributors to Hawaii's Future Today is the political action committee Hana Pono (named for the LDS hymn "Do What is Right!") which had been organized by the LDS church on 21 August 1977 to spearhead its anti-ERA political efforts in Hawaii. Hana Pono contributes \$1,869.95 during first year's efforts.
- Once organized, Hawaii's Future Today, under the direction of Jack Hoag and Debbie Hartman, began its public advocacy of a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and of a constitutional convention to write this same ban into the Hawaii state constitution. (Currently the Hawaii constitution bans ANY law that uses sex as a distinction. This is why the marriage law does not specify anything about the sex of applicants for marriage licenses.) It also files amicus curiae briefs along side the LDS church in the court cases that follow, a bit odd, since both groups make the same points in their briefs.
- After Jack Hoag's LDS connection is highlighted in the media, he is replaced as President of Church-owned Hawaii Reserves. The new President is Dan Ditto, the Church's lawyer who supervised the marketing agency's work in planning the establishment of Hawaii's Future Today.

Reports about the activities of Hawaii's Future Today in LDS affiliated newspapers, such as Garden Island, avoid mentioning the organization's LDS origins and affiliation, so this change was perhaps to help perpetuate the image of Hawaii's Future Today as a grass-roots movement.

- HFT reports receiving \$31,000 in donations prior to 11 May 1996. Of this, one donation is in the amount of \$29,000. There is a \$1,000 donation cap on moneys received by political-action groups in Hawaii, so this donation would be problematic if HFT is defined as a political-action organization.
- 16 Feb 1996 - Rex E. Lee, issues a position paper arguing for the limitation of marriage to opposite-sex partners.
- 9 May 1996 - Hawaii's Future Today places political ads in Hawaii's two daily newspapers at a cost of over \$1,000. Representative Terrance Thom, supported in these ads, wins his reelection by 54 votes. The Senate Judiciary Chair who opposed this group's political position and was opposed by the ad lost his re-election bid.
- 21 May 1996 - Hawaii's Campaign Spending Commission mails a complaint to Hawaii's Future Today that indicates that the ads are in violations of Hawaii's regulations governing spending in political campaigns, indicates the fines for such a violation and explains that Hawaii's Future Today must file the required papers to register as a political-action committee. Follow-up letters dated 20 Jun repeats the information about the complaint. Hawaii's Future Today does not respond by registering as a political-action organization, but asserts that it does not plan to involve itself in lobbying or campaigning for candidates.
- Jun 1966 - LDS headquarters acknowledges that it has been "calling" married couples with political action and advertising expertise on short-term missions to aid the work of Hawaii's Future Today.
- 9 May thru 11 Jul period - Jack Hoag, co-Chair of HFT, made several public statements stating that HFT would be endorsing and backing political candidates.
- 11 Jul 1996 - The Campaign Spending Commission sends another follow-up letter to Hawaii's Future Today about the complaint concerning its 9 May ads. It indicates that because it understands that it believed that Hawaii's Future Today "did not intend, nor plan to engage in any activity as" such a political organization it would not require their registration as a political organization.
- Aug/Sep 1996 - The church and Hawaii's Future Today submit amicus curiae briefs to Judge Chang of the Circuit Court of Hawaii in the Baehr case making the same appeals against same-sex marriage. Both argue that "traditional marriage" is in itself a compelling state interest that justifies sex discrimination in marriage, an argument that had been explicitly rejected by the Hawaii Supreme Court earlier.
- About this time, Jack Hoag and Mike Gabbard, LDS chair of Alliance for Traditional Marriage, cooperate to form a PAC called Save Traditional Marriage-'98 to lobby against same-sex marriage. Hawaii's Future Today donates \$1,000 to Save Traditional Marriage-'98. Several

principals of HFT also make personal donations. STM-'98 also receives a \$200 donation from the Australian Consulate, a violation of Hawaii law that forbids accepting contributions from foreign countries. Linda Rosehill, the lawyer who set up HFT, becomes the coordinator of contribution efforts for STM-'98.

- Sep 1996 - Baehr trial begins in Circuit Court of Hawaii, Judge Kevin Chang presiding. The trial lasts two weeks.
- Dr. Richard Williams, a Professor of Psychology from Brigham Young University testifies as an expert witness for the state. Having examined 20-30 research studies of children reared by gay and lesbian parents, he critiques nine of them for having methodological flaws. He also testifies that he is generally skeptical of the social and behavioral sciences as valid sources of information about human families, that social science (including psychology) is so flawed that no fix, reconciliation or overhaul can correct it, that he doubts the ultimate value of psychology and other social sciences, and that he believes that there is no scientific proof that evolution occurred. He also admits that his own critique of studies regarding gay and lesbian parenting is a minority position.
- 24 Oct 1996 - Hawaii's Future Today sends out a letter soliciting its members to participate in Save Traditional Marriage-'98's Steve Covey seminar dinners.
- 5 Nov 1996 - Hawaiians vote on a measure to call a constitutional convention for the state. The vote is 163,869 in favor of the convention, and 160,153 opposed, with 45,295 ballots being blank and 90 marked both as in favor and as opposed. On advise of the Attorney General, election controller Duayne Yoshina declares the convention mandated, but the count is challenged by the AFL-CIO in a lawsuit filed on 25 November.
- 03 Dec 1996 - Judge Chang of the Circuit Court of Hawaii finds in favor of the same-sex plaintiffs. Judge Chang explicitly rejects the "expert" testimony of Dr. Williams, saying that his testimony "is not persuasive or believable because of his expressed bias against the social sciences" and that his own testimony therefore impeached his credibility as an expert witness concerning social science. Judge Chang concludes that since the state has failed to demonstrate a compelling interest in denying marriage to same-sex couples, the plaintiffs prevail. The case is immediately appealed to the Hawaii Supreme Court.
- Jan 1997 - North America Northwest Area Presidency (Glenn L. Pace, William Kerr, and C. Scott Grow) send a letter to be read in all Washington state wards, urging members to express their support to government leaders for legislation against the recognition of same-sex marriages being considered in the state. The letter uses the same boilerplate as the 28 Jan 1996 letter mailed in California, indicating coordination of the action from a higher level than the Area Presidencies.
- 21 Jan 1997 - Debbie Hartmann, chair of Hawaii's Future Today testifies before the House committee in support of a constitutional amendment permitting the legislature to limit marriage to "one man and one woman". Her testimony includes the following remarks concerning HB 118 (which would establish domestic partnerships for non-heterosexually married partners): "With respect to HB118, which would provide certain benefits to unmarried couples, as also noted in

our testimony, while we do not support any type of legislation that would undermine the special relationship of marriage between one man and one woman, certain elements of the bill are acceptable. We support the type of humanitarian benefits the bill addresses and the fact that it applies to all people."

- 3 Feb 1997 - Debbie Hartmann testifies before the Senate committee in support of the constitutional amendment and repeats HFT's qualified support for the Reciprocal Beneficiaries bill (HB 118). The Reciprocal Beneficiaries bill and the constitutional amendment are both passed by the legislature on the same day. Its final wording is, "The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples". This amendment must be ratified by a majority vote of the citizens in the next general election in November of 1997.
- 7 Mar 1997 - President Gordon B. Hinckley formally discloses in a newspaper interview published in the LA Times that the church had made a commitment at the top levels to play an active role in the same-sex marriage issue: "'We're engaged right now in the same-sex marriage problem in legislation in Hawaii,' Hinckley said. 'We just made a decision today concerning the filing of a brief in that case. That's spreading around the country now pretty largely and we've become rather actively involved in that kind of thing,' he said" (LA Times, 7 March 1997, Page B-1).
- 24 Mar 1997 - In a decision written by Judge C.J. Moon, the Hawaii Supreme Court decides that a vote held during the preceding general election on whether to hold a constitutional convention failed to secure enough yes votes, since the Hawaii constitution requires the majority on any constitutional question to be the majority of all ballots cast, not just of all marked ballots. This decision is challenged by convention supporters in the federal courts.
- 3 Apr 1997 - It is reported by the media that Jack Hoag and Debbie Hartmann have been telling legislators that they will implicitly accept domestic partnership legislation in order to prevent same-sex marriage from becoming legal.
- 16 Apr 1997 - Debbie Hartmann states HFT's support for Gay family health insurance to legislators and reporters.
- 16 Apr 1997 - Hawaii legislature passes an amendment to the Hawaii constitution that reads "The legislature shall have the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples". This amendment requires ratification by a vote of the people. The vote is scheduled for the following general election, in November of 1998.
- 28 Apr 1997 - Reciprocal Beneficiaries bill passed and will take effect 1 July 1997. The revised version of the bill which was passed has been expanded to include all domestic partners who may not legally marry (eg., a widowed woman and her co-resident son, a brother and sister, or two persons of the same sex).
- Jun 1997 - Consistent with their prior qualified acceptance of HB 118, Hawaii's Future Today does NOT lobby for a veto of the Reciprocal Beneficiaries Bill.

- ca 1 Jun 1997 - Duane D. Feekin, President and CEO of Bank of Hawaii, writes to Governor Cayetano requesting a veto of HB 118 because of its "flawed language that will create much confusion and mistrust within our communities", its early effective date (1 July 1997) "which does not allow for adequate research to fully understand the impact on the many sectors which make up the Hawaii community", and "the full [economic] impact of this Bill has yet to be determined." The financial impact concern is due to the fact that the bill has been expanded to cover more than the small number of same-sex couples that the bill was originally aimed at. Feekin's letter is written in his role as chair of the Hawaii Business Health Council and the letterhead lists thirty prominent businesses (mostly tourist-related) as members. The council is not listed in the telephone directory or registered with the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii or Small Business Hawaii, raising the suspicion that the council was formed to create the appearance of business opposition to the Reciprocal Beneficiaries legislation by an organization other than First Hawaiian Bank, the actual initiator of the letter (a charge made by an unidentified bank officer to Bill Woods.). Jack Hoag, cochair of HFT, is a member of the Board of the First Hawaiian Bank and its previous CEO.
- 10 Jun 1997 - ITT Sheraton's Hawaii Region announces that it is terminating its membership in the Hawaii Business Health Council because it (1) was unaware of the letter to the Governor of Hawaii or the organization's position regarding reciprocal benefits and the same-sex marriage legislation, (2) was not advised or consulted on the matter addressed in the letter, and (3) had not seen the letter.
- 23 June 1997 - Deadline for veto of Reciprocal Beneficiaries. Governor Cayetano allows the bill to become law without his signature in protest over its expansion to include couples other than committed gays and lesbians.
- 1 July 1997 - Reciprocal Beneficiaries law goes into effect. Application forms are distributed by Governor's office.
- 10 Jul 1997 - U.S. District Court Judge David Ezra orders Hawaii to hold a new vote on holding a constitutional convention. He finds that the U.S. constitutional guarantee that citizens have the right to know the effect of their vote has been violated because election judges had informed voters that unmarked ballots would not be counted in determining whether the majority of votes favored a convention. Judge Ezra orders the new vote to be held by 6 December 1997, which would result in a convention being held in June of 1998 if the measure passes.
- 20 Jul 1997 - Hawaii's Future Today's chair, Debbie Hartmann, asserts that "The organization has always supported rights for homosexuals in areas traditionally covered by civil rights--equal access to employment, housing, and public services such as transportation. The issue of marriage, however, is something completely different." (Letters to the Editor, Honolulu Advertiser, Honolulu, Hawaii).
- Unknown at this time Hawaii Supreme Court is expected to take up the state's appeal of the Circuit Court decision in the Baehr case. If this occurs and the Court upholds Judge Chang's decision, same-sex marriages will become legal in Hawaii.

- by 6 Dec 1997 - Date set by Judge Ezra for vote on the holding of a constitutional convention. If passed, this convention would be held in June of 1998 and would likely alter the state constitution to limit marriage to opposite-sex couples.
- 14 May 1998 - W.E. Woods reports that Save Traditional Marriage-'98's report to the Hawaii Ethics Commission indicated donations from the following LDS sources: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (\$4,225), POLYNESIAN CULTURAL CENTER (\$1,025), BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY - HAWAII (\$1,200); HAWAII'S RESERVE, INC. [the LDS Church-owned land management corporation] (\$1,000); and LAIE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION [an appointed unit of HAWAII RESERVES, INC] (\$1,000)). This does not include officers of said organizations which are also to be calculated in aggregate amounts - JACK HOAG, Chair of HAWAII RESERVES, INC. contributor of \$400 and DEBI HARTMANN, BYU-HAWAII \$400; GEORGE SHEA \$200 (all known to be directly linked to these organizations). Total of \$5,225 does not include others who may also be connected such as family members, staff and other personnel of Mormon owned or controlled entities.
- abt Jun 1998 - Debi Hartman, co-chair of HFT becomes a candidate for the Hawaii Senate. Her campaign manager is Linda Rosehill.
- 5 Nov 1998 - Voters will cast ballots on the constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to limit marriage to "opposite-sex marriage". If ratified, same-sex marriages may still be performed until the legislature imposes such a limitation, a limitation that the Senate is not likely to support.