

**Date:** 03/18/2009

**Committee:** House Agriculture

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 1179,SD2 (SSCR816) RELATING TO EDUCATION

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes a farm to school policy in chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes (education law). Establishes a farm to school program in the department of education. (SD2)

**Department's Position:** The Department, while supportive of the intent to increase the consumption of locally grown meat and produce, does not support this bill. It creates an unfunded mandate. The Department is participating in discussions organized by the Department of Agriculture and involving local farmers and farm bureaus to explore how the Department could increase its purchases of local fresh meat and produce. We intend to continue these discussions and do not believe an additional unfunded mandate, when the Department is facing significant budget reductions, is in the best interest of our students.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

**wooley1-Christopher**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 3:57 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** uluahunter@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for SB1179 on 3/18/2009 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/18/2009 9:00:00 AM SB1179

Conference room: 312  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Thomas E. fratinaro  
Organization: Individual  
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Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

I support SB 1179. I support any measure that will encourage a program for our locally grown produce to be served in our local schools. Following the outbreaks of numerous foodborne illnesses on the mainland U.S., I feel that this bill is crucial to the safety of our children and I hope that this bill will lead to our state's autonomy from mainland grown produce. We need to grow locally and buy locally.

Aloha

SB1179 Relating to the Farm to School Program

AGR; Chair, Rep Clift Tsuji

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL

I was born and raised in Kailua on Oahu and I am a product of the Hawaii public school system. I try to eat healthy; organic if at all possible. I graduated from high school in 2004, so I experienced school lunches in the 90's up to about 5 years ago. When I think about what I ate for lunch while in school, I cringe. My lunches weren't very nutritious and vegetables were pretty brown if they were there at all. Currently, I work with children with Autism in the public school system and have learned a lot about how diets and nutrition can really affect children especially.

This bill will make improvements to many different aspects of our community. It will not only give the children in the school a better education about nutrition, but also about life skills. If these children learn how to grow food in a garden, it will give them techniques as to how to be more self-sufficient. I know that not all of these foods will be organic, but if they are grown locally, we will be able to keep a closer eye on how these foods are grown and what types of chemicals/pesticides are used, if any. By keeping a closer eye on how these foods are made, we will be able to actively participate in providing more nutritious foods to the children via school lunches. Finally, I believe that especially in these tough economic times, "buying local" will help our local economy survive and hopefully grow and I don't see a downside to that.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Sarah

Sarah Inouye  
MSW student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa

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## wooley1-Christopher

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**From:** Koh Ming Wei [kohmingwei@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 3:42 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support for SB 1179, SD2 Relating to Education

March 17, 2009

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Wooley, and Members of the Committee,

I began Kula o Mala our community school garden behind the Salvation Army building in Honoka'a in September 2007. Since then, more than 145 youth, 15 handicapped adults, 35 community members have accessed the garden.

7th and 8th grade students from the Honoka'a Intermediate exploratory class, and the 6th grade Special Education science class come two times a week for science, math, and language arts integrated lessons. They love the hands-on opportunity the garden provides. The teachers bring their students to our garden because they are unable to have a garden in their school.

The YWCA Hamakua Youth Center participants work in the garden as part of their Makahiki training, and have started a Hawaiian Cultural garden with many varieties of ki, canoe plants, and other medicinals.

The handicapped adult participants from the Brantley Center Honoka'a come to garden with the keiki from the Hawaii Sustainable Education Initiative (a private school in Honoka'a) once a week. The Salvation Army Family Intervention Services Ke Kama Pono program at-risk youth also garden once a week, and use the produce at their group home.

All the groups using Kula o Mala including the students from Honoka'a Intermediate and the Hamakua Schoolhouse have committed to growing food for the Salvation Army Food Pantry. We hope to donate at least 40 pounds a week.

Countless parents and community members have thanked me for this project. Their children love the garden, and the produce they bring home benefit the families physically, nutritionally, and financially. Many students have begun their own small gardens in their homes.

By promoting a local food economy we are:

1. reconnecting ourselves with the aina,
2. empowering ourselves to produce our own nutritional needs, and
3. supporting a sustainable island economy.
- 4.

My recommendation is for Ways and Means to fund this program. The long-term benefits to our agricultural economy will be significant, as the DOE is a secure contractor. Considering our current economy and uncertainty for the future, this program could grow our agricultural economy unlike any program on the horizon. I urge passage and funding for SB 1179, SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

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Koh Ming Wei  
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"I don't teach subjects, I teach children" - Jean Navarre

"Wisdom demands a new orientation of science and technology towards the organic, the gentle, the non-violent, the elegant and beautiful."  
- EF Schumacher

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