

2006 CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
As Amended at Hawaii County Convention May 6, 2006

Resolution Number: 06-01

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A NEW HOSPITAL IN WEST HAWAI'I

WHEREAS, by several key measures, the healthcare infrastructure in West Hawai'i is fragile:

- ❑ the area is classified as “medically underserved” by Federal standards;
- ❑ the area has only recently (2005) received funding for a community health center, providing it the same federal support that has been enjoyed for years by the rest of Hawai'i County and the State;
- ❑ medical specialists are difficult to attract and retain in the West Hawai'i high cost-of-living area;
- ❑ the Kona Community Hospital facility is in a state of rapid deterioration;

WHEREAS, the current facility lacks certain critical treatment capacities---cardiac intervention and neurosurgery for trauma victims---that result in fatalities;

WHEREAS, the lack of a first class full service hospital contributes to the problems of an inadequate medical infrastructure and the difficulty of attracting specialists to the area;

WHEREAS, in 1990 Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation, through its Certificate of Need Program refused to build a new hospital in West Hawai'i because it was not needed; however, from 1990 to 2000, the North and South Kona population increased from 29,942 to 37,132 and is projected to reach 62,049 by 2020;

WHEREAS, the combination of rapid population growth, serious gaps in the healthcare infrastructure, and the long planning and development time for hospitals, make it necessary to act now;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Hawai'i County urges the legislature to immediately develop plans to build a new full service hospital in West Hawai'i.

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ACCURATE LABELING OF HAWAI'I
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

WHEREAS specialty agricultural crops such as coffee, tropical fruit, macadamia nuts, chocolate and vanilla constitute the fastest expanding area of agricultural production on the Big Island and in the rest of the state; and

WHEREAS the care, skill and cultivation practices of Hawai'i specialty crop farmers, most of whom operate small family-owned farms, have built a reputation for quality among consumers of specialty agricultural products; and

WHEREAS loopholes in certain Hawai'i statutes allow unfair and deceptive business practices which are used to deceive consumers into believing non- Hawai'i agriculture products have been grown in Hawai'i--to the damage of the reputation for quality of Hawai'i -grown specialty crops; and

WHEREAS, by way of example, HRS 486-119 permits the deceptive labeling of foreign-grown macadamia nuts and non- Hawai'ian fruit juices as "Made In Hawai'i" if 51% or more of the value is added by in-state processing--even though none of the food products have been grown here; and

WHEREAS, by way of further example, HRS 486-120.6 permits the use of the "Kona" name on packaging of a "coffee blend" having as little as 10% coffee from Kona and 90% coffee from unidentified foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, by way of still further example, in their December 2004 edition the writers of Consumer Reports confused "Kona coffee blends" with "Kona coffee" and concluded that Kona coffee can be "second rate" on the basis of a mistaken belief that "Kona blends" are "Kona coffee"; and

WHEREAS the State of Hawai'i should provide the same type of protections to its specialty crop farmers as the State of California has provided to Napa Valley grape growers in Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code, Section 25241 ("Napa Truth-in-Labeling Law");

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hawai'i County Democrats urge our state legislators to amend HRS 486-119 and HRS 486-120.6 to prevent this deceptive misuse of the identity of Hawai'i specialty agricultural products and to prevent the resulting damage to the reputation of Hawai'i-grown agricultural products from continuing.

Resolution Number: 06-03

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM IRAQ

WHEREAS in 2003 the Bush Administration launched a war of choice in Iraq on the basis of manufactured and false intelligence; and

WHEREAS thousands of American citizens and many thousands more Iraqi citizens have been killed in this war of choice; and

WHEREAS three years of U.S. occupation of Iraq have wasted billions of dollars of American and Iraqi resources; brought chaos to Iraq; jeopardized US national security; and brought disgrace to the office of President of the United States and discredit in the world community to America's commitment to our national ideals;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Hawai'i County Democratic Party Chair write to each member of the Hawai'i congressional delegation, provide a copy of this resolution to each, and urge each to work vigorously to bring U.S. troops home from Iraq now.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS, Hawai'i County is very large: in the top 10% of all counties in the United States, and more than twice the area of all other counties in the state combined. Its geography is diverse and rugged, including active volcanoes, towering mountains, rocky desert, and tropical rainforests. Vehicular travel is difficult.

WHEREAS, Hawai'i County has a history and tradition of local responsibility, reflected in hundreds of ahupuaas, plantation towns, market towns like Waimea for the cattle industry; and today results in the National Association of County Organizations (NACO) considering there to be 30 distinct communities in the county, within six distinct districts—Hilo, Puna, Kau, Kona, Kohala, and Hamakua;

WHEREAS, Hawai'i County is part of a State that has a long political history, stretching back in time to the first Polynesian explorers that established a system of government based upon the ahupua'a land division;

WHEREAS, Hawaii became a state in 1959, with a state constitution characterized by centralization of government power in the state government and limited power delegated to the four major counties;

WHEREAS, these factors have left citizens of Hawaii county with insufficient local government authority to permit communities to develop according to their needs, priorities and aspirations;

WHEREAS, at the time the State Constitution was passed, Hawai'i County had a population of 61,332, and today it has a population of 167,293 and a growth rate of 2.9% (2004-05), the fastest growing county in the state. In addition, the County is host to many of the 7 million long and short-term tourists that visit the State.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Hawai'i County Democrats will support Democratic and non-partisan candidates for county and state offices who are committed to developing opportunities for local communities, to assume greater responsibilities for decision making and administration of governmental functions that affect the quality of life in their communities.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CRUISE SHIP REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Whereas, Hawai'i's exquisite and diverse Marine Environment is one the state's most precious natural resources.

Whereas the cruise ship industry has been experiencing dramatic growth, according to the Ocean Conservancy, of at least 10 per cent annually, since 1998.

Whereas, Hawai'i currently has no cruise ship discharge regulations, thus leaving the ocean's ecosystems vulnerable to pollution.

Whereas ballast waste is the world's largest source of aquatic invasive species.

Whereas studies have concluded that there is a need for government regulation of cruise ships as opposed to previous attempts of self-regulation by the industry via memorandums of understanding.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urges the legislature to immediately adopt cruise ship regulations to protect our priceless marine environment for present and future generations.

The cruise ship legislation shall:

- Set standards for sewage and gray water discharges.
- Ban discharges of solid waste, hazardous waste, medical waste, ballast water and oily bilge water.
- Prohibit discharges of gray water or incinerator ash within three miles of land.
- Incorporate existing state water quality standards.
- Implement a mandatory monitoring program, which includes waste quality monitoring to detect discharge of wastewater in port or near shore waters; and bottom habitat monitoring to detect damage to ocean bottom communities when anchors are dropped.
- Require fuels to be low sulfur concentration.
- Provide for mandatory funding to monitor and to enforce this legislation.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CONTROL OF CELL PHONE USE BY DRIVERS

WHEREAS, increased reliance on cell phones has led to an increase in the number of people who use them while driving; the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration and the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, reported that 6 percent of drivers used handheld cell phones in 2005, up from 5 percent in 2004, while the number of drivers using headsets rose from 0.4 percent in 2004, to 0.8 in 2005;

WHEREAS, motorists who use cell phones while driving are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves according to recent studies by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; further the study found that injury crash risk did not vary by type of cell phone;

WHEREAS, a government study released in June 2005 indicates that the distraction of cell phones and other wireless devices was far more likely to lead to crashes, near crashes and other incidents than any other distractions faced by drivers;

WHEREAS, driving in Hawai'i County is particularly demanding due to several factors:

- ❑ roads are often winding, narrow, with two-way traffic and no central dividers;
- ❑ roads are carved out of rugged rocky terrain and do not have shoulders offering escape routes;
- ❑ roadway lighting and signage are minimal;

WHEREAS, there has been a statistically significant increase in fatalities on Hawai'i County roads;

WHEREAS, in other jurisdictions, there have been numerous initiatives that address the problem of cell phone use while driving:

- ❑ according the National Conference of State Legislatures, over two-thirds of state legislatures looked at bills that would restrict the use of cell phones;
- ❑ four states banned the use of cell phones by young drivers, in 2005;
- ❑ New York was the first state to ban the use of cell phones while driving (2001); New Jersey, Connecticut, and the District of Columbia all have similar laws;
- ❑ In June 2003, federal and state highway agencies issued new guidelines for reporting crashes caused by distracted drivers; these authorities are asking police across the nation to note whether a driver was distracted and the source of the distraction.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Hawai'i County and the Hawai'i state legislature adopt laws regulating cell phone use while driving.

Resolution Number: 06-07

RESOLUTION INITIATING SMART GROWTH
IN HAWAI'I COUNTY

WHEREAS, residents are becoming increasingly frustrated with traffic congestion and other daily problems experienced in Hawai'i County due to inadequate infrastructure: residents, for the first time, consider tourism more a burden than a benefit; and state workers voice concerns about office relocations because of the potential for long commutes;

WHEREAS, visitors are also increasingly disappointed in the conditions they find and express their views in strident letters to the editor of West Hawai'i Today about what they get for their tourist dollars;

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Hawai'i County Council passed a revised General Plan;

WHEREAS, to complement that General Plan, Hawai'i County has embarked on a planning process through which local communities in six distinct districts will work collaboratively, assisted by experts, to formulate detailed plans for development in their districts: in introducing this process to residents of Kona, Mayor Harry Kim expressed the County's desire to use the process to make each district a better place to live;

WHEREAS, both East and West Hawaii anticipate that population growth will continue;

WHEREAS, developers routinely apply for variances to avoid their legal requirements to provide adequate infrastructure.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County of Hawai'i restrict the issuance of building permits on any and all new construction of three or more units until Impact Fee legislation is adopted by the county council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of Hawai'i cease relieving any developer or homebuilder of their required obligations to provide site infrastructure such as roads, sewer connections, water, sidewalks, street lighting, underground utilities, impact fees and other requirements or restrictions as included in their approval. All required changes must be processed and approved through the County Council review and approval process.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING TRAILS AND RAIL EASEMENTS

WHEREAS, a series of pathways, roadways and ancient trails was approved by the Hawai‘ian Monarchy in 1892 known as the Highways Act, and

WHEREAS, in modern times those trails have been recognized for their important historical value and

WHEREAS, the State Legislature has authorized a preservation and access program known as “Na Ala Hele” to ensure continued support for these trails, and

WHEREAS, several citizens groups, County and State agencies work in collaboration to expand information and awareness of these important natural resources, and

WHEREAS, additional historical value is intrinsic to many of the former rail easements on Hawai‘i island that were operated from 1880 to 1946 as the Hawai‘i Consolidated Railway, the Hilo Railway Company, the Waiakea Plantation trains, the Ola‘a Plantation Rail system, the Hilo-Honoka‘a rail system, the Mahukona Rail system, the Hilo-Mountain View railway linking to Volcano National Park, Kona and others, and

WHEREAS, approximately 450 miles of fixed and moveable track were installed in both narrow-gauge and standard-gauge configurations, and

WHEREAS, many of these rail systems are the foundation for our present road system and have significant historical value in the former rail-beds, retaining walls, railway “cuts”, bridges and

WHEREAS, there are significant untapped federal and state funding resources available through the Federal and State Departments of Transportation (Scenic Byways and other programs) the Department of the Interior, and the Departments of Agriculture (Rural Development Agency).

BE IT RESOLVED that the County and State of Hawai‘i support rail easements in a program similar to the Na Ala Hele program, and vigorously pursue funding opportunities for enhancing, preserving and educating residents and visitors on Hawai‘i’s natural resources, trails and rail history.

Resolution Number: 06-09

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RENAMING MAUNA KEA SUMMIT

WHEREAS, the Summit of Mauna Kea is considered one of the most sacred sites in Hawai'i, and

WHEREAS, Mauna Kea is a natural treasure and a vital resource for cultural, historic, scientific and environmental priorities including education and outreach, and

WHEREAS, ancient and modern Hawai'ians and people of Hawai'i revere sacred sites and their proper place names, and

WHEREAS, the original name of the summit cone of Mauna Kea was Pu'u Ku Kahau'ula, (the god Ku with a mantle of red snow) and

WHEREAS, the earliest documented maps (1828, 1843, 1890) and more recent 20th century maps (1901, 1921, 1938) refer to the summit cone by its ancient name, and

WHEREAS, the current listing of the summit cone as Pu'u Wekiu is simply a Hawai'ian translation of the English word summit, and is not a correct place name, and

WHEREAS, the status of Mauna Kea as a sacred site and natural resource should be recognized as a State and National Historic Landmark as well as referred to officially by its correct place name; now therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Hawai'i County Democratic Party that the place name of Pu'u Ku Kahau'ula should be restored to the Mauna Kea summit cone now known as Pu'u Wekiu.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HEALTH CARE FOR WEST HAWAI'I

WHEREAS, the West Hawai'i Community Health Center (WHCHC) provides access to affordable health care services to anyone who passes through our door regardless of their ability to pay and covers a service area from Kaiwihāe to Kona to Milolili; and

WHEREAS approximately 17,570 people need access to affordable high quality medical services—6,670 (15%) are uninsured and another 10,900 are on either Medicaid (25%) or Medicare (15%); and,

WHEREAS, many private physicians do not provide services to uninsured or Medicaid patients forcing these patients to go to the hospital emergency room or go without care; and

WHEREAS, the WHCHC has limited capacity and provides care to less than 10% of these patients because of its small facility (3 exam rooms) that is located in the Village of Kailua-Kona and because it has less than 2 FTE medical providers; and

WHEREAS, the federal 330e grant for the WHCHC only covers about 30% of the operating budget and the WHCHC must rely upon Medicaid, Medicare and privately insured patients to balance its budget and maintain services; and,

WHEREAS, the community goal for establishing a community health center in West Hawai'i was to complete the "Circle of Care" for the uninsured and low-income patients on the Big Island, by having the WHCHC provide services to North/South Kona and South Kohala and join the Hamakua Clinic and Bay Clinic that already serve the other areas of the Big Island;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Party endorses developing the infrastructure (facilities, equipment, and staff) of the West Hawai'i Community Health Center so it can adequately serve residents who do not currently have access to health care and in so doing complete the "Circle of Care" from Milolili to Kona to Kaiwihāe;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Democratic Party will support initiatives to secure additional financial support from the State of Hawai'i, the federal government, private foundations, corporations and individuals in order to maintain and expand the scope of health care services.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR
THE COUNTY OF HAWAI'I

WHEREAS, the County of Hawai'i is at present overly dependent on the importation of fossil fuels as its primary source of energy,

WHEREAS, transportation of imported fuels significantly increase the cost of living to all in the County of Hawai'i,

WHEREAS, the County of Hawai'i has abundant untapped natural energy resources,

WHEREAS, there are significant opportunities to use existing technologies to counter the ongoing risks and escalating cost of imported oil base products; e.g. the production of agricultural crops to produce ethanol for transportation fuel, recycling waste products to produce bio-diesel transportation fuel, waste-to-energy facilities to produce electricity and the use of renewable resources (wind, solar, wave action, etc.) to generate electricity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Hawai'i immediately adopt a policy of energy self-sufficiency island-wide and institute a wide range of measures designed to promote energy resources at all levels, that can include but not be limited to tax incentives for individuals and businesses, the use of energy saving devices/equipment in all new construction, the creation of County-wide alternative fuel dispensing facilities, and subsidies to spur development of local alternative fuel sources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County of Hawai'i establish an Energy Commission that will act as a focal point for the County's efforts to promote energy self-sufficiency and which will develop a County-wide plan to attain objectives under this program.

Resolution Number: 06-14

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING MANAGEMENT FOR
THE COUNTY OF HAWAI'I

WHEREAS, the County of Hawai'i recognizes that there is a significant shortfall in affordable housing units for many individuals and families on this island;

WHEREAS, the County administration and the County Council have taken initial measures to address this shortfall by mandating the construction of such housing;

WHEREAS, the County has yet to address the need for an effective management system for this increasing affordable housing inventory;

WHEREAS, some developers, although complying with the letter of the County Code regarding affordable housing requirements, are under no restriction as to specific criteria related to these units;

WHEREAS, the County has created the Hawai'i Island Housing Trust (HIHT), which will receive title to land set aside for the Waikoloa Employee Housing Project and which will establish a non-profit special purpose entity to manage the project;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the HIHT or a similar entity be created to insure the management and retention of the County affordable housing inventory.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of Hawai'i take immediate measures to expand the County's affordable housing inventory and insure that practical steps be adopted that permit individuals and families to obtain such housing.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING TIMELY EFFORTS TO MAKE VACANT PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS
AVAILABLE

WHEREAS, there are approximately 6200 public housing units in the State of Hawai'i; 825 were vacant as of 11/30/05, approximately 13% of the total;

WHEREAS, there are 737 public housing units in Hawai'i County, 202 of which are vacant, approximately 36% of the total;

WHEREAS, site visits made by the Joint Legislative Housing and Homeless Task Force, revealed that most vacant units had been vacant for substantial periods of time;

WHEREAS, the IBM business Consulting Services and Building Inspections Services, Inc. reported on a physical needs assessment of federal public housing owned by HCDCH; the 2003 report indicated many physical problems remained; these included:

1. deterioration of interior and exterior walls;
2. appliance failures;
3. insect infestation and termite damage;
4. damaged windows and doors.

WHEREAS, the HCDCH May 2005 point in time count of homeless persons in Hawai'i County was 1442;

WHEREAS, OF THE 1893 HOMELESS FAMILIES IN THE State, 83% are families with children;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the State of Hawai'i Legislature and Administration take immediate actions, including partnerships with counties and local organizations interested and willing to assist, to make vacant public housing units fit for habitation, and available to those who need them.

Resolution Number: 06-16

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING INCREASING SALARIES FOR
HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL PERSONS

WHEREAS, our District representatives on the Hawai'i County Council commit to full time participation on the Council and its Committees, and

WHEREAS, the positions of District representative on the Hawai'i County Council were formerly conceived as part time occupations, receiving only part time remuneration, and

WHEREAS, the Council's workload has greatly expanded in recent years, reflecting the rapid growth of population in Hawai'i County, and

WHEREAS, we require the most competent, professional and focused representation for each District,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the County of Hawai'i recognize that these legislative positions are full-time public service occupations deserving fair, full-time remunerations and appropriate steps be taken to increase Council members salaries.