

# Affirmative Action Plan of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i 2016

## PREAMBLE

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i embraces its historic commitment to the principles of full participation, equal opportunity, representation and rights for the diverse peoples of Hawai'i. The Democratic Party reaffirms its commitment to the goal of full representation and participation of the people of Hawai'i. We are an open Party that seeks representation and participation from individuals representing the diversity of Hawai'i society. These include, but are not limited to individuals who differ with respect to race, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, gender-expression, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

## FULL PARTICIPATION

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i will affirmatively seek, encourage, and promote full representation and active participation by all of the diverse peoples of Hawai'i in all facets of the programs and activities of our Party. All members, elected and appointed officials, and other representatives of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i shall always conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a diverse and inclusive party as articulated in this Affirmative Action Plan.

We are a Party built on principles of democratic process and inclusion and fully recognize that our strength and effectiveness flow directly from a commitment to the ideal of full and active participation and inclusion rather than exclusion. Our future as a political party, a state and a society are built on these principles. The Democratic Party will reach out to all groups targeting those who have been underrepresented in the Party and the political process.

We are a Party that shall ensure that the judicial bench in Hawai'i reflects the diverse population of its people, in particular, excluded and underrepresented minority groups.

We recognize that our Party benefits from the infusion of the energy and ideas of a new generation of members. This growth presents a great opportunity for true affirmative action. We must develop leadership through teaching, training, mentoring, and creation of opportunities for new leaders. Our affirmative action plan prepares us for this exciting future, built on respect for our *na kupuna* and the history and values that are the foundation for their continuing contributions and commitments.

## BARRIERS TO FULL REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i recognizes and reaffirms its commitment to address the barriers to full representation and participation by all the diverse peoples of Hawai'i in the programs and activities of the Party. The Barriers are similar to those that have historically

prevented full participation and enjoyment of opportunity to workers, women, racial, and other minorities in Hawai'i, which the Party has long struggled to eliminate.

This Affirmative Action Plan 2016 continues the Party's history of working to eliminate these significant barriers to full representation and participation, including but not limited to:

- Institutional and recurring racism and social and cultural biases;
- Social inequality and inequities, and socioeconomic status;
- Sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression
- Geographic and physical accessibility;
- Cultural differences and language barriers; and
- Closed social and political networks that exclude outsiders and deny open and full participation.
- Poor communication or modes of communication that some people are not inclined to use.

The term affirmative action refers to the process of taking positive steps toward full representation for all diverse groups by eliminating barriers that inhibit or otherwise exclude participation of underrepresented groups in the activities and programs of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and the Democratic Party of the United States.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN 2016

The State Party Chair shall implement the following steps towards developing and implementing a comprehensive program to increase participation and representation and eliminate barriers to participation by members of underrepresented groups and groups that have experienced discrimination and exclusion:

1. The Standing State Committee on Affirmative Action committee will work in the interim between the 2016 State Convention and 2018 State Convention. The charge of this committee will be to define the parameters of the discussion of affirmative action, to initiate internal education and discussion on affirmative action issues on the State and County levels, and to make recommendations for action to be presented at least quarterly to the State Central Committee, and for consideration at the 2018 State Convention. The Standing State Committee on Affirmative Action shall examine the barriers to full participation in Party programs and activities. The committee shall also discuss the substantive issues of interest to underrepresented groups that should be addressed by the Party. The paper survey, confidential questionnaire data will be used as a resource for affirmative action, discussion, and planning.

#### Action Steps:

1a. The Standing State Committee on Affirmative Action shall consist of the County Chairs (or their designee), chairs of the Hawaiian Affairs, LGBT, and Women's Caucus (or their designee) and any member of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i that wishes to help this

committee. Invitations to be members of this committee shall be extended via the State Party Chair to all Party members who want to participate. Under the direction of the State Central Committee, the State Standing Committee on Affirmative Action will be responsible for the implementation of the Affirmative Action Plan.

Timetable: Ongoing. Responsible person: State Chair.

1b. The State Chair shall designate an Affirmative Action Committee Co-Chair from among its members and the other co-chair from the membership of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i. Those Co-Chairs are responsible for the implementation of the State Standing Committee on Affirmative Action and keeping the State Central Committee informed on the status of its Affirmative Action Plan.

Timetable: Appointment of co-chairs no later than the first regular meeting of the State Central Committee after the biennium State Convention. Implementation of the plan – Ongoing.  
Responsible Person: Party Chair.

1c. The Committee shall implement its plans for internal education and discussion of affirmative action issues at the State and County levels conducting at least one session for the County Chairs, County Vice Chairs and District Chairs.

Timetable: Ongoing. Committee Chair and committee members.

1d. The Committee shall prepare and present a report on its work and recommendations for action to the State Central Committee on a semi-annual basis. A summary of these reports shall be incorporated into the report of the State Standing Committee on Affirmative Action for the 2018 State Convention.

Timetable: Ongoing.

Responsible person and entity: Committee Chair and committee members.

1e. Each County Chair shall establish a County Committee on Affirmative Action. Its County Chair will determine the composition and number of members of each County Committee. The County Chairs retain overall responsibility for the implementation of the County Affirmative Action Plans.

Timetable: COUNTY COMMITTEE FORMATION – NO LATER THAN TWO MONTHS AFTER THE BIENNIUM STATE CONVENTION

Responsible person and entity: County Committee formation – County Chairs Implementation by the County Committees – County Affirmative Action Committees.

2. Data gathering and identification of underrepresented groups. For any Convention there shall be made available an affirmative action questionnaire for all convention delegates, to elicit voluntary self-identification of the delegate's race, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation and other relevant self-identification. The questionnaires returned will be used as a resource for affirmative action discussion and planning. See Addendum

Action Steps:

2a. The Committee will develop and implement as accurate a picture of the Party as practicable to better plan and set goals for recruitment and participation in the Party.

Timetable: On or before January, 2017 NO LATER THAN 6 MONTHS AFTER ADOPTION  
Responsible person and entity: Standing State Affirmative Action Committee chair and committee, and County Affirmative Action Committee chairs.

3. Diversity, equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in leadership, board and committee appointments, volunteer participation and membership. The State Party will make every good faith effort to achieve diversity, equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in participation at every level of party leadership, including candidates, elected officials, and appointed office holders.

Action Steps:

3a. Members selected to serve on State, County, District or Precinct boards or committees shall be selected in a nondiscriminatory manner that is consistent with the Party's affirmative action policies. The membership at all levels of leadership should reflect the diversity of the peoples of Hawai'i both in content and proportion.

Timetable: Ongoing.

Responsible persons: All Democratic Party Leadership (State Party Chair, County Chairs Region Chairs on 'Oahu, District Chairs, and Precinct Presidents.)

3b. At all Party levels concerted efforts shall be made to expand volunteer participation that would include a broad and diverse cross section of the Party and society.

Timetable: Ongoing.

Responsible persons: All Democratic Party Leadership (State Party Chair, County Chairs Region Chairs on 'Oahu, District Chairs, and Precinct Presidents.)

3c. This Affirmative Action Plan and diversity policy shall be considered and implemented in the appointment of convention committees and the writing and implementation of the Delegate Selection Plan for the National Convention for 2020.

Timetable: Ongoing.

Responsible persons: All Democratic Party Leadership (State Party Chair, County Chairs Region Chairs on 'Oahu, District Chairs, and Precinct Presidents.)

3d. Concerted efforts shall be made to increase participation of all rural and Neighbor Island members in all Party activities.

Timetable: Ongoing.

Responsible persons: All Democratic Party Leadership (State Party Chair, County Chairs Region Chairs on 'Oahu, District Chairs, and Precinct Presidents.)

3e. The Party will make reasonable attempts to participate in a diverse array of community activities such as parades, fairs, and other events to demonstrate our commitment to reaching out to under-represented groups.

Timetable Ongoing

Responsible persons: State and County Chairs and Committees

3f. The State Central Committee will through the Party Chair appoint a Communications Committee to improve the communications to and from the Party officials as required by Article V, Section 9 of the Party's Constitution. The committee will investigate ways to improve communication with Neighbor Islands, electronic media to improve our connection with young people, and roles and responsibilities of people responsible for the Party's communication.