

1 BYLAWS OF
2
3 THE HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS CAUCUS OF
4
5 THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I
6
7 DRAFT GENERAL REVISION 2026
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10 ARTICLE I – ORGANIZATION
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12 **Section 1. Authority.** There shall be organized the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus under the authority
13 of the State Central Committee as prescribed in Article V, Section 7 of the Democratic Party of
14 Hawai'i Constitution.
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16 **Section 2. Name.** The official name of the caucus shall be the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the
17 Democratic Party of Hawai'i (a.k.a. "Hawaiian Affairs Caucus").
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20 ARTICLE II – PURPOSES
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22 The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus exists to represent Native Hawaiians whose inherent sovereignty
23 and rights were suppressed as a result of the 1893 illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i,
24 an event that deprived Native Hawaiians of self-determination and inflicted long-lasting political,
25 economic, and social harm. Guided by the values of aloha, mālama 'āina, ho'okipa, kuleana, and
26 above all, pono. The caucus supports the principles of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and
27 advances policies that promote dignity, justice, and reconciliation.
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29 The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus promotes self-determination by advocating for Native Hawaiian
30 rights and interests, including the protection of Native Hawaiian cultural practices, language, and
31 sacred sites; the preservation and stewardship of ancestral lands and waters both on the 'āina and
32 in the kai; and economic and community development grounded in fairness, responsibility, and
33 accountability. The caucus prioritizes pono-driven investment that addresses the impacts of
34 historical injustice and aims to ensure that resources, opportunity, and wealth are distributed to
35 those segments of society most in need.
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37 To advance these goals, the caucus works for improvements primarily in housing, health, jobs,
38 and education, with policies designed to strengthen community well-being and long-term
39 security for Native Hawaiians. It also promotes accountability by identifying and supporting
40 Democratic public servants who commit to the Democratic Party of Hawai'i Platform and
41 Resolutions as they relate to the protection of Native Hawaiian rights, cultures, and natural
42 resources, and to the pursuit of reconciliation and meaningful progress.
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ARTICLE III – CORE VALUES

The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus shall aspire to conduct its work within the ‘ohana, in the community, and with one another in accordance with the following core values. These core values shall guide the caucus in its deliberations, priorities, and actions.

Section 1. Aloha (Love).

Practice Aloha by demonstrating care, compassion, and respect for its members and for Hawai‘i’s communities.

Section 2. Kuleana (To be Responsible).

Honor kuleana by actively participating in, supporting, and contributing to the well-being of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus.

Hold the caucus and one another accountable to the well-being of society, recognizing that as the ‘āina holds us responsible for its well-being (the people thrive as the ‘āina thrives), so too must we hold ourselves responsible and accountable.

Hold accountable all public servants identified as Democrats to the party Platform and Resolutions of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i.

Section 3. Pono (Humanity and Righteousness).

Uphold pono by working to ensure that every person in Hawai‘i is treated with dignity and has access to: work or income; a safe place to live; nourishing food; accurate and appropriate education; and health care that promotes well-being.

Advocate for a pono economic system that takes into account existing inequalities, finite space, transmigration, and the limited resources of our island home, ka pae ‘āina.

Recognize that the rights and responsibilities accorded to the people of Hawai‘i today reflect Hawaiian social, cultural, and spiritual values evolved from time immemorial.

Section 4. ‘Imi ‘ike (Seek Knowledge).

Practice ‘imi ‘ike by seeking knowledge that enables sound, informed, and responsible decision-making.

Section 5. Mālama ‘āina (Care for the Land).

Practice mālama ‘āina by acknowledging the ‘āina as a living being and as a parent, requiring our care so it may thrive. The caucus shall aspire to fulfill its kuleana to mālama ‘āina as the ‘āina mālama us; and protect *all* of Hawai‘i’s natural resources, on the ‘āina (land) and in the kai (sea).

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Affirm that our relationship to the ‘āina springs forth our relationship to one another.

Embody aloha, mālama ‘āina, kuleana, and ho‘okipa by providing space for others who believe and behave accordingly.

Aspire to support sustainability that leads to ‘āina momona (abundance).

Honor and respect kupuna and our ancestors as a foundation.

Section 6. Na‘au Pono (Justice).

Nurture and practice a deep sense of justice in all that it does.

Section 7. Ho‘okipa (Welcome).

Welcome all members with aloha.

Section 8. Ho‘ihi (Respect).

Hold discussions with ho‘ihi by conducting deliberations respectfully and honoring the views of all.

Section 9. ‘Olu ‘olu (Graciousness and Pleasantness).

Be gracious and pleasant during meetings and related activities.

Section 10. Lokomaika‘i (To Share With Each Other).

Practice lokomaika‘i by working together for the whole.

ARTICLE IV – SUPREMACY

The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus Bylaws governs how the caucus operates, unless they conflict with the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i’s Constitution or Bylaws. If any part of these Bylaws conflicts with the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i’s Constitution or Bylaws, the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i’s Constitution and Bylaws govern.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership Eligibility.

The following persons are eligible to become members of the caucus:

- (1) Is a registered voter in the State of Hawai‘i;

- (2) Is a member of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; and
- (3) Supports the caucus and its purposes.

Section 2. Enrollment; Caucus Enrollment Card.

The procedure for enrollment in the caucus shall be the submission to the caucus Membership Committee a Caucus Enrollment Card, as prescribed, and may be modified from time to time by the Executive Committee, or as provided by the applicant through the Official Enrollment Card of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i as defined in Article I, Section 3 of the Bylaws of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i.

Section 3. Termination.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the caucus to remove caucus enrollment cards from the active membership roster upon receiving notification from the Secretary of the State Central Committee as defined in Article I, Section 6 of the Bylaws of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i.

ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Composition.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the following positions:

- (1) The Officers;
- (2) The Immediate Past Chairperson;
- (3) Two (2) At–Large Members from O‘ahu County;
- (4) Two (2) At–Large Members from Hawai‘i County;
- (5) Two (2) At–Large Members from Maui County;
- (6) One (1) At–Large Member from Kaua‘i County; and
- (7) Two (2) State Central Committee (SCC) of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i Representatives, elected by the caucus who shall be of different genders.

Section 2. Authority and Duties.

The Executive Committee shall have the authority and duty to manage the business and affairs of the caucus in accordance with these Bylaws. The Executive Committee shall:

- (1) Conduct the day-to-day administration of the caucus;
- (2) Conduct all necessary business of the caucus in the interim between membership meetings;
- (3) Determine a fiscal year cycle for the caucus, approve a budget, and maintain fiduciary accountability for caucus resources;
- (4) Temporarily fill Officer, At-Large Member, and State Central Committee Representative vacancies with an interim position holder;
- (5) Keep the membership informed on all matters affecting the caucus;
- (6) Develop plans for and implement projects that support the purposes of the caucus;
- (7) Authorize fundraising activities; and

(8) Establish special committees as they deem appropriate.

Section 3. Qualifications.

To serve in any of the positions that comprise the Executive Committee, the nominee must attest to the following qualifications:

(1) Shall be a member of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus.

(2) Must demonstrate conduct and advocacy consistent with the caucus purposes and values.

(3) Must demonstrate active participation with the caucus or other Native Hawaiian serving organizations (e.g., attending meetings, serving on committees or as an officer, chairing committees, and supporting related advocacy).

(4) Must be able to attend all regularly scheduled Executive Committee and membership meetings, and special meetings as required, unless excused in advance for good cause.

Section 4. Resignation and Removal.

4A. *Resignation.* Any member of the Executive Committee may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairperson of the caucus, unless the notice specifies a later time when the resignation shall take effect. The acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

4B. *Automatic Resignation.* Three (3) unexcused absences of any member of the Executive Committee shall be deemed a resignation from their position and the position declared vacant.

4C. *Removal.* Any member of the Executive Committee may be removed, with or without cause, from the position held, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at a regular or special meeting. The meeting shall have been called with at least fourteen (14) calendar days' notice to the membership, and such call for the meeting shall include "removal" as the purpose, or "removal" shall be included as an item on the agenda circulated to the membership.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS, AT-LARGE MEMBERS, IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRPERSON, & STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Officers.

The Officers of this caucus shall be the Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson, Second Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.

1A. *Chairperson.* The authority and duties of the Chairperson shall include:

(1) **Preside.** Presiding at all meetings of the caucus and the Executive Committee.

(2) **Supervise.** Supervising the work and activities of the caucus.

(3) **Check Controls.** Countersigning all checks presented for payment by the Treasurer, issued in the name of the caucus.

(4) **Annual Report.** Submitting an annual report to the membership regarding the caucus's activities.

- (5) **Appointments.** Appointing chairpersons of committees, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee.
- (6) **Spokesperson.** Serving as the chief spokesperson for the caucus on legislative and other matters consistent with positions adopted by the Party and the caucus. In making public statements, the Chairperson shall use caution, clarity, and good judgment to ensure that remarks represent officially adopted positions of the caucus and may reasonably be understood as such by the public.
- (7) **Special Advisors.** Appointing Special Advisors to the Chairperson. Special Advisors may have certain rights and privileges of an Executive Committee member as determined by the Chairperson, except that they shall not be entitled to vote and shall not be counted for purposes of quorum.
- (8) **Other Duties.** Performing other duties that customarily pertain to that office.

1B. *First Vice Chairperson.* The authority and duties of the First Vice Chairperson shall include:

- (1) **Authority.** In the absence of the Chairperson, the First Vice Chairperson shall perform all duties of the Chairperson and shall have the same authority as the Chairperson.
- (2) **Committee Liaison.** Serving as the Executive Committee liaison for any committees assigned to them by the Chairperson.
- (3) **Logistics.** Securing meeting places for caucus meetings and arranging the logistics for such meetings.
- (4) **Other Duties.** Any other such duties as may be assigned by the Chairperson.

1C. *Second Vice Chairperson.* The authority and duties of the Second Vice Chairperson shall include:

- (1) **Authority.** In the absence of the Chairperson and First Vice Chairperson, the Second Vice Chairperson shall perform all duties of the Chairperson and shall have the same authority as the Chairperson;
- (2) **Committee Liaison.** Serving as the Executive Committee liaison for any committees assigned to them by the Chairperson.
- (3) **Other Duties.** Any other such duties as may be assigned by the Chairperson.

1D. *Secretary.* The authority and duties of the Secretary shall include:

- (1) **Minutes.** Record the minutes of all meetings of the caucus and Executive Committee.
- (2) **Timeliness.** Complete and distribute draft minutes within fourteen (14) days after each meeting.
- (3) **Notices.** In consultation with the Chairperson, prepare and send all meeting notices.
- (4) **Roster.** Keep an up-to-date membership roster of the caucus.
- (5) **Succession.** Deliver to the duly qualified successor all books, papers, and records in the Secretary's possession or control within fourteen (14) days after leaving office, with appropriate turnover documentation. If no successor is qualified, deliver to the Executive Committee.

1E. *Treasurer.* The authority and duties of the Treasurer shall include:

- (6) **Receipts.** Receive all funds paid to the caucus and provide receipts where appropriate.
- (7) **Deposits.** Deposit funds in a bank or depository approved by the Executive Committee promptly within five (5) working days of receipt to the credit of the caucus.

- (8) **Authorized Disbursements.** Make disbursements only as authorized by the Executive Committee and in accordance with these Bylaws and any adopted budget or spending limits.
- (9) **Check Controls.** Ensure withdrawal instruments are signed by the Treasurer and the Chairperson (or, in the Chairperson's absence, the First Vice Chairperson or Second Vice Chairperson).
- (10) **Safeguards.** Maintain accurate books, preserve supporting documentation (receipts, invoices, and vouchers), and maintain appropriate safeguards for organizational funds.
- (11) **Inspection.** Keep accounts and books available for inspection at all reasonable times by the Executive Committee or the Finance Committee.
- (12) **Meeting Reports.** Submit a complete report of money received and disbursed at each regular meeting.
- (13) **Annual Report.** Submit an annual report to the Executive Committee and the caucus.
- (14) **Succession.** Deliver to the duly qualified successor all money, property, books, and records within fourteen (14) days after leaving office, taking a receipt, and provide a final financial report to the Executive Committee describing account balances, outstanding bills or obligations, the financial institutions where funds are deposited, and where supporting documentation is maintained. If no successor is qualified, deliver to the Executive Committee.

Section 2. At-Large Members.

At-Large members shall assist the Vice Chairpersons with the membership and Executive Committee meetings and perform other tasks as assigned by the Chairperson.

Section 3. Immediate Past Chairperson.

The Immediate Past Chairperson shall facilitate an effective and orderly transition between the outgoing and incoming administrations, provide guidance upon request, and help ensure administrative continuity.

Section 4. State Central Committee (SCC) Representatives.

SCC Representatives shall serve as liaisons between the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus and the State Central Committee (SCC). The authority and duties of the SCC Representatives shall include:

- (1) representing the official positions of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus as adopted by the caucus or the Executive Committee, wherever possible, and otherwise use their best judgment to advance and protect the interests of the caucus in all matters coming before the SCC at which they speak or act as representatives;
- (2) preparing and submitting two (2) written reports annually to the SCC as prescribed by the Democratic Party of Hawai'i Bylaws Article 5, Section 8E;
- (3) perform such duties as are consistent with the Democratic Party of Hawai'i Constitution, including Article 5, Sections 7A and 7C, and the Democratic Party of Hawai'i Bylaws, including Article 5, Sections 8A, 8E, and 8F.

1 **Section 5. Term of Office.**

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3 The Officers, At-Large Members, and SCC Representatives shall take office upon the end of the
4 regular election meeting and end at the time of the conclusion of the following regular election
5 meeting.

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ARTICLE VIII – ELECTIONS

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10 **Section 1. Nominations and Elections Special Committee.**

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12 In January of even-numbered years, the Executive Committee shall establish a Nominations and
13 Elections Special Committee. The Executive Committee shall also establish such a committee to
14 fill any vacancies through a special election. The committee shall plan, organize, and execute the
15 nomination and election process for Officers, At-Large Members, and SCC Representatives.

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17 **Section 2. Election Dates.**

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19 The regular election meeting shall be held in March of even-numbered years when the
20 convention is held in May; otherwise, it shall be held at least thirty (30) days prior to the State
21 Convention. A special election meeting shall be held within forty-five (45) days of the vacancy.

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23 **Section 3. Nomination Procedures; Signature Requirement.**

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25 The number of signatures required for nomination for SCC Representatives shall be five (5), in
26 accordance with Article 5, Section 2E of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i Constitution.

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28 **Section 4. Filing Deadlines.**

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30 The filing of nomination papers shall be due thirty (30) calendar days before the meeting at
31 which the regular election will be held and ten (10) calendar days before a special election. Only
32 nominations for Officers and At-Large Members may be made from the floor.

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34 **Section 5. Voter Eligibility.**

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36 Persons eligible to vote shall be limited to those members of the caucus, certified as of the
37 candidate filing deadline for regular elections and special elections.

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39 **Section 6. Filling of Vacancies; Special Elections.**

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41 Any vacancy in a position on the Executive Committee may be filled temporarily by an interim
42 position holder and shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The interim position holder
43 shall serve until a special election is held, which shall occur within forty-five (45) days after the
44 vacancy is created. The special election shall be held at a meeting of the caucus membership and
45 shall elect a member to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.

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ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees.

The Standing Committees of this caucus shall be:

- (A) Legislation;
- (B) Finance;
- (C) Membership;
- (D) Communications; and
- (E) Rules.

1A. *Legislation.* The Legislation Committee shall be responsible for:

- (1) **Tracking.** Monitoring matters of concern to the caucus, with emphasis on legislation that directly impacts Native Hawaiians.
- (2) **Advocacy.** Developing, supporting, and promoting legislation consistent with the caucus purposes, and not inconsistent with the positions of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i as expressed in its platform and resolutions. Recommending a legislative agenda for approval by the Executive Committee.

1B. *Finance.* The Finance Committee shall be responsible for:

- (1) **Budget.** Preparing and drafting the annual budget for Executive Committee review.
- (2) **Review.** Performing periodic financial reviews of the books.

1C. *Membership.* The Membership Committee shall be responsible for:

- (1) **Development.** Growing the caucus membership.
- (2) **Welcome.** Welcoming and orienting new members.
- (3) **Roster.** Assisting the Secretary with the maintenance of the membership roster.
- (4) **Events.** Planning and implementing events for the benefit of the membership.

1D. *Communications.* The Communications Committee shall be responsible for:

- Website.** Maintaining the caucus website.
- Social Media.** Maintaining the caucus social media.
- Newsletter.** Maintaining a membership newsletter.

1E. *Rules.* The Rules Committee shall be responsible for:

- (1) **Updates.** Reviewing and recommending changes to the caucus bylaws, including to ensure compliance with the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i Constitution and Bylaws.
- (2) **Rules.** Assisting in developing standing rules or rules of order for the caucus.
- (3) **Interpretation.** Providing an interpretation of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus Bylaws when requested by the Chairperson, the Executive Committee, or the caucus.

Section 2. Special Committees.

The Executive Committee may establish special committees for the caucus. Each special committee shall be chaired by a member of the caucus and may include persons who are or are

1 not members of the caucus. Each special committee shall be formed for a specific purpose and
2 shall dissolve when that purpose is fulfilled.

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ARTICLE X – MEETINGS

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7 Section 1. Membership Meetings.

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9 1A. *Regular meetings.* The caucus shall meet at least once every three (3) months.

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11 1B. *Special meetings.* Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson, or by a majority of the
12 members of the Executive Committee.

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14 1C. *Quorum.* The quorum for caucus membership meetings is ten (10).

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16 Section 2. Executive Committee Meetings.

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18 2A. *Regular meetings.* The Executive Committee shall meet at least six times a year.

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20 2B. *Special meetings.* Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson, or by a majority of the
21 members of the Executive Committee.

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23 2C. *Quorum.* The quorum for an Executive Committee meeting is a majority of filled positions,
24 but no fewer than three (3).

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26 Section 3. Notice.

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28 Notice of all caucus meetings shall be provided in person, by telephone, electronic mail, or by
29 mail to each member's last known address, and by posting on the Democratic Party of Hawai'i
30 website. Such notice shall be given no less than ten (10) days before a regular meeting and no
31 less than five (5) days before a special meeting.

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33 Section 4. Electronic Meetings.

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35 Electronic meetings are authorized. The Executive Committee may adopt rules for electronic
36 meetings, including teleconference or videoconference. Participation through simultaneous
37 two-way communication constitutes attendance for purposes of quorum and voting while that
38 communication is active and enabled.

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40 Section 5. Parliamentary Authority.

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42 The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern all caucus meetings in
43 all matters to which it applies, except where it is inconsistent with the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus
44 Bylaws, any special rules of order adopted by the caucus, or the Constitution, Bylaws, or special
45 rules of order adopted by the Democratic Party of Hawai'i.

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ARTICLE XI – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Prohibition Against Private Inurement.

No part of the caucus' net earnings shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its officers, members, agents, or other private persons, except that the caucus may pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and may make payments or distributions in furtherance of its purposes and consistent with these Bylaws.

Section 2. Distribution of Assets.

Upon dissolution of the caucus, after payment of, or provision for payment of, all debts and liabilities, the remaining assets shall be distributed to the Democratic Party of Hawai'i.

Section 3. Fundraising Activities; Gifts; Assessments

No officer, member, or agent may conduct fundraising activities, or solicit or accept assessments, contributions, or gifts, or make disbursements in connection with such activities, without the express consent of the Executive Committee. All officers, members, and agents of the caucus who, in the name of the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, engage in fundraising activities or are responsible for making disbursements and receiving assessments, contributions, or gifts shall be responsible for maintaining strict and accurate accounts of all funds received and disbursed. A full and complete written report shall be submitted to the Executive Committee within a reasonable time after completion of a project or term, or upon request of the Chairperson, the Treasurer, or the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Impossibility Clause; Emergency Bylaws and Powers.

4A. Impossibility. As authorized under Article 9, Section 9 of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i bylaws, the Executive Committee may suspend any provision of these bylaws as it deems necessary in an emergency at a regular or special meeting. Any suspension must identify a compelling interest and state the specific start and end dates.

4B. Emergency Bylaws and Powers. In an emergency, in which the Executive Committee is unable to hold a duly noticed meeting or establish quorum, it may adopt, amend, or repeal emergency bylaws only during an emergency defined in 4C. Emergency bylaws may affect only the Executive Committee by:

- (1) changing how meetings are called;
- (2) changing quorum requirements for meetings;
- (3) designating additional or substitute members; and
- (4) modifying lines of succession for officers.

1 4C. **Emergency Defined.** An emergency exists if, due to a catastrophic event, (i) a quorum of
2 the caucus cannot readily be assembled, and (ii) the caucus would be materially harmed if action
3 is not taken during the emergency.

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5 4D. **Effect Limited to the Emergency.** Emergency bylaws and suspensions govern only during
6 the emergency; regular bylaws resume automatically when the emergency ends.

7 8 9 **ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS**

10 11 **Section 1. Initiation.**

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13 Amendments to these Bylaws may be initiated by any member of the caucus with ten (10)
14 signatures of members, the Executive Committee, or by the Rules Committee.

15 16 **Section 2. Review.**

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18 All proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Rules Committee, which shall review them
19 for consistency with the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i Constitution and Bylaws.

20 21 **Section 3. Notice.**

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23 Members shall be informed of any proposed amendments at least thirty (30) days before the
24 scheduled membership meeting at which they will be considered.

25 26 **Section 4. Adoption.**

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28 Any amendment or general revision shall be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members
29 present and voting at a duly convened meeting.

30 31 **Section 5. Transmission for Certification.**

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33 Within thirty (30) days after adoption, approved amendments or revisions shall be transmitted to
34 the Standing Rules Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i for review and approval by
35 the State Central Committee as prescribed in Article V, Section 8 of the Democratic Party of
36 Hawai‘i Constitution.