

HAWAI‘I COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

(Revisions Prepared in Committee 04.17.2008, Finalized 04.19.2008)

Preamble

The abiding values of the Democratic Party are liberty, social justice, compassion and respect for the dignity and worth of each individual. In this time of war, these principles and our quality of life must be protected. As the party of the people, we Hawai‘i County Democrats commit ourselves to these values.

Education

Democracy and the health of our community depend on an educated electorate; thus education of Hawai‘i people is a top priority. The public education system must provide comprehensive, lifelong educational opportunities that equip our citizens to pursue their ambition and to be informed participants in the democratic process.

Economic Development

The economy of Hawai‘i County is based on our natural, aesthetic, human and cultural resources. Maintenance of these resources, particularly our rural ambiance, is essential for sustainable economic development. We support diversified agriculture and encourage value-added products and the “Buy Hawai‘i” program to assure greater food security and food safety. We recognize the need for sustainable economic activity, a living wage, and affordable housing for all. We must protect workers’ rights, including the right to organize, without reprisal.

Transportation and Social Infrastructure

Recognizing that there is a transportation crisis on the Big island, we support urgent development of transportation systems, bus services, shuttles, bike trails and adequate alternative traffic routes. A critical lack of community halls, amenities and gathering places keeps our youth at risk. We support and encourage Community Development Plans to identify these infrastructure needs and solutions.

Energy

We support energy independence and self-sufficiency for Hawai‘i County, through conservation and urgent development of sustainable, alternative energy sources. We commit to independence from off-island energy by 2020.

Environment

The Democratic Party believes that the preservation and restoration of our natural environment is essential. We support a sustainable society that utilizes the earth in such a way that future generations will benefit from the practices of our generation. We support the restoration, preservation, and protection of our native ecosystems.

We believe in the vigorous enforcement of our environmental laws and increased citizen involvement in protecting

our resources. We support programs that encourage clean, efficient, creative and environmentally friendly modes of transportation, recycling and solid waste management.

We oppose dumping of any toxic substance into our coastal waters from county, state and federal entities, including military, and support funding to enforce prohibited dumping of any toxic substances.

Culture

Recognizing Hawai'i's people, our history and our culture as valuable resources, we Democrats encourage and support the expression of these diverse cultures. We celebrate the unique importance of Native Hawai'ians to our collective culture. We support the right of Native Hawai'ians to reach their own settlement of unresolved issues with the state and federal governments.

Family

We affirm that the right to define "family" resides with the individual. We support a woman's right to choose.

Health and Human Services

As Democrats, we support creation and maintenance of accessible programs that protect the health and welfare of all citizens. We believe a "safety net" is critical to working families and vulnerable populations. We support Hawai'i's continuing leadership in our pursuit of universal health care.

Affordable Housing

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i County recognizes the lack of adequate, accessible, affordable, and safe housing on the Big Island. We support efforts to provide affordable housing near centers of employment and services. We encourage affordable rentals and home ownership based on ethical financing practices.

Government

We believe the health, safety, and the well-being of the general public are the primary responsibilities of County government, and these must always be balanced with personal liberty. We affirm Government operations at the County level shall be efficient, effective, accountable, and open to everyone.

Conclusion

We Hawai'i Democrats commit to a renewed sense of aloha, our spirit of welcome, openness and mutual respect. With this spirit, we can assure that Hawai'i will remain a special place for all.