

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: 02/23/2023

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 0250, HD1 RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on HB 250, HD1.

The Department's school meal program currently awards its fresh produce and frozen protein bid solicitations by geographic areas in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program and state procurement laws.

The Department understands and supports that the geographic diversity of Hawaii's islands presents unique opportunities to regionalize food preparation. However, the Department would like to point out that agricultural production, quality, certifications, and distribution are critical to satisfying the Department's needs and standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2023
10:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 250, HD1
RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT

Chairperson Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 250, HD1. The bill facilitates the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawaii farmers, ranchers, and food producers and will allow school complexes to regionalize their menus. The Department supports this bill and offers comments.

The 2008 Farm Bill allowed child nutrition program operators to use a geographic preference when procuring locally grown and locally raised unprocessed agricultural products. The Department comments that HB 250 aligns with our call-to-action "Buy Local, It Matters" campaign that leads to farmers, ranchers and producers scaling up to meet the demand this bill intends to create. The 2008 Farm Bill also provides that the schools define what is local for schools using a geographic preference when sourcing food for the federal child nutrition program.

As such, the Department defers further comment to the Department of Education. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol; Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0250, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 250, House Draft 1, RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This measure, as received by your Committee, would require the Department of Education (DOE) to adopt rules for the procurement of goods and services related to food programs at public schools that incorporate geographical preference for unprocessed, locally grown and locally raised agricultural products. The bill would take effect on July 1, 3000.

Because the State purchases so much food for the daily operations of public schools, it is prudent and essential for government to spend its limited resources within the State to ensure that these funds are circulated through local businesses and communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated the need for a bill like this. Our over-reliance on tourism has weakened our ability to respond to unforeseen economic downturns. The only way for us to protect ourselves from the next global pandemic or catastrophe is for Hawaii to diversify its economic base and become more self-sufficient. And for us to do that, we need to utilize more locally-grown food.

We urge your favorable consideration of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



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

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports HB250.**

Our state is home to a rich and diverse agricultural industry, but too often our local products are overlooked in favor of cheaper, imported options. By requiring the Department of Education to establish rules for procuring locally grown and raised food products, we can help ensure that our schools are supporting the local economy and providing students with the freshest and healthiest food possible.

Additionally, incorporating a geographic preference for local food products will provide valuable educational opportunities for students. They will learn about the importance of supporting local farmers and the connection between the food they eat and the land it comes from. By supporting this bill, we can help build a stronger and more sustainable food system in Hawaii, while also promoting education and health for our children.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

February 21, 2023

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023
10:00 am
via Video Conference



RE: **HB250 HD1** Relating to Farm to School Procurement (**Strong Support**)

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa & Committee Members,

Chamber of Sustainable Commerce offers this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB250 HD1, which requires the department of education to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products.

As business owners who believe we can strengthen our economy without hurting employees, consumers or the environment, we urge this committee to vote in favor of passing HB250 HD1 because it would economically uplift our local farmers, nutritionally benefit our students and replenish our state budget.

Using state funds to purchase locally grown foods supports local taxpayers; it is an investment in a circular economy that will have exponential returns. Whereas, procuring foods from out of state, sends all the economic benefits out of our local economy. The financial gains Hawaii reaps as it shifts to local farm-to-school purchasing should be fully recognized and credited during any state procurement calculation and deliberation.

This bill has had three committee referrals in the House which offers sufficient discussion. We ask this committee to amend the counter-effective date of July 1, 3000, inserted by a previous committee; return to the original HB250 effective date of July 1, 2023.

**Hawaii
Legislative
Council**

Maile Meyer
Na Mea Hawaii
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Island Naturals
Hilo / Kona

Tina Wildberger
Kihei Ice
Maui

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Kauai

Kim Coco Iwamoto
AQuA Rentals, LLC
Honolulu



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, February 23, 2023 — 10:00 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 250 HD1, Relating to Farm to School Procurement.

Dear Chair Yamashita 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 the 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 options, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports HB 250 HD1, which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food 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), it is important to provide opportunities for local producers to participate in institutional purchasing. By creating a geographic preference, schools across the state will be able to procure fresh products from local, regional farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

Date: February 23, 2023

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Katagawa, Vice Chair

Re: Strong Support for HB 250 Relating to Farm to School
Procurement

Hrg: Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 10:00 AM, Conf Rm 308

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (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 Obesity Prevention Task Forceⁱ and The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui,ⁱⁱ which collectively represent over 60 organizations from across the islands.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) appreciates the opportunity to provide STRONG SUPPORT for HB 250, which requires the Department of Education (HIDOE) to establish rules to ensure local procurement of goods and services related to food service. This bill will allow public schools to have a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and raised food products.

Additionally, this bill creates transparency by requiring the HIDOE to post all of the contracts rewarded for local food procurement on its website. This requirement is critical to illustrate the progress the HIDOE has made in reaching the goals outlined in Act 175. Increasing access of locally grown and raised foods for consumption by our keiki will positively impact their health while also supporting the development of Hawai'i sustainable food systems.

Geographic preferences support local farmers.

This bill will regionalize school meals, which will also support local food producers and suppliers on each island. Act 175 requires that the Department of Education procure 30% of the food it serves from local sources by the year 2030, currently local procurement is at 6.2%.ⁱⁱⁱ This measure helps to support reaching that 30% goal.

HIDOE cannot reach the 30% goal alone. This project needs to have statewide collaboration to achieve success. Farmers and distributors need local procurement rules to produce adequate harvests in order to deliver

the appropriate volume of locally sourced foods to serve the 100,000 plus meals that the HIDOE serves daily.

Mahalo for considering this measure and for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB250.

Mahalo,

Dennis Chase
Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Program Manager
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the **Obesity Prevention Task Force** is composed of over 40 statewide organizations, and it works to make recommendations to reshape Hawaii's school, work, community, and healthcare environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

ⁱⁱ Founded in 2010, the **Hawai'i Farm to School Hui** is a statewide network comprising five island-level networks, community organizations, schools, state agencies, and other food systems stakeholders with a collective mission to strengthen Hawaii's farm to school movement. The three pillars of successful farm to school programs are 1) school gardens and on-campus farms, 2) education, and 3) school food improvements through local procurement.

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/DOE_REPORT2023_FarmtoSchoolMeals.pdf



Date: February 21, 2023
To: Representative Yamashita, Kyle T., Chair
Representative Kitagawa, Lisa, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance Committee, FIN
From: Hawai'i Youth Food Council
Re: **SUPPORT for HB250**
Hearing: 23/02/2023, Thursday, 10:00 AM

On behalf of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB250 which establishes rules for the procurement of goods and services related to administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for locally grown food.

I believe that this is important because the quality of the food that is given to public schools in Hawai'i might be flawed due to fast production in pressure to give food to other place's school. Locally grown foods are fresher and more nutritious than imported foods that have traveled far distances. Increasing the amount of local foods served to students will result in improved health outcomes. Not only that, it will support local businesses and create better economic opportunities, along with a positive environmental impact not only in Hawai'i but in other places as well.

There have been countless times where I have witnessed someone get sick from lunch at a local public school. There are also complaints about school lunches being dry, tasteless, and a seemingly lack of nutrients. Having local foods would most likely solve that problem as they are harvested with the ideal ripeness making it taste better. It would also increase students' knowledge while learning about our food systems. Learning about farming and what is in the foods might also encourage students to take interest in agriculture. In today's day and age, being sustainable is very much in demand, if the food programs in public schools are able to use locally grown food, that can be one step closer into a sustainable future. Farmer's can also profit and would be able to support instead of other outside sources and boost our economy. It can potentially play a crucial role in student's lives along with Hawai'i as a whole.

(Continued on next page)

There are many benefits that come with serving local foods to public school's food programs. As a student in Hawai'i, we should take action and try to implement local foods in our system, creating many opportunities in the future. It can be very beneficial for the farmers, students, economy, and even the nation.

The **Hawai'i Youth Food Council** is a program of the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui and Hawai'i Public Health Institute, and includes students from public, charter and independent high schools across Hawai'i. The council was established in 2020 to engage and empower youth in the process of rewriting the present narrative of Hawaii's food system. Members identify and address systemic issues that exist throughout various dimensions of the food chain to promote community participation in the formation of resilient, equitable local food economies.

Thank you very much for your support of garden-based learning for all students. We respectfully request that you please pass this bill.

Sincerely,
Members of Hawai'i Youth Food Council

Vinnerie Conner, Kea'au High School
Kaylie Hirayama, Hawaii Preparatory Academy
Gigi Kiyabu, Mid Pacific Institute
Jaden Joy Rosabia, Kealakehe High School
Tyler Levine, Oak Meadows Homeschool
Shania Wilson, Mililani High School

GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCE

What It Is and How to Use It



* * * * *

THE 2008 FARM BILL directed the Secretary of Agriculture to encourage schools to purchase locally grown and locally raised products “to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate.” The Secretary was also instructed to allow child nutrition program operators to use a “geographic preference” when procuring locally grown and locally raised unprocessed agricultural products.

There are many ways for schools to buy local products for use in federal child nutrition programs (see **USDA’s 10 Facts About Local Food in School Cafeterias**). While using geographic preference is not the only option for buying local foods, it is a powerful tool and particularly useful in formal solicitations where respondents are ranked and scored.

Types of Products

The ability to apply a preference for local products applies only to unprocessed or minimally processed items. The geographic preference rule does not apply to any products that have been cooked, heated, canned or that have any additives or fillers. It can be applied to a wide array of products that meet the definition of unprocessed or minimally processed such as various forms of fruits, vegetables, meats, fish, poultry, dairy, eggs, and grains.

Defining Local

Definitions for local vary widely depending on the unique geography and climate where a school is located and on the abundance of local food producers and manufacturers. Many schools define local as within a certain number of miles from the school, within the county, or within the state. Alternatively, definitions might include more than one state (i.e., Georgia, Alabama, and Florida) or discrete parts of several states (i.e., specific counties in southwest Washington, northeast Oregon, and Idaho). In addition, many programs use different definitions of local depending on the product or season. Also, please note that when applying geographic preference, origin is tied to the agricultural product, not the location of the respondent.

Who Defines Local?

Schools define what they mean by local. While many state and/or local governments have adopted definitions of local such as “within the state” or “within the county,” schools using a geographic preference when sourcing food for the federal child nutrition programs are under no obligation to adopt any definition for local that might be in existence in local areas.

Three Examples for Using Geographic Preference

Federal regulations do not prescribe the precise way that geographic preference should be applied, or how much preference can be given to local products. Thus, there are a variety of ways to apply geographic preference and one way is not considered better or more effective than another. The key is to be sure that use of geographic preference does not restrict full and open competition. Further, regardless of which method is used, the selection criteria must be clearly described in all solicitation materials.

EXAMPLE ONE

A school district issues an invitation for bid (IFB) for apples and states a preference for apples grown within 100 miles of the school. IFBs are generally used when a firm fixed-price contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. The solicitation makes it clear that any respondent able to provide local apples will be awarded 10 points in the selection process. In this example, the 10 preference points are equivalent to a 10 cent reduction in price for the purposes of evaluating the lowest bidder.

	OWEN'S ORCHARD	APPLE LANE FARMS	ZOE'S BEST
Price	\$1.97	\$2.05	\$2.03
Apples within 100 miles of school	No	Yes (10 Points)	No
Price with preference points applied, for evaluation purposes only	\$1.97	\$1.95	\$2.03

Apple Lane Farms meets the stated preference for local products and is awarded 10 additional points, which translates into deducting 10 cents from Apple Lane Farm's price. This makes Apple Lane Farms the "lowest bidder." The school still pays Apple Lane Farms \$2.05 for its product; deducting 10 cents from the price of responsive bidders that meet the geographic preference only applies to determining the winning respondent and would not affect the actual price paid to the respondent.

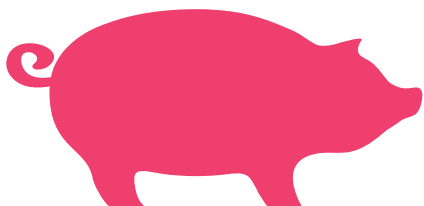
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EXAMPLE TWO

A school district issues a request for proposals (RFP) for its produce contract and indicates a preference for fresh fruits and vegetables produced within the state. For the purposes of evaluating bids, respondents who can supply at least 60% of the requested items from within the state will receive a 10% price reduction.

	PRODUCE EXPRESS	RAY'S PRODUCE	F&V DISTRIBUTION
Contract Price	\$31,000	\$35,000	\$34,000
% F&V from within the state	20	80	50
Geographic preference points to respondent able to meet > 60% local items	No	Yes (10% pref.)	No
Price with preference points applied, for evaluation purposes only	\$31,000	\$31,500	\$34,000

Ray's Produce is the only firm that is able to supply greater than 60% of the requested items from the state, thus, Ray's Produce receives a 10% reduction in price for the purposes of evaluating bids. Even with the reduction, Ray's Produce is not the lowest bidder. If price alone were the determining factor for this school district, Produce Express would be awarded the contract.



EXAMPLE THREE

A preference for local products doesn't necessarily have to be calculated with absolute values; sliding scales may be appropriate. Further, solicitations may include evaluation criteria that allow for consideration of factors other than price.

Some of the factors in addition to price that might be considered include technical expertise, past experience, years in business, marketing, etc. School districts may also include elements such as ability to host farm visits, showing the state or farm of origin on the invoice, or providing farm information for education in the lunchroom as part of their selection criteria.

A school district issues a request for proposals for beans and grains and makes it clear that bids will be evaluated using a 100 point system. Fifteen preference points will be awarded to vendors able to provide over 70% of the requested items from within the state, 7 points for 50-69% and 5 points for 25-49%. Points for local sourcing will be included along with other evaluation factors.

	LAURIE'S LEGUMES	PAULA'S PULSES	GARY'S GRAINS
Price = 60	40	50	60
Three references, past history = 20	20	20	20
Able to provide farm/facility tour or classroom visits = 5	0	5	5
Able to provide state of origin on all products = 5	0	5	5
Ability to provide products sourced within the state = 15	0	15	7
100 possible points	60	95	97

In the example above, Paula's Pulses is able to source 75% of their products from within the state, earning them 15 points in the scoring process in the local products category. Gary's Grains can source 55%, earning them 7 points, and Laurie's Legumes is unable to guarantee any products from within the state so they receive 0 points in the local preference category. Gary's Grains wins the contract.





Learn More

- * **Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs Guide**, from USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) – This comprehensive guide showcases the many ways schools can purchase locally, and correctly. The document also provides information on procurement basics, what local means and where to find local foods.
- * **Procurement Geographic Preference Q&As Part II**, from FNS – A memo published in October 2012 addressing additional questions regarding application of the geographic preference option and other mechanisms for local procurement.
- * **Finding, Buying, and Serving Local Foods Webinar Series**, from FNS - This series starts with an introduction to basic procurement principles, and then walks through strategies and tactics for buying local foods.
- * **State Agency Guidance on Procurement**, from FNS in partnership with the National Food Service Management Institute – An online procurement training geared towards state agencies that focuses on federal procurement requirements.
- * **Program-specific procurement regulations**, from FNS – Links to regulations governing each major Child Nutrition Program from Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- * **A School’s Guide to Purchasing Washington-Grown Food**, from the Washington State Department of Agriculture – This guide provides information on using the geographic preference option to source local foods in Washington; however, much of the content is broadly applicable.
- * **Final Rule: Geographic Preference Option**, from FNS – The final rule, published in the Federal Register, includes a summary, background, and final regulatory language, by program, for the geographic preference option.
- * **Geographic Preference: A primer on purchasing fresh local food for schools**, from School Food FOCUS and the Harrison Institute for Public Law at Georgetown Law – This guide provides an overview of procurement regulations and several examples for how a school might apply a geographic preference.
- * **Procurement Geographic Preference Q&As Part I**, from FNS – A memo published in February 2011 addressing questions regarding application of the geographic preference option.

Learn More

For even more resources about procuring local foods, visit USDA’s Office of Community Food Systems website:
www.usda.gov/farmtoschool.



For more information, and to sign up for the bi-weekly e-letter from the Food and Nutrition Service’s Office of Community Food Systems, please visit www.usda.gov/farmtoschool.
Questions? Email us at farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov.





HAWAII APPLESEED
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for H.B. 250 – Relating to Farm to School Procurement
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 10:00AM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitigawa, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **H.B. 250**, which would require the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) to adopt procurement rules relating to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised agricultural products.

The 2021 Hawai‘i legislature passed Act 176, SLH 2021, which establishes a farm to school program in HIDOE. House Bill 250 attempts to address a significant concern around achieving the goals set forth in this legislation, by requiring that the Department take advantage of what’s known as a “geographic preference” to award bids for ingredients for their school meal programs.

The HIDOE breakfast and lunch menus are developed a year in advance to allow time for procurement, which can be a lengthy process. However, there is only one statewide menu for each program, which does not take into account the many regional and cultural food preferences of the children that the HIDOE serves. As a result, the Department currently only solicits and awards bids on a statewide basis to accommodate the statewide menu, precluding the opportunity to source from smaller local farms and vendors, who may not have the ability to supply ingredients for the entire statewide school system.

Thank you for considering these comments in your deliberation of H.B. 250. Hawai‘i Appleseed is in full support of the HIDOE farm to school program, as we believe in the importance of good quality food served through our federally-subsidized nutrition programs. We sincerely believe that this legislation will help achieve the intended effect of reaching the state’s farm to school goals.

The Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice advocates for economic justice for and with Hawai‘i’s people. We envision a Hawai‘i that puts its people first—where everyone can meet their basic needs while living happy, healthy and creative lives.



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

February 23, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 250, HD1
RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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 250, HD1, which requires the department of education to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products.

HFB strongly supports the increased use of locally grown agricultural products, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, and poultry products in our schools.

In 2009, the State enacted ACT 175 which gave Hawai'i agricultural products a price preference and included Hawai'i agricultural products under the State's procurement code. HFB believed that agricultural producers' price preference for bidding presented a competitive advantage. This included enjoyment of the small business preference rule that permits an agency to identify certain contracts for competition among small businesses or requires a large business to subcontract with small businesses to provide the products. We believed that the preference helped cultivate a level playing field with out-of-state bidders and created additional market opportunities for Hawai'i's farmers and small businesses.

HFB suggested the changes because farmers and ranchers were having a difficult time entering into state supply contracts. During our involvement with this process, it became clear that education at all levels, not just within our group of farmers and ranchers, but even within the procurement office, was needed. Although HFB attempted to move everyone in this direction, the training was never accomplished.

In previous sessions, there have been measures proposed to remove the preference and ease the process required for governmental bodies to acquire local agricultural commodities by exempting Hawai'i agricultural producers from the procurement code. This would change the current code back to where it was before HFB's requests to the Legislature modified the language, resulting in the current code. When bills were introduced that would revert to exempting locally-grown agricultural products from the procurement code, HFB requested clear metrics to help determine the success of the procurement code with the exemption.

Many formal and informal studies have been done addressing farm-to-school programs. Our farmers and ranchers have tried to work with the procurement system and can speak to the shortcomings of the system. For example, supplying a school or schools within a geographic area is feasible. Providing to the entire school system is not. The focus should now be on working with the procurement system to make institutional markets accessible while considering the capacity of farmers and ranchers in Hawai'i. Assistance to farmers on how to navigate the system should also be a priority.

The proposed geographic preference will provide the flexibility that should help increase the purchase of more locally-grown agricultural products, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, and poultry products for our Farm to School program.

HFB is committed to working with the department of education to implement a procurement program that will allow Hawai'i farmers and ranchers to source more products for Hawai'i's Farm to School program.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 9:58:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeri Di Pietro	Hawai`i SEED	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai`i SEED strongly supports HB 250 HD1, the Farm-to-School Procurement bill requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to adopt rules for the procurement of goods and services that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised agricultural products. This bill would facilitate an increase in local food purchasing, and allow school complexes to regionalize their menus.

Mahalo,

Jeri Di Pietro, President



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

HB250 SD1
RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT

Thursday, February 23, 2023, 10:00 AM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

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.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB250 SD1** which requires the department of education to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports the purchasing of locally sourced food, and Hawaii's ranchers are ready to contribute to that by providing local beef, a nutritious protein. Hawaii's locally grown beef provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





To: The House Committee on Finance (FIN)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Thursday, February 23, 2023, 10:00 am

In strong support of HB250 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the FIN Committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii **strongly support HB250 HD1** which requires the department of education to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services related to the administration of food programs at public schools that incorporate a geographic preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products.

Efforts to increase local food procurement promotes good health for students and our local economy, as well as improving the health of our planet. These efforts avoid the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping food in for meals offered at public schools. It also stimulates our economy by creating local jobs and supporting the growth of local agriculture.

Facilitating the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawaii farmers, ranchers, and food producers is a win all around for our local economy, our keiki, and the climate! HB250 HD1 is a meaningful step forward in these efforts.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this very important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



House Committee on Finance

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB250 HD1

Thursday, February 23, 2023 10:00 a.m. Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports HB250 HD1, which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to establish rules for the procurement of goods and services at public schools that incorporate a preference for unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

By focusing on local relationships that “regionalize the menu,” children will have greater access to more culturally appropriate and nutritious foods, such as kalo, sweet potatoes and others while becoming more connected to where their food comes from.

Local food has a shorter time between harvest and your table, and it is less likely that the nutrient value has decreased. Food imported from far-away states and countries is often older, has traveled and sits in distribution centers before it gets to your store. This is exacerbated in places like Hawai'i, where our food is treated and shipped such long distances.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Most importantly, HB250 HD1 allows kids a more direct connection to their food system, enhancing their community pride and connection to place and identity.

Please support HB250 HD1 and prioritize quality local food in schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



February 22, 2023

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

Our organization has been supporting farm to school on Kaua'i since 2010, and I'm writing to ask you to please pass HB250. I want to be clear that **farm to school will finally be possible through this bill**, as it provides support for community engagement which will aid in annual incremental progress towards increasing production.

Not only is farm to school possible, we have made it happen here on Kaua'i at a small scale with great success. Our organization has run both National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Summer Food Service Programs (SFSP) with above 30% locally procured ingredients, and also developed recipe guidebooks for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to highlight local ingredients and Pilot Farm to ECE programs. We believe in DOE's ability to craft USDA compliant menus utilizing local ingredients - we have had interns at UH develop perfectly compliant USDA menus. Community organizations like ours are willing to support DOE in their process of creating and adopting new menus, to ensure the success of this very important program.

We also aggregate and distribute approximately a half-million dollars worth of local food annually through our food hub. This has provided us with the hands-on experience of working with over 100 local producers every year on our island, learning their barriers to contracting directly with the government and what they need to scale their production to meet growing demands from multiple entities. We have had to develop and follow various government procurement policies - and have found them easy to navigate.

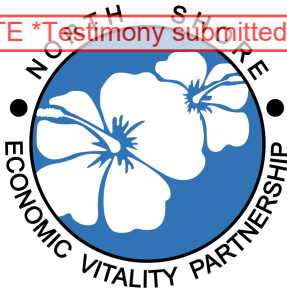
Having executed various USDA programs ourselves, we understand the fears and the challenges large departments have in adopting local procurement when they must look at it through a statewide lens and total industry transformation. **But that's not frequently how change happens - it often happens incrementally and involves community relationships.** This is why we are advocating for the de-consolidation of kuleana in this bill, so that on the ground and in-community relationships can be leveraged to produce successful results, and locally employed staff can guide its progress.

Farm to school programs, progress and relationships have been built across the state for well over a decade. Ours is a small story of a community's success in a sea of many great ones. It's well past time to leverage these. Especially for our neighbor islands, a bit of autonomy and doing what works for our communities is essential to this program's success. Our communities across the state are ready to help fundraise, strategize, and bring resources to the table - but they must be allowed to be involved in the process to be able to help. The only way I see that happening is with decision making authority at the complex level - within, for, and by our communities that this program aims to serve.

HB250 is essential to farm to school in Hawai'i. We humbly ask you to please pass HB250 so that our communities can continue to work together towards the 30 by 30 goal. Together, we know we can do this. Please give us the chance.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Megan Fox
Executive Director



67-332 Kaiea Pl.
Waialua, HI 96791-9501
808-383-4481
www.NSEVP.org

February 22, 2023

House Committee on FINANCE
Thursday February 23, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

SUBJECT: Comments on HB 250– RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership (North Shore EVP), I would like to extend support for HB 250, which will facilitate the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawaii farmers, ranchers, and food producers and allow school complexes to regionalize their menus.

Since 2016, North Shore EVP has been working to prepare farmers to fully and equitably participate in Hawaii's commercial and institutional markets by providing food safety training and certification through our USDA GroupGAP program. Although the Department of Education (DOE) currently does not have procurement guidelines for locally sourced produce, food safety certification should be a qualifying criterion for any farm selling products to our schools. Currently less than 2% of Hawaii's farms have obtained food safety certification and in some regions of the state the DOE would be hard pressed to identify growers that could provide the quantity and consistency of products needed to fulfill the geographic preferences identified in this bill.

We support the intent of this bill but ask that the procurement policies and procedures created under this bill provide adequate time for farms to acquire the necessary food safety certification that may be required for them to participate in the farm to school program

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Kevin M Kelly, President

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:09:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Lu Kelley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB250 HD1.

Please support this effort to regionalize our farm-to-school initiative while bringing fresh and healthy locally-raised food to our keiki.

Local food procurement provides economic benefits to local food systems by providing a long-term revenue stream for farmers and other food producers, promoting market diversification, and increasing income and economic growth opportunities for individual farmers.

HB250 HD1 bill will help to facilitate the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawai'i farmers, ranchers, and food producers and allow school complexes to regionalize their menus.

Mahalo,

Mary Lu Kelley

Lawai, Kauai

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:58:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa DeSantis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I support HB250, HD1.

Mahalo for your time and service to our islands.

Lisa DeSantis, Waimea, Hawai‘i Island

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:24:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this effort to regionalize our farm-to-school initiative while bringing fresh and healthy locally-raised food to our keiki.

Local food procurement provides economic benefits to local food systems by providing a long-term revenue stream for farmers and other food producers, promoting market diversification, and increasing income and economic growth opportunities for individual farmers.

HB250 HD1 bill will help to facilitate the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawai'i farmers, ranchers, and food producers and allow school complexes to regionalize their menus.

Mahalo,

Michele Nihipali

54074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:49:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Molly Mamaril	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and members of the Committee on Finance,

I stand in support of the HB 250 HD1 in order to revitalize our local agricultural community and increase healthy food options for our students. This is a unique opportunity that is common sense and also fits into our most recent (2022) City & County of Honolulu Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) which prioritizes the diversifying industries across Hawai'i. Within it, there is also a specific Agriculture and Food Systems Action Plan which outlines the need to make farm-to-school pathways easier, including in Priority Action #3: "Increase institutional purchasing and procurement of local food (e.g., Farm to State program, hospitals, schools) to provide guaranteed markets for agribusinesses and align agricultural infrastructure to meet demands." The countywide CEDS feeds into the Statewide CEDS effort. Resource: <https://www.oedb.biz/oahu-economy>

Mahalo for your consideration,

Molly Mamaril

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:34:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Bernstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Members of the FIN Committee:

On behalf of the Climate Future Forum, I'm writing to you in strong support of HB250. On December 3rd, 2022, the Climate Future Forum was held at the Hawaii State Capitol. The event included about 80 youth, eight state legislatures and staff members, and about 30 people from the community. One of the goals of this event was for youth to develop their legislative priorities for the 2023 legislative session. One of their priorities is centers around improving Farm to School programs. Therefore, the Climate Future Forum strongly supports this bill for the following reasons:

- improve student access to healthy, local foods (especially fresh fruit and vegetables) to improve nutrition
- expose students to healthy behaviors
- build student awareness of food systems and connection to food (various learning opportunities based around food)
- contribute to the local agricultural industry (new markets, more stability, more jobs)
- reduce food miles and associated greenhouse gas emissions

Please pass this bill with any needed amendments.

Respectfully,

Paul Bernstein

Founding member of Climate Future Forum

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:17:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

Please support this effort to regionalize our farm-to-school initiative while bringing fresh and healthy locally-raised food to our keiki.

Local food procurement provides economic benefits to local food systems by providing a long-term revenue stream for farmers and other food producers, promoting market diversification, and increasing income and economic growth opportunities for individual farmers.

HB250 HD1 bill will help to facilitate the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawai'i farmers, ranchers, and food producers and allow school complexes to regionalize their menus.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, M'ililili

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:39:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in favor of HB 250 HD1. I believe that focusing on procuring local agriculture is a step towards sustainability for our island home and will help foster appreciation for our food by our student body. Codifying into the law to specifically stipulate an emphasis on local merchants and producers is an excellent way to assure this. Mahalo for your time.

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:52:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvonne Yoro	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Yvonne Yoro, resident of Wahiawā, O‘ahu. I am testifying IN STRONG SUPPORT of House Bill 250 HD1 and ask that you pass this measure in its current form.

I strongly support building farm to school connections to improve student access to healthy, local foods and a process that contributes to the local agricultural industry.

Mahalo!

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:00:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leanne Kami	Kohana Family Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou, my name is Leanne Kami. I work in Hilo as a strategy consultant for Kamehameha Schools, focused on sustainable food system development in Hawai‘i. I also own and manage Kohana Family Farms, a small organic farm in Pana‘ewa. I am writing this letter in my personal capacity as a farmer and member of the Farm-to-School Hui, Hawai‘i Farmers Union United, and the Hawai‘i Farm Bureau Federation.

I strongly support HB248, which supports farm to school programs and geographic preference.

Farm-to-School programs support local farmers and this bill supports local food production, suppliers, and sustainable food systems in Hawai‘i. These shifts will provide guidelines and flexibility in procuring local products and supports achieving Act 175.

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 2:31:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Sarasa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee,

I am testifying **in support of** H.B. 250. I am a young adult living in Hawai'i and a student at the William S. Richardson School of Law. This bill is a major step forward for our children, environment, and local economy.

I grew up eating frozen pizzas in my school cafeterias. Children deserve access to healthy and fresh options in their school lunches. We should not nourish them with food that is frozen, packaged in plastic, and shipped thousands of miles from the mainland. Our local farmers will also benefit from this bill because increased business allows them to scale their operations and better compete with the pricing of major retailers. These major food suppliers benefit from economies of scale and externalize the harmful environmental costs of their shipping and packaging disposal. Our community bears those costs. The legislature has an opportunity here to adopt a policy supporting local food production that benefits our state's children, consumers, and farmers.

I respectfully request that the Committee supports this measure. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Emily Sarasa

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:46:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry SUPPORT HB 250 RELATING TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT.

Public/Charter schools needs additional funding for this program, cost of supplies, etc. In addition, cafeteria be used as a culinary course, like KCC.

HB-250-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 8:45:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this effort to regionalize our farm-to-school initiative while bringing fresh and healthy locally-raised food to our keiki.

Local food procurement provides economic benefits to local food systems by providing a long-term revenue stream for farmers and other food producers, promoting market diversification, and increasing income and economic growth opportunities for individual farmers.

HB250 HD1 bill will help to facilitate the increase of locally grown and locally raised food products from Hawai'i farmers, ranchers, and food producers and allow school complexes to regionalize their menus.

Mahalo,

Marsha Hee, life-long resident of Hawaii - currently of Volcano, Hawaii Island