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# Isle Republicans finesse abortion issue

## **The GOP state convention adopts a plank to oppose partial-birth abortions**

By Mike Yuen  
Star-Bulletin



Finessing what in the past would have been divisive debates on hot-button issues such as abortion, Hawaii Republicans have approved a party platform that they believe will appeal to a wide range of voters.

"The idea is to attract a moderate and large constituency, said party Chairwoman Donna Alcantara as isle Republicans concluded their three-day state convention yesterday. "We did not want to do anything to hurt our candidates. We wanted to do everything to help them."

The platform includes calls for reducing taxes and fees, consolidating government administrative functions and decentralizing the statewide public-school system.

It backs the right of "all working men and women to join labor organizations without fear of threat or intimidation," and urges unions "to uphold the dignity of their workers."

The platform also supports "traditional family values," parental consent so that teen-agers can consider "alternative solutions to abortion" and the right of isle residents to vote -- as they will in November -- on a constitutional amendment allowing legislators to ban same-sex marriages.

A plank opposing partial-birth abortion was resurrected during an emergency meeting of the platform committee yesterday and adopted by the convention. The special meeting was called because two members said they did not know of an earlier gathering in which it was

decided to not include the plank.

But unlike previous years, the abortion debate did not erupt into hostility or lead to walkouts. That's because party leaders stressed that the platform should simply state positions -- not outline a particular course of action.

"We don't say we ban it," platform Chairman Len Alcantara, the party chairwoman's husband, said of partial-birth abortion. "We don't say how we would deal with it. We just say we don't like it."

Waikiki delegate Gladys Hayes, a retired businesswoman, added: "The name of the game is to win -- not your personal feelings, religious or otherwise. We don't want to see floor fights. Like the Democrat Party, we've got to learn to pull together."

Other delegates insisted that controversial social issues won't hurt Linda Lingle, the GOP gubernatorial candidate and Maui mayor, because her own campaign material states her opposition to same-sex marriage and partial-birth abortion.

The state party platform is inclusive and very much in line with what the public feels, said Lingle and former state Senate minority leader Michael Liu of Kaneohe.

"I think," Lingle added, "it is also significant that someone like me can run on pro-choice except for those two (platform) restrictions (on abortion), which is parental notification for minors and a ban on partial birth. But beyond that, I'm pro-choice."

Andy Blom, the executive director of Hawaii Right to Life who attended the convention as a delegate's guest, was "delighted" by the inclusion of the plank opposing partial-birth abortions. "I'm very proud to see a party stand up and say this is wrong, and to also say that you have a home here," Blom said.

North Shore delegate Antya Miller argued against having the procedure mentioned in this year's platform because partial-birth abortions have not been performed in Hawaii.

State Rep. Gene Ward of Hahaione Valley said: "This is what the Reagan revolution was all about: taking the social conservative and the fiscal conservative and saying, 'Hey, if we unite, we can lead.' Let us not divide ourselves. Let us not belittle what we both bring to the table from the social side, from the fiscal side."

Two years ago, pro-life delegates narrowly failed to insert a plank opposing partial-birth abortions.

GOP convention delegates also said they will be keeping an eye on the three-day Democratic state meeting that begins Friday. If former Lt. Gov. Tom Gill, a supporter of same-sex marriage, is elected state Democratic Party chairman, it will be a boost for Republicans, they said. Gill as the Democratic Party leader would symbolize a party out of touch with the mainstream, they maintained.

Gill is running against retired state appellate Judge Walter Heen. As a substitute associate justice in 1993, Heen authored the dissenting opinion when the Hawaii Supreme Court rejected the state's request for a reconsideration of an earlier ruling that would set the

groundwork for legalizing gay marriages.

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## Cayetano opens HQ, jabs at Lingle

By Mike Yuen  
Star-Bulletin



About an hour after the Republican state convention ended yesterday, Democratic Gov. Ben Cayetano officially opened his campaign headquarters on South King Street at Kalakaua Avenue.

Cayetano drew a crowd that was more than double the 511 delegates who attended the GOP gathering in Waikiki.

Cayetano campaign senior adviser Charles Toguchi said the opening was not timed to steal the thunder of the Republican convention.

When Cayetano addressed his supporters, he again accused Linda Lingle, a GOP gubernatorial candidate and Maui mayor, of engaging in the "politics of blame."

Interviewed later, Cayetano said: "If you take this Legislature, which gave me a difficult time, just imagine that it would be totally unworkable if it had to deal with a Republican governor who does not respect them."

**FASI QUIET** Former longtime Mayor Frank Fasi, who is challenging Lingle for the Republican gubernatorial nomination, did not have a significant presence.

Other than addressing delegates Saturday, he did nothing. He did not make any other appearances. He did not host a meet-Frank Fasi reception. He did not work the crowd. There was only one delegate wearing a Fasi T-shirt, which appeared to be from his 1994 gubernatorial campaign in which he ran as a third-party candidate.

He had no volunteers with him. Other than his two-page biography that was included in each delegate's folder, there were no Fasi campaign brochures.

During his speech, he said he felt like David walking into a den of lions. Fasi shared another gut feeling: delegates were unlikely to be swayed by him.

**NUMBER 2 SPOT** In the Republican primary for lieutenant governor, former state Sen. Stan Koki will be stressing his business background and how it will help in boosting the state's economy.

Michael Liu, Koki's primary opponent, will be emphasizing his "length of public service,"

which includes stints as state Senate minority leader and deputy under secretary and assistant secretary of Agriculture in President Bush's administration.

Koki, who ran a carpet and drapery business before selling his majority interest in 1990, said he knows what it takes to succeed in business and how business is treated by the state. "What I believe is that government should get out of the way and let the free enterprise system succeed," he said.

Liu also said Koki "disappeared" following his loss in the 1994 primary for lieutenant governor, and did not testify on behalf of tax relief for small businesses during the subsequent legislative sessions.

**KUROIWA ABSENT** Noticeably absent from the GOP convention was James Kuroiwa Jr., who resigned as Honolulu County chairman shortly before the convention opened. He cited "philosophical differences" with state party Chairwoman Donna Alcantara.

Alcantara and Bob Chung, Makiki district chairman, said it was because Kuroiwa wanted to unilaterally oust Chung.

While Kuroiwa wasn't present, his son was. Computer consultant Jared Kuroiwa is running for the Nuuanu-Punchbowl House seat that is open because the incumbent, House Republican leader Quentin Kawanakoa, is making a congressional bid.

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