ENV 2014-01 **Promoting Soil Health**

Whereas, The State of Hawai‘i depends on agriculture as a major industry and was once self-sufficient in production of its own food and fiber; and

Whereas, Soil health is essential to establish and maintain a healthy agricultural system capable of producing, fiber and nutrient-dense, high quality food on a sustained basis; and

Whereas, Humus is any organic matter that has been broken down to become stable soil that is also rich in organic matter, which is essential to good soil structure because it increases soil aggregates and porosity; and

Whereas, Increased humus and good soil structure enables beneficial cultures of bacteria, nematodes, protozoa and fungi to thrive in the soil that enable plant roots to uptake soil minerals essential for their growth and health; and

Whereas, Good soil structure also facilitates seedling emergence, reduces erosion, improves water retention, plant root penetration and uptake of water and minerals; and

Whereas, Humus in the soil also stores large amounts of carbon from the air and reduces the carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) in the atmosphere that is primarily responsible for global warming and acidification of the oceans; and

Whereas, Enabling Hawaii’s farmers to have easy access to affordable compost and green waste that could be used to add humus back to Hawai‘i’s soils would significantly improve Hawai‘i’s soil health; and

Whereas, Improved soil health will reduce Hawai‘i’s dependency on imports of costly chemical agricultural amendments by improving the productivity of Hawai‘i’s soils using local resources; and

Whereas, A state policy to improve soil health will promote research and education and support farming practices that will improve soil health; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved,** That the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i supports development of localized compost and green waste facilities that are easily accessible and affordable to farmers for use on their land to produce humus and improve soil health; and be it

**Resolved,** That the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i supports a state policy to promote soil health as a priority in agricultural education and for all agencies responsible for promoting and implementing Hawai‘i’s agricultural policies and practices; and be it

**Resolved,** That the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i urges the Democratic members of the Hawai‘i State legislature, the Governor of the State of Hawai‘i, and the heads of the county and state regulatory bodies to enact legislation and regulation that provide incentives for farmers to improve soil health; and be it

**Ordered,** That copies of this resolution will be transmitted to the Governor of Hawai‘i, all Democratic Party members of the Hawai‘i State Legislature and Hawai‘i’s Congressional Delegation.
WHEREAS, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i is an organization that seeks sustainable solutions for our ʻāina, culture, and people; and

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i recognizes the important role that indigenous natural resources and renewable energy play in the social and economic well being of all Hawaiian communities; and

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i is made up of individual community members and is supported by partner organizations that have roles and responsibilities in ensuring the State of Hawai‘i meets energy goals in an environmentally sound and economically advantageous manner; and

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i acknowledges that Hawai‘i does not have locally available fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i acknowledges that when Hawai‘i imports fossil fuels, we are exporting the environmental footprint of our energy infrastructure and energy culture; and

WHEREAS, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is a nonrenewable fossil fuel composed primarily of methane; and

WHEREAS, Relying on LNG as a primary source to meet Hawai‘i’s energy needs will likely require substantial long-term commitments to pay for the infrastructure necessary to import and burn the fuel; and

WHEREAS, Imported LNG is not a sustainable long-term solution for meeting Hawai‘i’s renewable energy goals, it is environmentally harmful to the global atmosphere, harmful to the local communities from which it is extracted, harmful to water resources in those communities, and harmful to animals and the humans that live within those communities; and

WHEREAS, Imported fossil fuels like LNG impose price volatility and energy insecurity on Hawai‘i’s people, and extend the existing energy price disparities between Hawai‘i’s islands; and

WHEREAS, All people of Hawai‘i have a right to energy decision-making and leadership that is thorough, open, and transparent, with meaningful consultation with Hawai‘i’s citizens and particularly with Native Hawaiian communities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i calls upon our elected officials and appointed regulators to ensure that no decisions are made, with respect to LNG, that will inhibit energy independence for Hawai‘i; and be it

Resolved, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i requests the Legislature ensure that if LNG is imported to Hawai‘i it is for the sole specific purpose of serving as a short-term path to our sustainable clean energy future; and be it

Resolved, The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i asks that government agencies perform meaningful community consultation in Hawai‘i, including with Native Hawaiian citizens, before endorsing, investing in, or approving any LNG infrastructure for any of our islands; and be it

Ordered, That copies of this resolution will be transmitted to the Governor of Hawai‘i, all Democratic Party members of the Hawai‘i State Legislature and Hawai‘i’s Congressional Delegation.