

HR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:22:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/1/2025 11:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Climate Protectors Hawaii **SUPPORTS** more local **fruits and vegetables** in schools, which would benefit keiki, farmers climate resilience, and the environment. The resolution properly calls for procurement of locally grown Native Hawaiian crops such as Kali, 'ualu, and ulu.

HR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 11:25:53 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/1/2025 11:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's a win, win, win - support our local farmers, improve our children's dietary health, promote food sovereignty for our State, and reduce our greenhouse gases by reducing the shipping of food to Hawaii. **STRONG** support for the action



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

April 1, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HCR 104 / HR 100
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO STRENGTHEN FARM-TO-
SCHOOL INITIATIVES

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
11:15 AM

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 HCR 104 / HR 100, which urges the Department of Education to strengthen farm-to-school initiatives.

HFB strongly supports the increased use of locally grown agricultural products, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, poultry, and value-added products in our schools and state facilities. We support the State's Farm-to-School goal of 30% by 2030, in accordance with Act 175, SLH 2021 as well as the Farm-to-State goals established in Act 176, SLH 2021.

Increased purchasing by DOE and other state departments will help address food security and food sustainability by creating demand for local farm products, which will result in farmers and ranchers growing more. It will also help provide more of Hawai'i's fresh and nutritious foods to our students and residents.

HFB is committed to working with the Department of Education and the other state entities to implement a procurement program that will allow Hawai'i farmers and ranchers to source more local products for Hawai'i's Farm to School and Farm to State programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



CLIMATE FUTURE FORUM

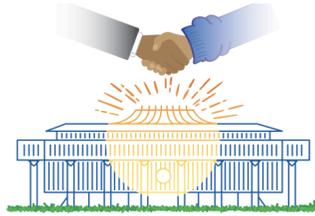
To: Representative Kahaloa, Chair
Representative Kusch, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture (AGR.)
Re: SUPPORT for HCR104 / HR100
Hearing: 04-01-2025, 11:15am

Dear Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

The Climate Future Forum's Regenerative Food Systems Working Group **strongly supports** HCR104, which urges the Department of Education to strengthen farm-to-school initiatives. Our purpose is to advance policies that build a resilient, equitable, and regenerative food system for Hawaii's future. Expanding farm-to-school programs is a key tool in addressing both climate change and food security while supporting local farmers, improving student nutrition, and building up our economy.

Hawai'i currently imports nearly 90% of its food, making us highly vulnerable to external disruptions. Farm-to-school programs decrease our dependence on imported foods while simultaneously supporting local agriculture. However, significant barriers, such as complex procurement policies, inconsistent farm-to-school partnerships, and limited infrastructure—prevent schools from purchasing locally sourced foods at scale. Investing in farm-to-school initiatives is an investment in Hawai'i's food sovereignty, economic resilience, and climate future. By strengthening these programs, we can provide nutritious meals to our keiki, reduce our carbon footprint, and support a thriving local agricultural economy. Hawai'i has already committed to sourcing 30% of school meal ingredients locally by 2030, a goal that demonstrates our state's dedication to food security and agricultural sustainability. However, reaching this target will require removing barriers that make it difficult for schools to buy local—including streamlining procurement policies, strengthening farmer-school connections, and increasing funding for farm-to-school programs.

The Climate Future Forum empowers youth (ages 14–26) to actively engage in shaping and advocating for climate policy and legislation. By bringing together youth, educators, policymakers, and nonprofits, the forum fosters meaningful dialogue on climate action priorities and provides actionable steps to address climate change in Hawai'i. Through discussions involving over 100 youth, the forum has identified key high-priority areas, including regenerative food systems,



CLIMATE FUTURE FORUM

climate and the economy, clean energy and transportation, climate justice and equity, and sustainable infrastructure.

Thank you very much for your support of youth engagement in climate policy. We urge you to pass HCR104 and take bold action to secure a sustainable, just, and resilient food system for Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Sincerely,

Maya Gaudiano, Erika Tien,
Regenerative Food Systems Policy Leads of Hawai'i Climate Future Forum



March 31, 2025

To: Chair Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair Matthias Kusch, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

From: Health Committee

Re: Testimony in Support of HCR 104 / HR 100 - Strengthen Farm-to-School Initiatives

Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025, **Time:** 11:15 a.m. Place: Via videoconference and Conference Room 325, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii is in strong support of HCR 104 / HR 100, which urges the Department of Education to strengthen farm-to-school initiatives. This resolution is an essential step toward promoting locally sourced food, supporting Hawaii's agricultural economy, and enhancing the health and education of our keiki.

- **Benefits of Farm-to-School Initiatives:**

- Encourages the consumption of fresh, locally grown produce in school meals, benefiting both students' health and the local agricultural community.
- Provides educational opportunities for students to learn about sustainable agriculture, nutrition, and environmental stewardship.
- Strengthens food security by reducing reliance on imported goods and increasing access to locally produced food.

- **Impact on Student Health and Education:**

- Integrating farm-to-school programs improves students' dietary habits, fostering lifelong healthy eating practices.
- Hands-on agricultural education promotes awareness of local farming practices and instills appreciation for Hawaii's unique ecosystems.

- **Support for Local Farmers and Economy:**

- Expanding farm-to-school initiatives creates consistent demand for locally grown products, bolstering the livelihoods of Hawaii's farmers.
- Encouraging partnerships between schools and agricultural producers strengthens community ties and economic resilience.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HCR 104 / HR 100. By passing this resolution, Hawaii reaffirms its commitment to supporting local agriculture, improving student health, and fostering sustainability through farm-to-school initiatives.

Mahalo nui loa,

Alan Burdick, Chair, Health Committee

Melodie Aduja, Vice Chair, Health Committee



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloe, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

HR 100/HCR 104

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 11:15 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council is in **support of HC 100/HCR 104**, which advocates for the expansion and support of farm-to-school programs in Hawaii.

Farm-to-school programs are vital not only for improving the nutrition of our keiki but also for promoting a deeper understanding of agriculture, sustainability, and the importance of supporting local economies. Hawaii has already committed to sourcing 30% of school meal ingredients locally by 2030, and we believe this is a crucial step toward strengthening our food systems. However, to turn this commitment into a tangible reality, farm-to-school programs are essential.

As an organization that represents the interests of Hawaii's cattle ranchers, we recognize the importance of providing students with fresh, local, and nutritious food, including locally raised beef. Farm-to-school programs allow students to connect with the food they eat and the people who produce it. Through hands-on experiences, students not only learn about the nutritional value of locally sourced ingredients, but they also gain insight into how farming and ranching are intertwined with the culture and sustainability of our islands.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



HR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 7:25:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/1/2025 11:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Pokipala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Department of Education has the responsibility of educating Hawai'i's children, and it may seem that investing in local farming is not necessary. Actually, the partnership between our public schools and local farms provide fresh food to the cafeteria's at our schools, they offer opportunities for our young people to experience farming, and this partnership may help shed light on the economic benefits local farming can provide our state.

HR-100

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 9:28:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/1/2025 11:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's time for the DOE to take serious and honest attempts towards implementing farm to school initiatives. In public testimony for legislation on this very issue, the DOE has provided ample excuses for their lack of progress, excuses not unlike "the dog ate my homework." Enough already.

HR-100

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 8:12:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/1/2025 11:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tinamarie Cura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimonial in Support of the Farm-to-School Initiatives:

I strongly support initiatives that recognize and support the Farm-to-School Programs, which provides a valuable opportunity to connect our students with fresh, locally grown food while supporting our local farmers and strengthening our communities.

The Farm to School Programs ensure that children have access to nutritious meals that promote their health and well-being. By incorporating fresh fruits, vegetables and other locally sources ingredients into school meals, we not only enhance the quality of the food served but also introduce students to the benefits of healthy eating habits.

Additionally, the program offers educational opportunities that foster a deeper understanding of agriculture, nutrition and sustainability. Students gain hands-on experience through school gardens, farm visits, and nutrition education, cultivating lifelong skills and appreciation for where their food comes from.

Supporting local farmers through this initiative also stimulates our local economy and reduces the environmental impact of long-distance food transportation. Working with our local farms aid in providing nutritious, balanced meals to our students which is not only essential for their physical health but also for their academic success and overall well-being. It's a win-win for our students, farmers and our communities.

By creating more programs with the concept of "Farm-to-Table" it will offer a greater variety of farm fresh fruits and vegetables to our children. Local, seasonal produce not only enhances the nutritional value of school meals but encourages the children to make healthier choices and helps our economy by working with our local farmers.

I urge lawmakers to continue to support and expand the Farm to School Programs. Investing in the health of our children and the resilience of our local agricultural system is a step toward a brighter and healthier future for all.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Tinamarie Cura