



# A NEW DAY IN HAWAII

## Economy and Jobs An Economy of the People

In 2010, the choice is clear. We can rebuild our economy around the interests of Hawaii's middle class, or we can reelect Hawaii's economic status quo.

My economic plan is about good jobs, greater financial security, economic opportunity, and long-term sustainability. It's about the Hawaii that is always talked about, but has never been realized because it takes collaboration, political courage, and leadership that has been lacking.

The other plan for Hawaii's economy is to keep managing our way through more of the same, where we cater to the interests of the wealthy for a short-term gain, and export our children to pursue their long-term dreams elsewhere. It's economics-as-usual in Hawaii and we literally cannot afford it anymore.

Hawaii's economy is not a business enterprise for a few executives in power to oversee.

Hawaii's economy is about you, your family, your job, your ability to pay the rent and utilities, put food on the table, save for retirement, put your kids in college, and take good care of your aging parents. The economy is about whether you can survive a job loss, a furlough, heavy credit card debt, or an unexpected illness. The economy is measured by your small business and whether or not you will have a great month of sales. The economy is also about whether you can buy your own house, start your business, and imagine your children making a future for themselves in Hawaii.

By these measures, you don't need any statistics to tell you that the economy of Hawaii can do much better.

As Governor, I will set a course and then put my trust in you—the construction workers and engineers who will build our new infrastructure; the entrepreneurs and small business owners who will keep dollars circulating; the scientists and technicians who will harness clean energy; the farmers and fishermen who will produce our food; the principals and teachers who will educate our children; the health care professionals who will prevent costly illnesses; the public service employees who will make government work efficiently again; and every single working person serving as the backbone of Hawaii's economy. Leadership you can trust means looking out for you and your family, focusing our limited public resources on the important priorities, and making a firm commitment to getting the job done.

### Underlying economic problems addressed in our plan

- Too much importing of energy, food, goods and services
- Lost opportunities with federal resources that can stimulate the economy now
- Not enough good paying jobs
- An underperforming education system
- People lack financial assets
- Obsolete infrastructure
- Woeful business climate
- Short-term thinking
- Concentration of political power and wealth

## SAVE AND CREATE JOBS NOW, AND SEED THE GOOD JOBS OF THE FUTURE

- **Utilize federal stimulus dollars right away.** An Abercrombie Administration will use its relationships and knowledge of Washington, D.C. to capture hundreds of millions of dollars left on the table for projects in transportation, housing, healthcare, education, energy, environmental sustainability, technology, agriculture, and small business. This means immediate jobs in all sectors of the economy.
- **Fund the construction of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century infrastructure.** We will form public-private partnerships, get federal resources, and work with the Department of Defense to build a modern infrastructure in Hawaii focusing on the energy grid, information, irrigation, and transportation, including supporting Honolulu's rail system the right way. This means more jobs. It also means that residents, students, entrepreneurs, farmers, and retirees will have systems built around their needs.
- **Build green workforce housing through public-private partnerships.** By providing public lands, negotiating project labor agreements, and working with private developers, we will build environmentally friendly housing quicker and of highest quality. This means more housing inventory that working people can really afford, good jobs, and wages that will circulate in the economy.
- **Support small business and entrepreneurship.** Small businesses are the heart of the local economy. They create jobs and keep money circulating. Small businesses need a more business-friendly regulatory environment, more training and education, a fair and transparent procurement system, and more help marketing for export and establishing local markets.
- **Infuse technology and innovation throughout the economy.** At last, we will have leadership fully committed to technology and innovation in Hawaii, that will set firm goals, increase technology in schools, enhance the economic development role of the university system, create smart incentives for capital formation, generate sustainable dual-use technology businesses, and better use

technology in government. This means higher quality and more convenient services for you, and high paying jobs now and in the future so people can make a good living at home in Hawaii.

## INCREASE SELF-RELIANCE AND PROTECT OUR RESOURCES

- **Produce our own energy.** We will overhaul our outdated regulatory system by creating a Hawaii Energy Authority that will put clean energy projects on a fast track. When we produce our own energy, we will keep billions of dollars in our own economy and create green local jobs. By increasing funds available for rebates and conservation, you will save money on utility bills, protect yourself from future spikes in foreign energy costs, and protect Hawaii's environment.
- **Grow our own food.** Just a 10% increase in the amount of food we produce for ourselves could mean keeping \$300 million in the local economy. It will be worth the investment to protect important agricultural land, rebuild the irrigation infrastructure, improve agricultural education, and build markets for locally grown food. Healthy, locally grown food will become more affordable and accessible to your family, and will help keep money circulating in our economy.
- **Advance sustainable tourism and development.** Hawaii's visitor and hospitality industry will remain critical to our economic future if done well. But we cannot keep pouring money into marketing Hawaii while neglecting to make improvements to the "product." We need to repair decrepit public facilities, design and build greener buildings, invest in vibrant culture and arts, and restore our natural environment. This will create economic benefits that ripple through the economy. And it also means you and generations to come will be able to enjoy and to do your part in nourishing the natural environment and cultural diversity of Hawaii.

## INVEST IN THE SKILLS, HEALTH, AND WEALTH OF WORKING FAMILIES

- **Make an unprecedented investment in early childhood.** Early childhood health and education is one of the best economic investments of public dollars that we can make. We need to put early childhood support at the top of the public agenda if we want long-term growth in the economy. We will combine fragmented parts of various agencies into a Department of Early Childhood to focus our efforts. That means all children and grandchildren will get a good start in life, and we will not be left paying for problems down the road that can be avoided at a much lower cost by providing services to very young at-risk children.
- **Achieve excellence in lower and higher education.** Transforming our economy requires transforming education and bringing about excellence in the public schools, making sure college is accessible and affordable, developing scholarships and internship programs, and partnering with the private sector to ensure we are adequately preparing people for jobs right here. The university system will be an integral leader of Hawaii's economic transformation, with faculty taking the lead in pursuing more research grants to enhance our economy and serve our communities.
- **Ensure healthcare for all and support for elders.** Dealing with illness and disease is consuming too much time, productivity and money. There are growing disparities between people, and our population is rapidly aging—two conditions that are putting a strain on our economy. We need to get health costs under control by advancing preventive care, improving access to care, and rebuilding the public health infrastructure. We will also provide better support for older adults so they can live productive and dignified lives. And we will bring all parties together to discuss forming a collaborative, universal system of care that combines the best qualities of our private and public sectors to restore Hawaii to the forefront of healthcare. This means higher quality of life and less strain on your pocketbook.
- **Grow a resilient middle class through asset building.** Through innovative policies and public-

private partnerships, we will create realistic pathways for working people to enter, stay, and advance in the middle class by helping households build financial assets. We will do this by increasing financial education efforts, creating incentives to save for retirement, helping people save for college, making home ownership and business ownership more realistic, and cracking down on predatory lending practices. With more financial assets, you will have financial security, more economic options, and the ability to leave a legacy for your children.

## REBUILD CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT AND HOW TAX DOLLARS ARE SPENT

- **Develop stronger partnerships.** Government has a critical role in helping the economy run smoothly and looking out for the interests of all people. In Hawaii, we need state government to be a better partner with the federal government so we can be at the forefront of President Obama's agenda in areas like education, infrastructure, healthcare, and energy. And government must work collaboratively with the private sector to revamp outdated permitting and regulatory processes that are too slow or costly for businesses. This will bring more funds into Hawaii, generate more economic opportunities, and improve our business climate.
- **Improve transparency and implement procurement reform.** Politics has overwhelmed the process of bidding for and performing work for the government. We must have a government procurement system that is fair, based on merit, and free from political pressuring. There must also be transparency in government so people know that their economic interests are being represented, not just the interests of a powerful few.
- **Make government lead by example.** State government needs to put its weight behind its economic proposals. That means leading by example in buying local, conserving energy, being a good environmental steward, creating family-friendly workplaces, providing customer-friendly service, and infusing technology and innovation into operations. This will mean improved

government services for you and for businesses so that our economy runs more smoothly and we achieve the big goals that we set for ourselves.