



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII'**  
**STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE**

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**TESTIMONY  
OF  
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ADMINISTRATOR  
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE**

**TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE  
ON  
FINANCE  
FEBRUARY 20, 2025, 10:00 AM**

**HOUSE BILL 1293, HD1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 1293, HD1. The State Procurement Office (SPO) opposes this version of this bill. The SPO provides the following comments:

The proposed language in the HD1 version does not address the procedure(s) for purchases exceeding \$25,000 to less than \$100,000, which is contrary to the intent of the bill and will thus lead to confusion for buyers. The SPO recommends that the procurement levels be simplified to assist the department in this procurement and to provide requirements to ensure compliance, accountability, and transparency:

- The word "local" is added to the term "packaged food products" for clarity.
- Procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000 shall be exempt from the requirement to conduct procurements through an electronic system.
- No less than three written quotes are required for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000, with the exception of rural communities. For schools in rural communities, no less than two written quotes are required for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000
- All awards of \$2,500 must be on the Hawaii Awards and Notice Data System (HANDS) or similar Department of Education procurement platform
- All awards of \$2,500 or more shall be compliant with section 103D-310(c)
- The SPO may request data from the department to evaluate the efficacy of this Act, pursuant to section 103D-212.
- The term "quotes" shall replace "notification."

The SPO recommends that Section 2, page 2, lines 17-21, and page 3 lines, 1 – 10, read as follows:

**§302A – Local edible produce and packaged local food products procurement; small purchases.** Notwithstanding section 103D-305(c) and any law to the contrary, procurements of less than \$100,000 for local edible produce and packaged local food products for the department shall be exempt from the requirement to conduct procurements through an electronic system

and shall instead be subject to no less than three written quotes for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000; provided that the department may allow for no less than two written quotes for procurements of less than \$100,000 for local edible produce and packaged local food products to supply schools in rural communities, as determined by the department; provided further that if the department is unable to receive the required number of written quotes as required by this section, written justification shall be provided and kept by the department in the procurement file. All awards exceeding \$2,500 shall be posted electronically on the Hawaii Awards and Notice Data System (HANDS), or similar department of education procurement platform, and shall be compliant with section 103D-310(c). The State Procurement Office may request data from the department to evaluate the efficacy of this Act.

The department must exercise due diligence to ensure that agencies are not engaging in parceling, which is the artificial division of goods so as to intentionally circumvent the procurement process.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/20/2025

**Time:** 10:00 AM

**Location:** 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Bill Title:** HB 1293, HD1 RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
PROCUREMENT.

**Purpose of Bill:** Exempts Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than a certain amount from the electronic procurement system requirement. Requires at least three written quotes for Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts. Requires at least two written quotes for Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts for certain schools in rural communities. Sunsets 6/30/2028. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on HB 1293, HD 1.

Adjusting the Department's small purchase procurement capacity temporarily by increasing the threshold of \$100,000 for small purchase procurement, will help further support the goal of 30% locally sourced foods purchased by 2030. This will allow for the unencumbered purchase of locally produced foods from small businesses. The process proposed in this bill will allow us to purchase items that currently are unavailable from our distributors such as poi and limu.

However, the Department recommends that the committee revert the language added in the HD 1 back to the original version of the bill.

The Department appreciates the language in the bill that allows for a written justification in the instances where the required quotes are not able to be generated as a result of the limited number of vendors that can be a particular problem in our more rural communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify with comments on this measure.



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February 20, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1293, HD1**  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1293, HD1**, which allows the Department of Education to procure local edible produce and packaged food products under a certain dollar amount without using an electronic procurement system. It also requires the department to obtain written quotes for purchases within specific price ranges, with considerations for rural schools.

Hawai'i's Farm to School program is an essential initiative that improves student nutrition, supports local farmers and ranchers, and strengthens food security. Under Act 175, SLH 2021, the state has committed to sourcing at least 30 percent of school meals from local food sources by 2030. However, achieving this goal has been challenging due to procurement regulations that favor large, out-of-state suppliers over local farmers.

HB 1293, HD1 addresses this issue by streamlining the procurement process for the Department of Education. By exempting smaller purchases from the electronic system and requiring written quotes for mid-range purchases, the bill makes it easier for local farmers and ranchers to supply fresh food to Hawai'i's schools. The flexibility given to rural schools further ensures that they can access locally grown products even when fewer suppliers are available.

Expanding DOE's local food procurement will help create a stable and predictable market for Hawai'i's farmers. Many producers hesitate to scale up their operations due to uncertainty in demand. By simplifying the procurement process, HB 1293, HD1 encourages long-term investment in local agriculture, benefiting both farmers and students.

To fully support this initiative, HFB encourages additional efforts to assist local farmers and ranchers in navigating the procurement system. Educational workshops, technical assistance, and direct collaboration between DOE and local producers will further increase participation and ensure that Hawai'i-grown food reaches more students across the state.

We respectfully urge the committee to pass HB 1293, HD1 to strengthen Hawai'i's Farm to School program and increase the availability of fresh, locally grown food for students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:45:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support for this Bill, that has been so long in the making. Let's support our local farmers and our keiki, it's a win win. Whatever it takes now is time for this action. Mahalo.



February 19, 2025

Committee on Education  
Hawai'i State Legislature

Subject: Strong Support for HB1293, HD1 – Raising the DOE's Small Purchase Procurement Limit

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of Ho'ōla Farms, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Hawai'i's agricultural community, food security, and veteran farmers, to express our strong support for HB1293, HD1. This bill is a critical step in ensuring that our keiki receive fresh, local, and nutritious food while also strengthening the livelihoods of local farmers who work tirelessly to feed our communities.

As an organization actively engaged in farm training and local food distribution, we have seen firsthand the significant impact that purchasing locally grown food has—not only on the children it nourishes, but also on the farmers who now have the opportunity to supply our schools. Increasing the Department of Education's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, in alignment with other state departments, will be a game-changer for our local food system.

Currently, the \$25,000 threshold creates unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles that restrict the DOE's ability to procure locally sourced foods. The burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements hinder efficiency and create barriers that prevent small and mid-sized local farms from participating in school food programs. By raising the limit, HB1293, HD1 will:

- Streamline the purchasing process for local food.
- Eliminate barriers for farmers who want to sell to schools.
- Expand market access for Hawai'i's agricultural producers.
- Help achieve the state's goal of sourcing 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6).

This bill is not just about procurement policies—it is about investing in Hawai'i's future. By empowering schools to purchase directly from local farmers, we keep food dollars circulating within our state, support economic resilience, and provide our children with fresh, high-quality meals that fuel their learning and well-being.



On behalf of Ho'ōla Farms, I urge you to pass HB1293, HD1 and ensure that our keiki—and our farmers—have the resources they need to thrive.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Emmons".

Emily Emmons  
Executive Director, Ho'ōla Farms  
[Contact Information]



## HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS  
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University of Hawai'i at Hilo

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Dina Shek, JD  
Medical-Legal Partnership  
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai  
HMSA

JoAnn Tsark, MPH  
John A. Burns School of Medicine, Native  
Hawaiian Research Office

## HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a  
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &  
Evaluation

Community Health  
Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Network

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &  
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: February 19, 2025

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

RE: Support for HB 1293 HD1, Relating to Department of Education  
Procurement

Hrg: Thursday, February 20, 2025, 10:00 am, Conference Room 308

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Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>1</sup> (HIPHI) works to advance policy and systems change to reduce disparities and improve the health of Hawai'i residents. HIPHI is home to and testifies here on behalf of the Hawai'i Farm to School Network. Hawai'i Public Health Institute and the Hawai'i Farm to School Network appreciate the opportunity to provide **strong support for HB 1293 HD1**, which introduces flexible procurement procedures for the Department of Education (DOE), including the requirement of at least two written quotes for certain purchases supplying schools in rural communities and a sunset clause to assess the effectiveness of these changes.

### More Straightforward to Work with Local Farmers

This bill increases flexibility for local food purchases from small and medium-sized farmers, particularly those in rural areas. Rural schools often face additional challenges, such as limited access to technology or fewer available vendors. Reducing the number of required quotes acknowledges these barriers and supports more equitable access to local procurement opportunities.

### Local Guidelines

HB 1293 requires the DOE to establish procurement guidelines with a geographic preference for locally grown or raised products and exempts purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products under \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system of the DOE. This smaller regional procurement model could be modeled after the School

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<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.



Food Authority (SFA) of New Mexico, which is notable for its success in smaller regional procurement from small to medium farms. To learn from this SFA model and to assess what staff positions, laws, and infrastructure are necessary, DOE will grant permission and allocate funds for a DOE procurement staff member, a dietitian, and a farm-to-school coordinator to travel to this SFA to study the smaller regional procurement model.<sup>2</sup>

### **Increased Accessibility**

Additionally, HB 1293 proposes increasing DOE-exempt purchases from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for the small purchase procurement program. The proposed policy increases the Department of Education's small purchase procurement threshold from \$25,000 to \$100,000, streamlining the purchase of locally sourced foods. This change supports Hawai'i's farm-to-school initiatives and the goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.<sup>3</sup> It reduces administrative burdens, allowing schools to acquire fresh, nutritious Hawai'i-grown produce quickly. The policy strengthens local agriculture, boosts economic self-sufficiency, and improves student health by providing fresher meals while advancing sustainability and reducing reliance on imported foods.

### **Uniform Purchase Limit**

It is important to note that all other Departments have a \$100,000 threshold (e.g., Department of Agriculture (DOA), Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Human Services (DHS), etc.). DOE is the only one with the lower \$25,000 threshold. This lower threshold dramatically limits the ability of schools to purchase local foods, as the amount demanded is usually well above this amount.<sup>4</sup>

### **Accountability Recommendations**

Furthermore, the State Procurement Office (SPO) shall suggest to DOE's School Food Services Branch (SFSB) financial system accountability recommendations to reduce the risk of financial mistakes that run afoul of parceling. SPO is welcome to review SFSB's progress in implementing SPO's suggested financial safeguard protocols.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> New Mexico Public Education Department, "Farm to School Procurement Guidelines."

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/student-success-wellness/nutrition/farm-to-school/>

<sup>3</sup> Hawai'i Farm to School Resource Hub - Advocacy, legislation, & policy. (n.d.).

<https://sites.google.com/hiphi.org/hawaiif2s/advocacy-legislation-policy>

<sup>4</sup> Hawaii DOE | Selling goods and services to the DOE. (n.d.).

<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/Vendors/Selling/Pages/home.aspx#:~:text=Schools%20and%20offices%20are%20authorized.or%20like%20goods%20and%20services.>

<sup>5</sup> Small Purchases Procurement method. (n.d.).

<https://spo.hawaii.gov/for-vendors/vendor-guide/methods-of-procurement/goods-services-construction/small-purchases-procurement-method/>



### **More Regionalized Purchasing**

For several years, the Hawai'i Farm to School Network, HIPHI, and partner organizations have advocated for regionalizing local food purchases. For example, bananas to be served in school breakfasts on Kaua'i should be purchased from farmers on that island. This arrangement fosters stronger relationships between the school community and local farmers, increasing nutritional education and knowledge of locally grown and raised foods among Hawai'i's students. HB 1293 will positively impact the health of our keiki and contribute to the development of sustainable food systems in Hawai'i.

### **Meeting our 30% by 2030 Goal**

Under Act 175, the DOE is required to purchase locally grown food as 30% of total procurement by 2030 and 50% by 2050.<sup>6</sup> The added flexibility in HB 1293 will help achieve these goals and support students and their families in understanding the importance of local food systems. Additionally, a sunset clause ensures that the policy can be evaluated and adjusted to meet the evolving needs of Hawai'i's schools and agricultural communities.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1293.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kawika Kahiapo', written over a horizontal line.

Kawika Kahiapo  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute  
Hawai'i Farm to School Network Program Coordinator

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<sup>6</sup> Tagami, M.(2023, December 12). Hawaii Education Department takes 'Big first step' to increase local food in schools. *Honolulu Civil Beat*.  
<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/12/hawaii-education-department-takes-big-first-step-to-increase-local-food-in-schools/>



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Thursday, February 20, 2025 — 10:00 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1293 HD 1, Relating to Department of Education Procurement.**

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mariah Yoshizu, and I am the Government Affairs Associate at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy, clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports HB 1293 HD 1**, which exempts Department of Education (DOE) purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than a certain amount from the electronic procurement system requirement; requires at least three written quotes for DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts; and requires at least two written quotes for DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts for certain schools in rural communities.

Ulupono supports the State's farm-to-institution efforts, including the DOE's Farm to School Program, which has the potential to leverage the department's significant buying power to become one of the state's largest purchasers of local food (perhaps one day the largest) while also shaping the tastes, attitudes and eating habits of Hawai'i's keiki for healthy outcomes. The State has committed to local food procurement goals through 2050 (including the DOE's own statutorily required goal of 30% local by 2030), and it is important to provide opportunities for local producers to participate in institutional purchasing.

While the DOE's regional kitchen construction plans advance, the fact remains that these facilities won't be operational for many years. The department should seize current opportunities to strengthen relationships with local food producers. By engaging farmers now, we can align DOE's food requirements with local agricultural production and build supply chain capacity. This proactive approach not only serves today's students better

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



than waiting for kitchen completion, but also sets up the regional kitchen strategy for long-term success — ensuring a robust supply chain is ready when these facilities open.

By expanding the small purchase exemption for the DOE, schools across the state will have an additional tool now to procure fresh products from local farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Mariah Yoshizu  
Government Affairs Associate

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 3:50:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debbie Millikan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Committee: Finance (FIN)**

**Hearing: February 20, 2025, 10am, Conference Room 308**

**Position: Strong Support of HB1293**

**Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Finance Committee Members,**

**I know firsthand that our youth want locally grown, fresh foods in their school meals. If the barrier is procurement, they see it as an easy fix- fix the system. For years as a garden educator, I saw young students grow and eat food directly from their campus garden/farm and love it. Their next question is always the same, “why can’t we eat like this at school lunch?” We can do our part by working on the systems that prevent access to fresh and local.**

**Please support HB1293 to raise the Department of Education’s (DOE) small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, in alignment with all other state departments.**

**This procurement change is essential to meeting Hawai‘i’s goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (as mandated by Act 175, 2021 / HRS 302A-405.6) and more importantly to ensure our vision that every child in Hawai‘i has access to fresh, nutritious, locally grown food.**

**Please support our young people, and our farmers, by eliminating this huge barrier for local producers.**

**Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony,**

**Debbie Millikan**

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:24:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Delacruz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a public school teacher in the Hawaii DOE and my students deserve quality, nutritious meals. I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals. Mahalo for considering my testimony in strong support of this issue.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:29:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John A. H. Tomoso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

02-18-25

RE: HB1293 HD1

Aloha

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of [HB 1293, HD1](#), which would exempt DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system requirement. This will also eliminate a barrier that hinders its ability to purchase local foods and support its goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030. This is not only good for the nutrition and healthiness of our keiki in our schools, but also good for our own local agricultural economy!

Mahalo

John A H. Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

51 Kuula St

Kahului, Maui, Hawai'i 96732-2906

808-280-1749

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:31:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Winternitz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Members of the House Committee on Finance,*

*I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.*

Mahalo,

Elizabeth Winternitz

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:43:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nadia Hussain	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a parent of a student who attends public school and as a community dietitian working with families on how to reduce chronic illness, this bill is imperative to sourcing food more locally as these foods contain significantly more nutrients than imported foods. I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious but also culturally relevant and important meals. Mahalo for considering my testimony in strong support of this issue.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:46:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Noel Shaw	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please continue to support this bill and make more local food procurement possible by giving the DOE more spending power. Please also remember when you make these changes- you're impacting preschool aged children who share campuses and cafeterias with DOE schools. Those in the 0-5 age range are at an important developmental stage which includes palate development. If we expose them to a diversity of locally grown foods, we create a market of locally grown food eaters who have an easier time making healthy choices for the future. Further, making these products accessible at school may be the only space they experience them and thus it's important we investment in more local food procurement.

Let's put into motion the things we need to actualize our local food goals and let's make those investments with a knowing that our keiki are worthy!

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:14:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Arroyo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Support of HB1293 HD1**

To the Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I, April Arroyo, am writing in strong support of HB1293 HD1, a bill that would improve the Department of Education's (DOE) procurement process for local edible produce and packaged food products. This bill is a crucial step toward supporting local agriculture, enhancing the efficiency of procurement for our schools, and ensuring that all students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

The exemption of small purchases of local produce and packaged food products from the electronic procurement system is a practical solution that reduces unnecessary administrative burdens. By allowing these purchases to bypass the often cumbersome and time-consuming electronic procurement system, schools can more easily procure the fresh, local foods that are essential for student health and well-being. This will also create a more streamlined process for smaller local vendors who may not have the resources to navigate complex procurement systems.

Requiring at least three written quotes for purchases between certain amounts ensures fiscal responsibility, while also encouraging competition and transparency in the procurement process. At the same time, the provision that requires at least two written quotes for schools in rural communities recognizes the unique challenges faced by these schools. In rural areas, there are often fewer local suppliers, and it can be difficult for schools to obtain a sufficient number of competitive quotes. By lowering the threshold for rural schools, this provision ensures that they are not left behind in the pursuit of fresh, locally sourced foods.

This bill is an essential step toward supporting Hawaii's agricultural community, reducing the carbon footprint associated with food transportation, and improving the nutritional quality of school meals. It aligns with the state's broader goals of sustainability, food security, and local economic growth.

I urge you to support HB1293 HD1, as it will benefit our students, local farmers, and the overall well-being of our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
April Arroyo  
86 Poloahilani Place  
Makawao, HI 96768  
808-757-8176  
aearroyo@hawaii.edu

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:15:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Andrea Kaawaloa-Okita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.*

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:45:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Colette Vander Plas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to strongly support raising the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE’s ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai‘i’s goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals. Thank you for considering my testimony in support of this issue.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 8:45:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Absolutely feed the children!

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:16:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.*

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:19:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:22:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joni Kamiya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee members,

I am in support of this measure to help bring down the barriers for increasing more local food in our public schools. As a daughter of a lifelong farmer, we need these barriers removed to help make this a reality and this is just one step towards that process. This not only supports our farm and local people but also gives our keiki healthy options too.

Mahalo,

Joni Kamiya

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:38:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lauren Pokipala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals. Mahalo for considering my testimony in strong support of this issue.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 11:29:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
keira torres	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm Keira Torres a student from Castle High School and I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals. I hope you can help us and support this bill and allow us students, to be able to eat nutritious and healthier portions of food.

Mahalo.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 6:15:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Christa SMith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to voice my strong support for HB1293.

Increasing the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000 will align the DOE with all other state departments. This will also eliminate a barrier that hinders its ability to purchase local foods and support its goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.

This is essential to the health and wellbeing of our keiki, our climate goals and to ensure we are capable of feeding our population. This is a healthy, sustainable, culturally significant step in the right direction.

Mahalo nui,

Mary Christa Smith

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 6:28:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support. Thank you.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 6:58:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Zach Montizor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Finally a law being written that truly supports the tax paying citizens of this State. Families are struggling with the inflation and this bill will help the working household support thier children by ensuring a nutritious meal in school. This is the best bill ever that will help to truly support local aggriculture and business.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:08:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathryn Braun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. This will help support our local food producers, who can then expand production and reduce our dependence on imported foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6) and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods.*

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:17:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mollie Bruhn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.*

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:24:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tayli Kahoopii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:26:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairperson, Members of the Committee,

I strongly advocate for the elevation of the Department of Education’s (DOE) small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, a move that would bring it in line with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold is a significant bottleneck, hindering schools from efficiently sourcing fresh, locally grown food. With over **250 public schools** and an annual DOE food budget exceeding **\$50 million**, the existing limit forces schools into convoluted, time-consuming procurement processes for even modest purchases. This delay in accessing fresh food not only limits opportunities for local farmers but also hampers the nutritional needs of our students.

By increasing the threshold to \$100,000, the DOE can **purchase in larger, more efficient quantities**, reducing administrative costs and allowing more funds to be directed toward food rather than paperwork. Additionally, bulk purchasing will improve economies of scale, leading to lower per-unit costs and more competitive pricing from local vendors. This policy shift directly supports Hawai‘i’s goal of sourcing **30% of school food locally by 2030** (Act 175, 2021 / HRS 302A-405.6). It strengthens the economic viability of our agricultural sector.

This change, which translates to a **fourfold increase in potential contracts** for local farmers before encountering cumbersome procurement barriers, will empower them to plan, invest, and expand their operations with greater confidence. A more stable and predictable demand from schools will also reduce food waste and keep more money circulating within Hawai‘i’s economy, thereby strengthening our local farming community.

This common-sense adjustment brings DOE procurement in line with other state departments, eliminates unnecessary red tape, and ensures Hawai‘i’s students receive fresh, nutritious meals while supporting our local farming community. By passing this measure, you will not only be taking a crucial step toward a stronger, more sustainable food system for our keiki and our state, but also enhancing the committee's reputation as a forward-thinking and responsible entity. I strongly urge you to consider this proposal.

**Thank you for your unwavering leadership and commitment to shaping a brighter future for Hawai‘i.**

**Katy Parsons**

Castle High School Math & SPED Teacher

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 11:56:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Suzanne Fields	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings legislators:

I **strongly support** raising the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments.

The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE’s ability to purchase local foods.

This also supports Hawai‘i’s goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

We **MUST** do whatever we can to impact the need to import 85% of our food to Hawaii. Sourcing foods locally for the schools positively impacts the children, the farmers, and our community at large by reducing the use of imported, non-local foods.

Local food is fresher, healthier, and helps support sustainable agriculture!

Do the right thing and support this measure!

Suzanne Fields

Haiku, Maui

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 2:31:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richard Collins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill. Mahalo.

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**RE: Support for HB1293, Relating to DOE Procurement**

Dear Chair and Vice Chair,

I strongly support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Respectfully,  
Leigh Ann Lopez

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 4:54:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth A. Ho'oipo Pa Nakea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Elizabeth Pa Nakea**

**1644 Liholiho Street, Suite P**

**Honolulu, HI 96822**

**[panakealaw@me.com](mailto:panakealaw@me.com)**

**2/19/2025**

**House Committee on Finance  
Hawai'i State Legislature  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813**

**RE: STRONG SUPPORT for HB 1293, HD1 – Strengthening Farm-to-School Programs**

**Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,**

**I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1293, HD1, which seeks to raise the Department of Education’s (DOE) small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for local edible produce and packaged food products. This crucial measure will remove unnecessary barriers that currently hinder the DOE’s ability to purchase fresh, locally sourced foods, ensuring our keiki and school communities receive more nutritious and high-quality meals.**

**Act 175 (2021) set a goal of sourcing 30% of school food locally by 2030. However, as of School Year 2023-2024, only 5.43% of the DOE’s food purchases were locally sourced. The current procurement system poses a significant challenge, requiring extensive formal competition and public advertising for purchases above \$25,000. This administrative burden discourages local food procurement and prevents our schools from accessing the best, freshest ingredients available in Hawai’i.**

**Raising the small purchase threshold to \$100,000 will:**

- **Streamline the procurement process, allowing the DOE to work more effectively with local farmers and food producers.**
- **Support Hawai‘i’s agricultural economy, keeping more of our taxpayer dollars within the state.**
- **Reduce dependency on imported foods, strengthening food security and sustainability.**
- **Provide students, teachers, and staff with fresher, healthier meals that enhance learning and well-being.**

**Farm-to-school programs are an investment in our future. By making it easier for the DOE to purchase local foods, we are not only nourishing our keiki with the best possible meals but also fostering a resilient, self-sustaining food system in Hawai‘i.**

**I urge the Committee to PASS HB 1293, HD1 and take a meaningful step toward ensuring that our schools can meet the goal of sourcing 30% of food locally by 2030. Mahalo for your time and consideration.**

**Respectfully, Elizabeth Pa Nakea, Teacher, Castle High School**

**HB-1293-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 5:09:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
April Bautista	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I kindly ask that you support and pass tHB1293 HD1 out of FIN.

Mahalo,

April

April Kamilah Bagasao Bautista

Kalihi-Pālama