

From: [Beth Reisen](#)
To: [Tam, Tammy DE](#); [Matsumoto, Derek R](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony for Hawai'i Task Force on Parentage Law
Date: Friday, July 5, 2024 6:14:00 AM

Dear Hawai'i Task Force on Parentage Law:

My name is Elizabeth Reisen and I am a licensed mental health professional with a focus in treating individuals and families with navigating the challenges of 3rd party family building post-conception. I am also a recipient parent of a donor conceived child. I am writing in support of the 2024 updated article 9.

For decades, practices have centered solely on the desires of parents, and have subordinated the needs and interests of donor conceived people. The position statement of Carol E. Lockwood follows this unfortunate familiar narrative, and misses the important ways that practices have changed and our community has evolved as well as the importance of legislative measures that reflect and support these changes.

It is reductive to position the 2024 updated Article 9 as harmful to individuals and couples struggling with infertility, LGBTQ+ families, and single parent families. In fact, there is ample research available that indicates that access to genetic discovery, as well as structural and communicative openness, are essential to long-term outcomes and well-being of donor conceived people. Not every donor conceived person will want the identity of their parents' donor, but many will. Without a structural means for disclosing donor identity, discoveries will continue through other means, such as DNA testing, reverse image searches, and other general combing of profile details to turn the stones that will uncover identity. Article 9 brings a predictable and organized system for revealing identity that both donor conceived people and donors can rely upon. Without this, the system is scatter shot.

In the position statement, the language and arguments presented are dehumanizing to the people created through donor conception. As a recipient parent, I should not be able to control my child's access to information about their biological parent (my sperm donor) simply because I purchase and own the gametes used in their creation. I cannot know now my daughter's desire to know or not know the donor's identity. However I fully support her right, and the right of every donor conceived person to decide for themselves if they want the donor's identifying information. The 2024 Article 9 allows for this choice. Donor conceived people that do not wish to discover the identity of a non-identified donor do not need to receive that information, and donor conceived people wishing to discover the identity will be able to. For recipient parents, identity disclosure to donor-conceived people at 18 years of age is the functional equivalent to 'anonymous' donation prior to the age of majority. It provides informed consent to donors and respects their desires by providing them a way to provide approved methods of contact to the bank or clinic to provide to the donor conceived person.

I support the 2024 article 9 for all of the reasons stated above and would urge the task force to recommend the 2024 article 9 in their recommendation. I appreciate the task force's time on this matter.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Reisen, LCSW, LMFT