

## BUS/AG 2016-01 **Responsible Legislation Regarding Pesticide Application**

Whereas, Some large industrial agricultural operations in Hawai'i do not use modern best practices that farmers elsewhere use to protect the environment, their neighbors, and their land; and

Whereas, Modern farming practices, used by most farmers in other states, dictate protecting the environment, their neighbors, and their own soil; and

Whereas, Some agricultural operations in Hawai'i are purported to overspray pesticides on residential housing, schools, hospitals, and waterways that drain into the ocean; and

Whereas, The potential for pesticides to drain into our oceans and their effects on the ocean environment have not yet been well studied and may be harmful to the ocean and reef environment; and

Whereas, Although the effects of most pesticides on human health for consumption of food produced from crops they have been applied to have been well studied, for many pesticides their effects on human health from overspray have not been well studied and may be harmful to human health; and

Whereas, Pesticide usage in Hawai'i is largely unknown to the public, and public knowledge of pesticide usage is necessary to assess safety and conduct scientific studies on safety; and

Whereas, Seed companies spray more pesticides on crops in Hawaii than crops on the mainland due to higher pressure from insects, fungus, and weeds in the tropics, regardless of whether those crops are Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) or conventional, the potential danger of which could be mitigated with buffer zones; and

Whereas, Many people are concerned about the safety of both GMOs and pesticides, while others agree that there is a scientific consensus that GMOs are safe but are concerned about the safety of pesticide application; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urges the state legislature and County Councils to consider both pesticides and Genetically Modified Organisms, but to respect that there are differing views on the subjects by addressing them separately; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i calls upon its members in the State Legislature to draft, sponsor, and pass legislation requiring reporting of pesticide usage by commercial agricultural operations and requiring pesticide application buffer zones on commercial agricultural operations around residential neighborhoods, school, hospitals, and waterways that drain into the ocean; and finally be it

*Ordered*, That copies of this resolution be delivered to the members of the Hawai'i State Legislature, the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Lt. Governor of the State of Hawai'i, and members of all County Councils in the State of Hawai'i.

## BUS/AG 2016-02 **The End of Sugar in Hawai'i**

Whereas, Sugarcane contributed to the growth of Hawaii's economy for more than a century and to the importation of huge numbers of contract laborers, who created the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic diversity that distinguishes Hawaii from any other state in the nation; and

Whereas, Controlled by the Big Five, the sugar industry thrived for decades; by the 1940's, sugar workers numbered more than 30,000; by the 1970's and 1980's, sugar plantations consolidated but began to decline until the mid-2000's when Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar (HC&S) was the only sugar plantation left standing in Hawai'i; and

Whereas, But by the end of 2016, sugar will be gone for good in Hawai'i; on January 6, 2016, HC&S announced closure of its sugar operations by year's end, marking an end to an era; and

Whereas, Life on the plantation in the early years was brutal; workers were little more than indentured servants, laboring to pay off their contracts and earning meager wages that mostly went to pay debts at the company store; and

Whereas, Labor strikes occurred, but only among workers of one ethnic group or another; segregated in camps by ethnicity, early on, the workers were unable to organize an effective strike against the sugar companies; and

Whereas, All workers on the plantation were not legally able to organize until the Hawai'i Labor Relations Act (also known as the "Little Wagner Act") was enacted to allow plantation field laborers to unionize; until then, the National Labor Relations Act (the "Wagner Act") specifically excluded agricultural workers from joining a union; and

Whereas, Under the leadership of the ILWU, the Great Sugar Strike of 1946 united sugar workers of all in a common struggle for better wages, benefits and working conditions; the ILWU organized workers at each sugar plantation as well as 6,000 contract laborers recruited from the Philippines to break the impending strike; and

Whereas, After 79 days on strike, the workers were able to win dignity and respect from management and a strong union to challenge the oligarchy of the Big Five; and

Whereas, The closure of Hawaii's last sugar plantation means the loss of 675 good-paying jobs on Maui; unionized agricultural workers are said to be the highest paid agricultural workers in the U.S.; and

Whereas, Sugar's legacy in Hawai'i will remain the values that were nurtured on the plantations among the workers and in their communities—values of hard work, cooperation, community, respect for work and others; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, The Democratic Party of Hawai'i recognizes the significant role that the sugar industry has played in Hawai'i and the loss to the State in revenues, jobs, and a unique way of life; and be it

*Ordered*, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Democratic members of the Hawai'i State Legislature and members of the Hawai'i Congressional delegation.

## BUS/AG 2016-03 **Calling for Truthful Labeling of Hawai'i-Grown Coffee**

Whereas, Hawai'i is the ONLY REGION ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD to permit the use of its regional names in labeling one of its heritage crops (coffee) with only 10% genuine content; and

Whereas, The unique climatic and soil conditions of Hawai'i are ideal for cultivation of coffee; and

Whereas, The care, skill and cultivation practices of Hawai'i coffee farmers, most of whom operate small family-owned farms, have resulted in recognition of Hawai'i's coffees as among the world's premier specialty coffees; and

Whereas, Existing Hawai'i statutes allow consumers to be misled into believing that packages containing 90% foreign-grown coffee are Hawai'i-grown coffee—thereby damaging the reputation for quality which Hawai'i coffee farmers have built over generations; and

Whereas, By way of example, HRS 486-120.6 permits the use of the “Kona” name on packaging of a coffee blend having as little as 10% Kona-grown coffee and 90% from unidentified foreign countries; and

Whereas, By way of further example, the writers of Consumers Reports in their review of Kona coffees confused “Kona Blends” with “Kona Coffee” and concluded that Kona coffee can be “second rate” on the basis of this common 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 California provides to Napa Valley grape growers, as Idaho provides to Idaho potato farmers, and as Georgia provides to Vidalia onion farmers: and

Whereas, The Hawai'i Legislature made a factual finding in Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 102 (2007) that “existing labeling requirements for Kona coffee causes fraud and confusion and degrades the ‘Kona coffee’ name”; and

Whereas, The Hawai'i County Council in October 2014 unanimously adopted Resolution No. 501-14 asking that the Legislature enact legislation requiring a minimum of 51% genuine content for labeling or advertising blends of coffee grown in the State of Hawai'i and that the origin of all coffee in such blends be prominently identified on the label; now therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i rescind resolution BUS 2012-14, and replace it with the following: be it

*Resolved*, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i requests that the members of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i in the State Legislature introduce and vigorously work for the adoption of the legislative reforms to HRS 486-120.6 requested in Hawai'i County Council Resolution No. 501-14 requiring a minimum of 51% genuine content for labeling or advertising blends of coffee grown in the State of Hawai'i and that the origin of all coffee in such blends be prominently and clearly identified on the primary display panel of the label; and be it further

*Resolved*, That this legislation be included in the Democratic Party's “2017 Legislative Package” and that the Department of Agriculture and all members of the Democratic delegation in the State Legislature vigorously support the adoption of this legislation; and be it further

*Ordered*, That copies of this Resolution be transmitted to each Democratic Party member of the State Legislature, the Department of Agriculture Chair and Governor of the State of Hawai'i.