



**PLATFORM  
OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII  
As Adopted at the 2024 State Convention  
May 18, 2024**

**PREAMBLE**

The abiding values of the Democratic Party are integrity, honesty, and transparency for all. At the heart of our party lies a fundamental conviction that Americans must not only be free, but they must live in a fair society. These values compel us to integrate democratic ideals in all aspects of economic, social, educational, and cultural life in our communities, our state and our nation. These principles must always be protected. As the party of the people, we Democrats commit ourselves to these values.

We believe that our democracy cannot properly function so long as political power can be bought. The Democratic Party will work against corruption in all forms, including extortion and bribery, and do everything in its power to ensure a government that serves the people.

We are facing increased global challenges economically, ecologically, and socio-culturally. We therefore adopt a worldview that is sensitive to and addresses these challenges that is not based on short-term economic gains. This platform outlines guiding principles for all members of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i.

**AGRICULTURE**

We believe that a key part of a sustainable and self-sufficient future for Hawai'i lies in a robust agricultural sector in our state that is capable of providing Hawai'i's people with sufficient, healthy and affordable food in perpetuity. We support the preservation and cultivation of sufficient land and marine agricultural resources to achieve this goal.

We support responsible development of these resources to achieve food security and self-sufficiency, while ensuring the sustainability of these resources for future generations to come. We support regulations that ensure the ethical and safe production and consumption of all agricultural products. We support funding efforts to fight invasive species that threaten agricultural production in Hawai'i.

## **ARTS AND CULTURE**

We believe all people should have access to opportunities to engage with the arts and pursue art and arts education. We support public funding of the arts, artists, arts education and cultural organizations and initiatives in communities and schools. We believe that a well-balanced education includes exposure to art, culture and the humanities.

We support initiatives to preserve the history, culture and artistic contributions of Hawai'i's people. Hawai'i prospers when we protect and promote the unique artistic and cultural contributions of the artists who create and preserve Hawai'i's heritage.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND DISASTER AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

We believe members of the public have an inherent right to be safe in their homes, workplaces and communities. We believe that Hawai'i's communities should be well-prepared for the challenges of today and of the future. We support policies that increase the self-sufficiency of communities, that create disaster preparedness plans and programs, and that address interconnections between public health and public safety.

We support policy that protects the people of Hawai'i and their property against natural and man-made disasters. We believe that climate change is real, affirm human activity as its primary cause and main driver, and support emergency preparedness and planning efforts to mitigate its impacts, including development of early warning systems, emergency management and response systems, and emergency sheltering.

We believe public safety includes eliminating risk of gun violence through more effective regulation and improved background checks. We believe public safety laws should be just, equitable and enforced fairly without discrimination. We believe that true justice restores people and communities.

We oppose the death penalty. We oppose racist policies and laws that cause disproportionate harm to communities of color. We believe incarceration should be used only when there are no alternatives to protect the public. We support rehabilitation, addiction services and other humane interventions that promote safe community reintegration as the ultimate goal.

We believe that true public safety cannot be achieved only by policing communities. We support policies that prevent crime by addressing root causes, especially systemic poverty and systemic racism. We believe true public safety can only be achieved through strong, self-sufficient communities, economic stability, and access to good health.

We believe that police reform can emphasize community policing that builds healthy relationships with communities served, with funding for training in de-escalation skills and understanding local cultural diversity. We believe it important to prevent abuse and

corruption at all levels of law enforcement through a public oversight body with true community representation to ensure police management remains accountable to the public.

We support policy that reforms 911 emergency response policies to add social service and mental health professionals as first responders to psychiatric emergencies modeled after San Francisco's successful, need-based 911 response system. We believe responders should be those who can best resolve behavioral health emergencies, relieving police of the work of social workers or psychologists and allowing police to instead focus on crime.

## **ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND LABOR**

We believe that all people have the right to live a dignified life free from poverty and poor health. We believe in designing our economy so that it provides prosperity to all Hawai'i's people.

We support policies that circulate currency through our economy, helping businesses to thrive, including tax policy that lessens the tax burden of low- and middle-income earners and increases the tax burden of high-income earners and the wealthy. We support government investments of tax revenue in community development, government anti-poverty programs, and the transition to a sustainable, green economy. We support policies to diversify our economy so that it is no longer reliant on environmentally adverse industries such as tourism and the military. We support policies that foster entrepreneurship and innovation.

We believe all workers have the right to safe, dignified jobs that pay a living wage. We believe that the minimum wage should be a living wage on which a worker can not only survive, but thrive. We oppose all subminimum wage policies, including the tip credit.

We believe that all workers have the right to form a union to collectively bargain with employers on their behalf. We support the efforts of unions to protect and advocate for workers. We support anti-discrimination protections in the workplace. We support policies that reduce racial, gender, and other disparities in pay.

## **EDUCATION**

*Provide an excellent, free public education for students at every level.*

We believe that the future of our state as well as our country depends upon an educated and knowledgeable citizenry. We support establishing a dedicated funding source to deliver a quality public education and library services to every student, regardless of learning capacity or ability to pay, in an environment conducive to the learning process. These resources shall be made available at every level, from preschool through higher education, including life-long learning.

Educational facilities must be maintained, renovated, and built to 21st century innovations so that our students learn in well-designed, safe environments. We believe a major role of education is to develop critical and creative thinkers who are knowledgeable about issues and able to evaluate and solve real-world problems.

Educators should be paid professional salaries to ensure that all children are taught by qualified teachers. Collective bargaining rights should be protected and strengthened for all educational employees, so that those employees may negotiate for fair compensation and work conditions. Educators and school staff should never be asked to increase their workload without being given the opportunity to negotiate for corresponding pay raises.

The curriculum also should emphasize cultural learning the arts, career and trade skills, and physical education so that we preserve our health and rich cultural history. We are committed to ensuring that all educational curricula are culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory. To the greatest extent possible, school curricula should include content on the historical injustice and cultural subjugation faced by Native Hawaiians and other historically underrepresented populations.

A variety of learning strategies should be used. Standardized testing should be replaced with authentic assessments that promote real-world learning opportunities for students.

We support the constitutional separation of church and state in education which has been a cornerstone of democracy. We also believe that public funds should not be allocated for private educational programs at any level, including preschool. We firmly oppose all policies that allow private corporations to unduly influence the educational curricula and programs offered in public school settings.

We believe that gender equity is a fundamental principle for Hawai'i's public education system. To that end, we support the enactment of gender-inclusive training for educators, sexual wellness programs that advance LGBTQ+ rights and healthy relationships, and gender parity in the distribution of educational resources and construction of school facilities.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY**

Protect and preserve Hawai'i's environment and achieve energy sustainability. Advance measures to re-establish a healthy climate and environment for humans and fellow species, including actions to urgently address climate change. Work towards 100% renewable energy goals.

We believe that all people have the right to live in a clean, healthy and safe environment. We believe that the preservation of our natural environment and its ecological well being is essential to ensuring a safe, healthy, bountiful life for future

generations in Hawai'i. We support policies that create a more sustainable society. We support the restoration, preservation, and protection of native ecosystems.

We believe in the resource management principles outlined in the Public Trust doctrine of the Hawai'i State Constitution. We support policy that incorporates indigenous resource-management practices and technologies such as the Ahupua'a System in modern urban planning and development to create an ecologically sustainable balance between the needs of the people and the rights of nature.

We believe that a key part of a sustainable and self-sufficient future for Hawai'i lies in achieving energy independence through a transition to clean renewable energy sources. We support policy that eliminates our dependence on fossil fuels and other dirty energy sources. We support policies that expand access to public transportation and encourage transit-oriented development and walkable communities.

## **GOVERNMENT**

We believe that all people have the right to live in a free, open and democratic society free from oppression and tyranny. We believe that a government of, by and for the people should be accountable to the people. We believe that a democratic government functions best when it is accessible to all its people. We believe in checks and balances within government and oppose policies that limit human or civil rights.

We believe government officials should be held to the highest ethical standards, as required by Article XIV of the Hawai'i State Constitution, and support full transparency in all government functions. We support policies that protect the integrity of our electoral process.

We support government reforms that limit the influence of money on the creation or execution of policy. We support campaign finance reform that limits the amount of money organizations, corporations or individuals can donate to political campaigns. We support full public-financing of elections.

We support the continued separation of Church and State, a foundational principle on which the Constitution of the United States of America was established and that guarantees religious freedom for all.

We urge expansion of early voting and vote-by-mail, implementing universal automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, and we will continue to fight against discriminatory voter identification laws.

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

We believe all people have an inherent right to live a healthy life in a clean and safe environment. We believe all people have the right to access high quality healthcare regardless of ability to pay. We believe the wellbeing of all of Hawai'i's people is of the

utmost importance. We support the creation of a universal healthcare system that values people over profit, and follows best practices and current research to deliver holistic care covering both physical and mental healthcare. We support a universal single-payer healthcare system similar to HR 1976, Expanded and Improved Medicare for All.

We support public funding to research and develop comprehensive public health solutions to the diseases and illnesses of today, as well as those of the future. We support public funding for reproductive healthcare. We support global health initiatives that prepare for and prevent the spread of infectious diseases around the world. We believe in harnessing the latest technology, including tele-health services, to remove barriers and increase access to care with a goal of reducing health disparities in Hawai'i's rural and underserved communities.

## **HOUSING**

We believe housing is a human right. We believe that each and every person should have access to safe, stable and adequate housing regardless of ability to pay. We support policies that deliver housing that is affordable to people at the bottom of the income scale where the need is greatest. We support policies that reduce barriers to the development of this housing, so long as these policies do not conflict with the tenets laid out in the Environment and Energy plank. We support policies that reduce barriers to homeownership for residents. We support policies that preserve housing for residents and discourage real estate speculation.

We believe that homelessness is the symptom of an inequitable economic system that creates generational poverty and hardship. We believe this system must be changed. We support policy that gets people experiencing homelessness re-housed quickly and efficiently, and we support policy that delivers wrap-around services to recently re-housed individuals and families. We support adequate public funding for these initiatives.

## **HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS**

We believe that all humans have inherent rights to freedom, justice, dignity, and peace. We support the preservation of these human rights. We support the preservation of equal civil rights and liberties for all people. We believe all people have the right to self-determination and freedom from oppression. We support affirmative action, the full implementation of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. We believe in women's equality and the right to privacy. We believe in reproductive freedom and choice, with access to safe and legal abortion services. We support public funding of services for survivors of domestic violence. We believe in full equality before the law for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Agender, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) community.

We support legislation and policies that prioritize the safety, security and well-being of our foster and adopted children, the most vulnerable keiki in our community. We respect family and familial bonds, but reunification with every biological family is not always the safest, most secure or in the best interests of every child. Which is especially true in aggravated circumstances involving drug use history, physical abuse, sexual abuse or unstable housing. We strongly support the efforts of parents and all people to recover, but our ultimate concern must be for the safety and well-being of the foster and adopted children.

## **KŪPUNA**

We believe that a Hawai'i where the elderly can age in place and remain active members of the community is a Hawai'i that benefits immensely from the wisdom and experience of kūpuna. We support policies that make it easier to age in place and we support policies that make it easier for caregivers to provide quality care for kūpuna. We support policies that protect kūpuna from abuse. We support public funding for kūpuna and family care programs. We support aging with dignity including equal access to medical services with publicly supported long-term care that does not exhaust personal and family expenses.

## **NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND HAWAIIAN CULTURE**

We support Native Hawaiians in their efforts to secure justice from the federal and state governments to repair the harms suffered and endured by the Native Hawaiian people and 'āina, including fulfilling its Public Land Trust responsibilities which require that the revenue be provided annually to Native Hawaiians and funding of the Hawaiian Homes Commission budget and other housing programs to ensure that no Native Hawaiian is homeless, here in their homeland.

We support proactive actions by the federal and state governments to enhance Native Hawaiian culture, health (including traditional and customary medicinal treatment programs), language, housing, education, environment, agriculture, jobs, and economic development. We support reforming the criminal justice system to address the disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians, including bail reform and restorative justice which includes Ho'oponopono.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL EQUITY**

We believe that digital access is a critical and essential service necessary for many aspects of our economy and community life. We support achieving digital equity to ensure that all of Hawai'i's residents—from keiki to kupuna—have the information technology capacity needed to participate fully in our society, democracy and economy, including civics, social and cultural activities, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.

We support access to high-quality internet and training to use technology for all of Hawai'i's residents, and support efforts to ensure their ability to use digital resources to be connected and successful in their lives. We support efforts in government and industries to achieve digital access and the availability of services and resources to all residents and communities, as these efforts are beneficial to our people and communities, and the future of our economy and state.

We support both net neutrality to ensure free, open access to the internet and the protection of personal data as a personal right. We recognize that technological innovation may have unintended consequences and believe in practices that promote technology ethics among creators and developers as well as ethical uses of their products by the public. We support legislative action and regulation in pursuit of that same goal.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

*Adopt transportation policies that improve our quality of life.*

We believe in the necessity of providing a safe, efficient transportation infrastructure. We endorse efforts to promote less reliance on imported fossil fuel and to support energy-efficient methods of transportation.

We support initiatives that will provide our state with more fuel-efficient vehicles, affordable mass transit and well-identified bike lanes. We support reducing and ultimately eliminating fossil fuel consumption through cleaner fuels, vehicle electrification and increasing the fuel efficiency of cars, boats, ships, and trucks. We support new investments in public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure across our urban and suburban areas. We recognize the importance of integrating any new modes of mass transportation with existing and future public streets, highways, bike lanes, retail establishments, services, and affordable housing, while maintaining a high degree of open space at ground level in current and all future high-density developments.

We seek to achieve energy sustainability based on renewable energy sources. We encourage the use of clean alternative fuel sources, including in our public transportation systems. We support incentives for use or adoption of public transit, telecommuting, carpooling, vanpooling, ridesharing, biking, and walking to effect the reduction of traffic congestion and air pollution. We support the urgent development of a variety of cost-effective energy improving systems, encourage transit-oriented development, and support tax incentives that encourage renewable energy initiatives.

## **U.S. MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

We believe in a foreign policy that relies on diplomacy, cooperation and the promotion of mutual prosperity.



We believe that the United States military should be used only as an absolute last resort and only in the defense of human rights and freedoms. We support worldwide reduction of militaries and nuclear arsenals. We support policies that promote disarmament and peace around the world. We support policy that reduces the immense size of the national security and military industrial complexes.

We believe that veterans of the United States Armed Forces should be honored and treated with dignity and respect. We support policies that provide veterans with the best possible care of both their physical and mental health.

We believe that the United States military has an obligation to protect the health and safety of the people of Hawai'i. We believe that the United States military has an obligation to protect the ecological health of the environment. We support policy that holds the United States military accountable for harm it causes to the people of Hawai'i and to the environment.

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