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Hawaii lawmakers convened at the state Capitol for a special session today to hear testimony on a [variety of legislation](#), but the main task at hand, and the one getting the most buzz, was the controversial measure to legalize marriage for gay couples.

Hawaii could become the 15th state to legalize same-sex marriage as early as next week. If approved, [Senate Bill 1](#) would extend the same rights, benefits and protections of marriage to individuals of the same sex in Hawaii.

Supporters also showed up, rallying at the Capitol rotunda, gathering along Beretania Street to wave signs and packing the room of the [state Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor hearing](#). Most of the crowd at the state Capitol seemed to be in favor of same-sex marriage.

Unitarian Church of Honolulu members, Charlotte Huszcza and Veronica Morgan have been partners for 19 years. They're eager to get married—they even set a date.

“On Dec. 28,” Huszcza says, laughing.

They support legalization of same-sex marriage, because it would provide them equal rights as married heterosexual couples. But mostly, they're fighting for Hawaii to recognize the legitimacy of their relationship.

“I have a wonderful relationship that anyone should envy,” Morgan says. “And the idea that we could get married is beyond my comprehension; it's just so exciting.”

Many testified in support of the legislation, including Planned Parenthood of Hawaii, the Life Foundation and the League of Women Voters of Hawaii. But there was also strong opposition.

Diocese of Honolulu's father Gary Secor testified against the measure that would redefine marriage in Hawaii.

“The word marriage describes the exclusive and lifelong union of one man and one woman with the possibility, in many cases, of generating and nurturing children,” Secor says. “Other unions exist, but they are not marriage.”

First Unitarian Church of Honolulu Rev. Jonipher Kuponu Kwong disagreed. He rallied supporters to show lawmakers that people of faith support equal rights for gay couples.

“We want to honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person,” he says. “And so we want to make sure that here in Hawaii, we live up to the ideal of being an Aloha State.”

Committee lawmakers voted 5-2 to advance legislation to the state Senate.

The full state Senate is expected to vote Wednesday on the measure, which could reach the House by Thursday.