



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/05/2021

**Time:** 03:00 PM

**Location:** 229

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 1385 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Require the department of education to develop a reorganization plan to provide students and schools with centralized food and transportation services. Requires the provision of locally produced food to increase in an unspecified percentage annually for five years.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports a centralized approach to providing students and schools with food and transportation services as indicated in SB 1385.

Currently, the overall program management and service delivery of food and transportation services are, for the most part, centralized. Reorganization to provide further centralization in both areas could lead to additional efficiencies and service improvements. As part of its modernization efforts, the Department is currently exploring such opportunities as coordinated school bell schedules to better meet student transportation needs and increase bus efficiency and student capacity and a centralized kitchen for food preparation.

The implementation of centralized kitchens may also assist in increasing the procurement of foods directly from local farmers. Centralized kitchens will allow farmers to deliver food directly to one site for multiple schools within that area as opposed to having many delivery points across the islands, easing the burden of the farmers. Centralizing food services may therefore increase local farmer participation in bid solicitations and help to further the farm-to-school program's aim of increasing the procurement of local produce and food as contemplated in SB 1385.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Friday, February 5, 2021 — 3:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports the intent of SB 1385, Relating to Education.**

Dear Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

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

**Ulupono supports the intent of SB 1385**, which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to develop a reorganization plan to provide students and schools with centralized food and transportation services. This bill also requires the provision of locally produced food to increase in an unspecified percentage annually for five years.

Ulupono supports increasing local food within the DOE's school meal programs. We estimate that locally sourced food purchases make up less than 4% of the DOE's current total food cost. We believe that establishing a goal of 30% locally sourced food within the DOE's school meal programs by 2030, as measured by the percent of the total cost of food, is reasonable and can be accomplished. In less than one year, 'Aina Pono pilot projects were able to increase the percentage of locally grown food from roughly 2% to 24% and from 3% to 15% at participating schools while lowering food costs at those schools.

We ask the committee to consider establishing this goal separate from any plan and requiring annual reports to the legislature with updates on meeting the goal. While it is important to require the DOE to develop a reorganization plan for food services, we feel that this effort should not preclude the DOE from moving forward with locally grown food procurement statewide.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*