

MINUTES of Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

Meeting date: December 12, 2012

Call to order: A General membership meeting of the Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party on December 12, 2012. Meeting started at 6:30 pm.

In attendance: Wayne Takata, Lisa Rey, Mike DeWeert, Cynthia Rezendes, Nate Ortiz, Charlie Ice, Marjorie Zeigler, Francis Chun, Laura Thielan, Mary Guinger, Juanita Kawamoto via internet Robin Kaye.

Treasurer's report:

- General fund \$1502.20; Reserve fund \$210.00
- Mike DeWeert is now officially treasurer.

Secretary report: Minutes of November 14, 2012 are unanimously approved.

Chair report:

- We are going to look at our 9 priorities and make sure that we are still in agreement with them.
- Laura Thielan is here today to present to us what her agenda will be for the upcoming session.
- Caucus has an at large vacancy due to resignation.
Robin Kaye has nominated Bill Sager and Lisa Rey has seconded.
Motion is approved with unanimous approval - Bill Sager is executive member at large.
- Walter Riddy interested in Molokai district representative position.
Molokai may have additional candidates come forward.

Laura Thelien Senator elect- Topic of discussion was her priorities for the session coming.

- Biggest issue to address is trend to bypass zoning and land use and auction of land leases -Senate Bill 2927 zoning, etc.
- If you exempt public hearings and land use commission simple board hearing does not afford the opportunity to weigh in. Dialogue during public testimony gives opportunity to make better decisions and more informed decisions. In support of repeal of act 55.
- Dept of Hawaiian homelands/ aloha tower, 4 mil acres.
Potential to move on prime ag. land, cultural lands.
Leases can be done behind closed doors if allowed to bypass auction/bidding.

Questions and Discussion followed:

- Repeal vs. amendment of act 55-?
Agency will have the power to change rules within themselves so therefore addressing their broad power by amending rules is not enough.
Flow chart plan of hearings can be ignored and no laws will prevent them from doing what they want.
- Facebook and blog to keep NGO's and constituents informed.
- Ability of PLDC to override DLNR? Laura does not think PLDC can override,

opportunity of public hearing on transfer only.

- Undersea cable position?
Giant project run by HECO- monopolistic power company is not the way to go.
Multiple sources and diversity and on island is what she would favor
Disappointed in amendment at Democratic party convention, host island should benefit but this did not get approved.
- In order to pass repeal majority vote in each house to get it to Governor. 2/3 in each house needed if Governor vetoes.

FOOD AND FARM SUSTAINABLE COMMITTEE Juanita Kawamoto

(Feed mills were a success and can be taken off list now)

1. Establish school garden farms and garden educators bring the stem system to light.
2. Long term Ag. lease for small farms needs to be resolved.

Added this year to include that we focus on community concerns and values including environmental and cultural impacts.

3. Adding this year to promote small farms and label GMO
4. Agricultural Development Corp ADC- no system to grant leases, maybe a management audit - as it stands anything goes - they are also exempt from public auction.

(At Agricultural briefing main issue was food safety)

These 4 items were approved unanimously

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE Mike DeWeert

Bike safety- complete streets has passed

1. **Barrel tax**
2. **Emphasis on solar -smart grid & storage and other ways to make solar more effective**
 - We have seen wind energy project being exempted who also don't make economic sense
 - Assault on solar tax credits is a problem. Lawsuit by Earthjustice has been filed and we will follow its progress.
 - Perhaps what we need are mean tested solar tax credits based on gross income
 - Please read Mike's white paper on solar vs. wind -too technical for public

- Move HECO to distributive entity instead of energy producer
- HECO did thankfully remove the 15% restriction

These two items approved unanimously

Bill Sager NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. Invasive species quarantine needs to be funded or we will be in big trouble

Bill recommends everyone to use eg branch tracking system- user friendly and effective.

Also recommends the policy ninja platform developed locally and free - Bill willing to train and assist if needed

(Shoreline setback on the big island removed from list- Phil on big island-not sure home much traction she has with that)

We were successful with plastic bag bill.

2. Still need to address Styrofoam, which is equally bad (or worse) for wildlife -

3. Near shore fisheries reefs discussed by Wayne - Hawaii has always been supported by our oceans- disconnect between what we invest in our ocean management and what we get from it. Enforcement dolcare is the enforcer for DLNR- however poor infrastructure how can the positions within agencies be rearranged to fill needs and gaps. - We need a planning that is long term and not reactionary

4. Follow up rain follows the forest -proposed to double 10% of forest management -we have been working on water conservation and so usage has flattened

These four approved unanimously.

Announcement by Marjorie Ziegler inviting us to attend ELN meeting

Meeting is adjourned at 8:43pm