



**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 SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON  
WAYS AND MEANS  
FEBRUARY 26, 2025; 10:03 AM

SENATE BILL 659, SD1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill 659, SD1. The State Procurement Office (SPO) appreciates the intent of this bill and provides the following comments and recommendations:

The language in the SD1 version does not provide guidance for purchases of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000, which is not subject to the requirement to conduct procurements through an electronic system.

The SPO offers the following comments on procurements valued at \$25,000 to less than \$100,000.

- While procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000 shall be exempt from the requirement to conduct procurements through an electronic system, the bill should address procurement thresholds. No less than three written quotes are required for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000, with the exception of rural communities. The SPO acknowledges challenges that may be faced by schools in rural communities, including finding vendors of local products. Thus, for schools in rural communities, no less than two written quotes are required for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000
- 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 of \$2,500 must be on the Hawaii Awards and Notice Data System (HANDS) or similar Department of Education procurement platform

- The SPO may request data from the department to evaluate the efficacy of this Act, pursuant to section 103D-212.
- 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.

For these reasons, and to ensure compliance, accountability, and transparency, the SPO recommends that Section 1, page 1, lines 4-12, read as follows:

**§302A – Procurement; locally sourced products; geographic preference; small purchase.** Notwithstanding section 103D-305(c) and any law to the contrary, procurements of less than \$100,000 for local edible produce and local value-added processed, agricultural, or 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 local value-added processed, agricultural, or 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.

Thank you.



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

**LATE**

**Date:** 02/26/2025

**Time:** 10:03 AM

**Location:** CR 211 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

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

**Bill Title:** SB 0659, SD1 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Exempts from the electronic procurement system the Department of Education's purchase of fresh local agricultural products and local value-added processed, agricultural, or food products not exceeding \$100,000, subject to certain requirements. Requires the Department of Education to establish guidelines for determining a geographic preference for locally sourced products. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 659, SD 1.

This bill will increase the School Food Services Branch's (SFSB) small purchase procurement capacity and flexibility to procure more locally grown produce. This will aid in the Department's progress toward meeting the 30% by 2030 local farm-to school ingredients purchase goals.

The Department recognizes that it will be responsible for establishing guidelines with a geographic preference for locally sourced products in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program and state procurement laws, including the necessity of gathering competitive bids.

The process proposed in this bill will allow us to purchase items that currently are unavailable from our distributors such as poi and limu.

Exempting the Department from the electronic procurement system will increase opportunities to procure from local farmers across the state who may be electronically limited, yet food safety compliant. The SFSB further recognizes that educating farmers about procurement compliance is a

part of its farm to school mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Wednesday, February 26, 2025 — 10:03 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 659 SD 1, Relating to Department of Education.**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz 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 SB 659 SD 1**, which exempts from the electronic procurement system the Department of Education's (DOE) purchases of fresh local agricultural products and local value-added processed, agricultural, or food products not exceeding \$100,000, subject to certain requirements. This bill also requires the DOE to establish guidelines for determining a geographic preference for locally sourced products.

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 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.

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



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



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February 26, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON SB 659, SD1**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:03 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, 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 SB 659, SD1**, which allows the Department of Education to procure fresh local agricultural products and local value-added processed agricultural or food products under \$100,000 without using an electronic procurement system. It also requires the department to establish guidelines with a geographic preference for locally sourced products.

Hawai'i's Farm to School program plays a crucial role in improving student nutrition, supporting local farmers and ranchers, and increasing the state's food security. The state has committed to sourcing at least 30 percent of school meals from local food sources by 2030 under Act 175, SLH 2021. However, one of the main challenges in achieving this goal has been the complexities of the procurement process, which has historically favored large, out-of-state suppliers over local farmers.

SB 659, SD1 addresses this issue by exempting the Department of Education's purchases of fresh local agricultural products and value-added food products under \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system. This change will streamline the purchasing process and make it easier for local farmers and ranchers to participate in school food procurement. By allowing DOE to establish geographic preferences, the bill ensures that local producers are given a fair opportunity to compete in supplying Hawai'i's schools.

Increasing DOE procurement of locally grown agricultural products will help create a stable and reliable market for local farmers, encouraging them to expand production. Currently, many farmers hesitate to scale up operations due to uncertainty in demand. By

simplifying the purchasing process, SB 659, SD1 helps provide the consistency that local farmers need to plan, invest, and grow more food for Hawai'i's students.

To fully support the success of this initiative, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau 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 enhance participation and ensure that Hawai'i-grown food reaches students across the state.

We urge the committee to pass SB 659, SD1 to support local farmers, strengthen Hawai'i's Farm to School program, and increase the availability of fresh, locally grown food for Hawai'i's students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**LATE**

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Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports SB659.**

SB659 seeks to streamline the procurement of locally sourced agricultural products for Hawaii's public schools by exempting purchases under \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system and requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to establish guidelines with a geographic preference for locally sourced products.

Instead of broadly directing DOE to establish "guidelines", the bill should explicitly align these guidelines with HRS §103D-1002 (Hawaii product preferences) and enhance them by mandating the purchase of locally sourced products when priced within 10% of the lowest out-of-state option and recognizing discretionary purchases up to 15% higher with justification. This ensures stronger support for Hawaii's farmers while maintaining cost efficiency in school food procurement.

Alaska's Sec. 29.71.040 provides a model, requiring state-funded entities to buy in-state agricultural and fisheries products if they are of similar quality and price, with a 7% mandatory preference and 15% discretionary preference.

**\*\*Proposed Amendment to Section 1 §302A(b):\*\***

"The department shall establish guidelines with a geographic preference for locally sourced products when procuring products. The guidelines shall include the following provisions:

- (1) The department shall award contracts for locally sourced products if the cost is no more than 10% higher than the lowest-priced out-of-state option; and
- (2) The department may award contracts for locally sourced products if the cost is no more than 15% higher than the lowest-priced out-of-state option, provided that justification for the selection is documented."

This adjustment strengthens the bill's intent by ensuring that Hawaii's procurement policies prioritize local food while remaining flexible for budgetary considerations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union



# Food+ Policy Internship 2025

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

**LATE**

**February 25, 2025**

**Subject: SB659 SD1 – Relating to the Department of Education**

Aloha Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

Hawaii Food+ Policy is in strong support of SB659 SD1, which proposes to streamline procurement processes for the Department of Education by allowing the purchase of fresh local agricultural products and value-added food products up to \$100,000 without requiring an electronic procurement system, while maintaining compliance with existing procurement rules for purchases under \$25,000.

This bill directly supports Hawaii's ongoing efforts to strengthen local agriculture and food sustainability. By simplifying procurement requirements, SB659 SD1 reduces barriers that may currently prevent small-scale farmers and producers from participating in institutional purchasing. These changes will enable schools to source more fresh, locally grown products, benefiting both students and the local economy.

SB659 SD1 aligns with Hawaii's local procurement objectives established in Act 176 (SLH 2021), Act 144 (SLH 2022), and Act 175 (SLH 2021), which emphasize increasing local food procurement minimums. SB659 SD1 would also support local farm-to-school initiatives. By raising the small purchase threshold, the safeguards against parceling would also still be acknowledged but not prohibitive. This bill will help the Department of Education meet all of the above goals while ensuring accountability through Hawaii Compliance Express.

Additionally, the potential to allow quicker payment methods such as checks or cash will ease financial burdens on small producers, encouraging greater participation. This measure will foster new and stronger relationships between schools and local farmers while advancing Hawaii's food security and sustainability goals.

We respectfully urge your support for SB659 SD1 as a critical step toward strengthening our local food systems and supporting Hawaii's agricultural community.

Mahalo for your consideration,  
The Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawaii communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:36:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cynthia M Archibald	Testifying for North Shore Nutrition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Nutritionist, I have extensively researched and written on the importance of consuming locally-sourced fruits and vegetables for human health/longevity, economic health, and planetary health.

An increasingly large body of scientific evidence shows that improved access to local fruits and vegetables leads to improved health outcomes and reduced markers of long-term chronic illness. Locally-sourced produce is generally more nutrient-dense than imported counterparts. A diet high in locally-sourced plants resembles the food patterns of ancient Hawaiians, who experienced far lower rates of chronic diseases we currently see in our communities (obesity, Diabetes, metabolic syndrome, hypertension, etc...)

Evidence also shows that local purchases support the local economy. Importantly, it will encourage local food production, which improves the state's food security and food sovereignty. Finally, increased local food production reduces the state's reliance on imported foods, improving our resilience and reducing carbon emissions from cargo shipments (one of the world's major polluters).

This bill will support the health of our communities, our land, and our economy. I strongly support this bill.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:44:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emily Emmons	Testifying for Hoola Veteran Services	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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 4:35:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marjorie Tayao	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.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:07:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dianne Tam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 659 SD1 to exempt DOE purchases on local edible produce and packaged food products less than \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system requirement. Please remove the barriers to purchasing locally sourced foods that will feed our keiki in the local school system.

Mahalo for your tireless efforts to support local and support our children.

Aloha,

Dianne Tam

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:24:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tanielle Tokoro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

90% of Hawaii's food come from the mainland. Hawaii can save so much money if we grew our own foods. We can keep Hawaii's money in Hawaii by supporting our local farmers. supporting this bill will allow students to have healthier foods that will keep them going throughout the day. Providing them with our local farm foods will not only provide them with healthier choices it can spark an interest in Hawaii's movement towards sustainability. Mahalo for taking this moment to read my testimony.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:51:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

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

Comments:

I 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.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 5:56:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
maureen Langberg	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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 7:03:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 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. 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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 8:42:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

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

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 659 SD1**

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

**Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 26, 10:03 AM**

**Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,**

**I submit this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB 659 SD1 because our keiki deserve better. Our farmers deserve better. Our future deserves better.**

**Act 175 (2021) set a clear and meaningful goal: 30% of school food locally sourced by 2030. Yet, in School Year 2023-2024, we barely reached 5.43%. That is not progress—it is a signal that our system is broken. Our keiki cannot wait. Our farmers cannot wait. Our future cannot wait.**

**The current DOE procurement system places unnecessary barriers in the way of meaningful change. A \$25,000 threshold forces small, local farms to compete in an arena built for large corporations, effectively shutting them out. This is not pono. This is not the Aloha Spirit. Raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit to \$100,000 aligns it with other state departments and eliminates bureaucratic red tape that has long prevented our schools from sourcing fresh, local food.**

**Imagine a Hawai'i where our children eat fresh kalo, 'ulu, and greens grown by local hands. Imagine a Hawai'i where our schools uplift our economy, where we invest in our farmers, where we feed our keiki the nourishment of this land. This is not just a policy shift—it is a commitment to Aloha 'Āina, to food sovereignty, to self-sufficiency.**

**By supporting SB 659 SD1, you are not just passing a bill—you are feeding our keiki. You are investing in our farmers. You are strengthening Hawai'i's future.**

**I urge you to do what is right. Support SB 659 SD1. Support Hawai'i. Support our keiki.**

**Mahalo for your time and consideration.**

**Elizabeth Pa Nakea. Teacher**

**Castle High School**

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

**(808)308-2654**

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2025 9:58:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
JoAnn Tsark	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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:23:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 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.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:44:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 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:

02-22-25

RE: SB659 SD1

Aloha mai,

I know that Act 175 (2021) set a goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030. However, the Department of Education (DOE) has veritably struggled to make progress towards this goal – in School Year 2023-2024, only 5.43% of food purchased was locally sourced.

Thus, I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of [SB 659 SD1](#), 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 effectively hinders its ability to purchase local foods and support its goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.

Aloha aku,

John A. H. Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

51 Ku'ula St., Kahului, Maui, HI 96732-2906

808-280-1749

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:51:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 2:01:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ella Marie Siroskey	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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:25:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerald Tariao Montano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means: I am Gerald Montano, a pediatrician practicing in Wailuku on the Island of Maui. 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. Secure access to meals is a strong indicator for health among our keiki. As a pediatrician, I see how a lack of access to food could adversely affect health. I ask our legislature to promote our keiki's health and pass SB659. Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony. Regards, Gerald Montano, DO Kahului, HI

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:14:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bryan Mih	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a parent and community pediatrician, I support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. Please ensure that our keiki have access to fresh, nutritious meals that are locally sourced. Mahalo for your support.

Sincerely,

Bryan Mih, MD MPH FAAP

Pediatrician

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:13:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT TO HELP LOCAL FARMERS. MAHALO!

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:39:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joella Speelman	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.*

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:20:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laynie Sueyasu	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.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:26:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristin Mills	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in strong support of SB659. We need to support Act 175's goal of sourcing 30% of school food locally by 2030. We need to support our local farmers while at the same time improving the nutrient content of our keiki's school meals.

Please support SB659.

Sincerely,

Kristin Mills, PhD-ABD

parent, voter, health educator

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:48:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Erica Yamauchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members:

As a mother of two children in our public schools, I support this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Erica Yamauchi, Kaimukī/Wilhelmina Rise

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 2:01:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
BETH IRIKURA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support this bill to help meet 2030 goal to provide healthy fresh local food to schools with less bureaucratic hurdles. Support local agriculture, reduce risks of invasive pests and diseases, reduce fiscal and pollution costs of long distance transport.

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:53:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Hatzistavrakis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I strongly support **SB 659** which would raise 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.

Please considering passing **SB 659**, raising the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

Thank you!

**LATE**

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:12:05 AM  
Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beonka J Snyder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Beonka Snyder  
75--5715 Kalawa St  
Kailua-Kona HI 96740  
bjsnyder@hicomcommunityhealthcenter.org  
02/25/2025

Subject: Testimony in Support of Raising the DOE’s Small Purchase Procurement Limit

Dear Chair [Last Name], Vice Chair [Last Name], and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for increasing the Department of Education’s (DOE) small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold creates unnecessary barriers, particularly for local food procurement, by imposing burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. These constraints limit the DOE’s ability to efficiently source fresh, nutritious food for our schools.

By raising the procurement limit, we can streamline the purchasing process, eliminating bureaucratic hurdles that hinder timely and effective procurement. This change will enhance the DOE’s ability to support local farmers and food producers, directly benefiting Hawai’i’s agricultural economy. Furthermore, it aligns with the state’s commitment under Act 175 (2021) / HRS 302A-405.6 to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.

Increasing the procurement limit is not just about efficiency; it is about ensuring our keiki have access to fresh, healthy meals that support their well-being and academic success. Additionally, strengthening local food systems fosters economic resilience and sustainability for our communities.

I urge the committee to support this necessary change, which will empower the DOE to make timely, impactful purchasing decisions that align with Hawai’i’s long-term goals.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Beonka Snyder



**LATE**

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:14:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
angelina kays	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support raising the Department of Education's (DOE) small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold creates significant barriers for local food procurement, requiring burdensome formal competition and public advertising processes that ultimately hinder the DOE's ability to efficiently source fresh, local food for our students.

By increasing this limit, the DOE will be able to streamline its purchasing processes, eliminate unnecessary obstacles, and enhance its capacity to purchase locally grown and produced foods. This change would directly support Hawai'i's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030, as outlined in Act 175 (2021) and HRS 302A-405.6. The procurement limit increase would help fulfill this critical goal, while also boosting Hawai'i's agricultural economy and providing students with access to healthier, more nutritious meals.

Raising the procurement threshold to \$100,000 will allow the DOE to more effectively engage with local farmers and producers, ensuring that our schools have access to fresh, high-quality food while reducing costs and administrative burdens. It is a practical and beneficial step that will strengthen both our local food systems and our educational programs.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Angelina Kays

**LATE**

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:30:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB659 SD1 with the following proposed amendment to ensure stronger support for Hawaii's farmers while maintaining cost efficiency in school food procurement:

**\*\*Proposed Amendment to Section 1 §302A(b):\*\***

“The department shall establish guidelines with a geographic preference for locally sourced products when procuring products. The guidelines shall include the following provisions:

(1) The department shall award contracts for locally sourced products if the cost is no more than 10% higher than the lowest-priced out-of-state option; and

(2) The department may award contracts for locally sourced products if the cost is no more than 15% higher than the lowest-priced out-of-state option, provided that justification for the selection is documented.”

This adjustment strengthens the bill's intent by ensuring that Hawaii's procurement policies prioritize local food while remaining flexible for budgetary considerations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**LATE**

**SB-659-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:13:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chloe Hannsz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a high school student writing in strong support of the bill SB659.

Hawaii imports roughly 90% of its food—a statistic that spurs apprehension regarding Hawaii’s ability to be sustainable and self-sufficient during a crisis. SB659 is just one stepping stone to an independent Hawaii. By increasing the procurement capacity for small edible purchases, the bill will support local farmers, putting money in local people’s pockets and good food on our children’s plates.

Furthermore, the goal to provide at least 30% local foods to public schools increases the wellbeing of students and contributes to a healthy learning environment.

More than often my classmates will choose to go without lunch because the food served at the cafeteria is undesirable. On a few occasions, the school food has appeared to be spoiled or otherwise unwelcoming. Students opt to skip class in order to buy food elsewhere, so we have an issue with ditching school.

Although school meals are regarded as a small or even insignificant part of students’ day, I know that a healthy meal makes all the difference. I see my classmates battling low energy and brain fog during class, but I am confident that they have so much more potential. I imagine that if school lunch was fresh and pleasant, students would know that they are valued and cared for. We would have the motivation to come to class and have the energy to learn.

I urge you to consider this bill, as it would improve the lives of all students in the Hawaii Department of Education.