

HPU is coercing landlord to deny lease to Clubhouse

Your Sept. 4 editorial on the Clubhouse/Hawaii Pacific University issue has grossly mischaracterized my position. You wrote that "Miike's assertion that opposition to his department's plans amounts to discrimination against the mentally disabled is a gross distortion of civil-rights laws," and set up a false dichotomy between my position and people's constitutional rights to voicing their opposition.

I recognize people's First Amendment rights to voice their opposition, but HPU has gone beyond that. It has filed lawsuits seeking court orders to restrain and enjoin the landlord from proceeding with the Clubhouse lease.

HPU's principal basis for seeking such remedies is its allegations that Clubhouse participants are dangerous and that "the proposed Honolulu Clubhouse will cause the crime rate in the surrounding neighborhood to soar."

In doing so, HPU is seeking to coerce the landlord to engage in discriminatory practices and asking the court to compel that coercion. How your paper can conclude that I have therefore engaged in "a gross distortion of civil-rights law" is beyond my comprehension.

Finally, your editorial states that the Downtown Neighborhood Board also opposes the Clubhouse plan. While some board members may have such an opinion, I do not believe that is the position of the board.

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