SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE HAWAII PUBLIC SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE TO DEVELOP NUTRITIONALLY-SOUND PUBLIC SCHOOL MENU PLANS THAT INCLUDE VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN MEALS.

WHEREAS, all students should be assured nutritionally-balanced diets to assure they become healthy adults who do not suffer from the effects of obesity and malnutrition from not eating healthy food; and

WHEREAS, fruits and vegetables promote good health because they contain fiber and essential nutrients, including vitamins and minerals, are low in fat and calories, contain phytochemicals that may provide additional protection to reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease, and contain no cholesterol; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Cancer Society, American Dietetic Association, American Heart Association, and National Institutes of Health recommend that diets should include a balance of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; and

WHEREAS, students who identify themselves as vegetarian or vegan, i.e. they do not consume or use any animal products, or come from vegetarian or vegan families desire access to vegetarian and vegan meals in the public schools; and

WHEREAS, some public schools are able to provide vegetarian and vegan meals; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Education and the Hawaii public school food service are requested to consider nutritionally-sound public school menu plans that give students the option of vegetarian and vegan public school meals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is requested to conduct training and workshops for cafeteria managers and workers to increase awareness of the benefits of and options for providing vegetarian and vegan meals that are nutritious and balanced to students in public schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is requested to post on its website a list of schools that have vegetarian and vegan menu options; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is requested to submit a report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2009 on action it has undertaken pursuant to this measure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Education.