



Hawaii Farm Bureau
F E D E R A T I O N

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TESTIMONY

H.B. 1380 Relating to Hawaii Grown Produce

Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee;

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of our farm and ranch families and organizations supports with amendments, HB1380, starting a Farm to School program.

Last year, HFBF worked with the Legislature to clarify Hawaii's procurement law. We found it frustrating that very few of our farmers and ranchers were able to enter the State procurement system. HFBF has come before this body many times, with bills requiring increased use of local products in the State procurement system. During those hearings, the procurement office objected stating that agricultural products were exempted from the procurement process so the request was unreasonable. We did not understand the discrepancy.

Annually, HFBF had supported HDOA's request to the procurement office to exempt Hawaii agricultural products from the procurement process. While the justification was that it would allow payment at higher prices, it also provided a condition that the Office was not required to consider local agricultural products. The Bill passed, removed the exemption and required the consideration of local products. Existing laws have other preferential requirements that would need to be considered. By being part of the procurement process, all of these requirements would be in effect. It took us a while to understand this as it was exactly in opposition to what we had been told in the past. Since the passage of the Bill, we have had objections from many entities including the Department of Education that asked that we repeal the law.

Unless the procurement process is remedied, the intent of this program will face challenges. We agree with the measure that the opportunity is huge. The new federal dietary guidelines for school nutrition provides opportunities for our farmers and ranchers. However, they must be able to sell into the system



Friday, February 4, 2011
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 312

Testimony to The House Committee on Agriculture
RE: HB 1380 – Relating to Hawai'i-Grown Produce

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

I am the Director of the Hawai'i Island School Garden Network representing 50 Network School Garden Members on Hawai'i Island in public/private/charter schools K-12 serving over 5,000 students. I am also a member of the Hawai'i School Garden Hui, a coalition of Island School Garden Networks, the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools, Ma'o Organic Farms, Hoa 'Aina O Makaha, and the Healthy Hawai'i Initiative. I am on the steering committee of the Hawai'i Island Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition (NPAC) whose focus this year is the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and on the Board of Slow Food Hawai'i, whose focus is School Garden/Farm to School Program support.

I support the intent of HB 1380 to establish a Farm to School Program within the Department of Education. The concept of linking schools with local farmers to provide fresher, tastier, and healthier school meals should be part of a healthy school environment. The bill is intended to develop policies and procedures to implement the program, but does not include a funded Farm to School Coordinator position within DOE or DOA. Without a funded staff position within the department, the organizing and implementation of a new and far reaching agriculture economic development program would be extremely difficult.

Increasing the number of schools funded to procure fresh fruit and vegetable snacks, over and above the current number funded through the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) would certainly increase fruit and vegetable consumption at school. The one-two year grant program could be administrated through the Office of Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs at the Department of Education. Increasing the number of schools that may participate will "potentially" increase the amount of locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables purchased for the program. This will help to improve student nutrition and open the door for creating pathways between Hawaii's farms and the Department of Education Food Services that will be necessary to create a Farm to School Program.

School Gardens are an integral part of any Farm to School Program. However, School Garden Programs are in their beginning stages, and are created as "teaching and



educational” gardens rather than as production gardens for the cafeteria. If the department wishes to move in this direction, we must first establish and support School Gardens in our public, private, and charter schools before we can ask them to be “production gardens.” That idea is not out of the question, especially in our High School Agriculture Programs, however support and capacity needs to be built into the system first, before we can have this level of production and consumption.

I think the farmer to food bank pilot program would require a large amount of subsidy funding. Funding educational programs that would “educate communities to grow food and establish community gardens” would encourage Food Bank participants to grow food for themselves and their ohana for the long term and would increase food sustainability in Hawai’i.

Thank You for this opportunity to comment on HB 1380

Aloha,

Nancy Redfeather
Director
Hawai’i Island School Garden Network
The Kohala Center
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LATE TESTIMONY

hashem1 - Angleica

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 04, 2011 12:09 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: rikeweiss@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1380 on 2/4/2011 9:00:00 AM
Attachments: HB1380.doc

Testimony for AGR 2/4/2011 9:00:00 AM HB1380

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rike Weiss
Organization: Individual
Address: P.O. 37346 Honolulu, HI 96837
Phone: 808 271-0888
E-mail: rikeweiss@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/4/2011

Comments:

I am testifying in support of HB1380, which I see as a very necessary step toward the long road of achieving food security for Hawai'i, among many other reasons.

- Reconnecting our keiki with the land on which their food is grown will foster greater respect for our finite natural resources.
- Providing locally grown produce means better nutrition and leaves the Islands less vulnerable to shipping and the every increasing costs of transportation from thousands of miles away.

While I am testifying as an individual, as a board member of Slow Food O'ahu, I together with our organization and Slow Food International—with thousands of members worldwide, am working diligently toward establishing a 'good, clean and fair' food policy.

LATE TESTIMONY

hashem1 - Angleica

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 04, 2011 1:26 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: nlowen@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1380 on 2/4/2011 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 2/4/2011 9:00:00 AM HB1380

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Nicole Lowen
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: nlowen@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/4/2011

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and members of the Agriculture Committee,

I am in support of HB1380, establishing a Farm to School program within the Department of Education.

Farm to School programs are a key component of sustainable food systems. With rates of childhood obesity and diabetes rising to alarming levels, children's exposure to fresh and locally produced foods—through school gardens, nutrition education, and better school lunch choices—is a way to ensure that that children become knowledgeable eaters and learn to make conscious and informed choices about the foods they eat. An investment in these programs in the present will save taxpayers from having to pay the healthcare bill in the future, when an estimated 1/3 of our children may suffer from Type 2 diabetes, according to the CDC. Formerly referred to as adult-onset diabetes, the rising rates of Type 2 diabetes in children can be directly attributed to the over-consumption of unhealthy processed foods and drinks, and can be avoided with changes in diet that would be supported by Farm to School programs. Children often bring lessons learned in school home to their parents and communities, increasing the reach and value of these programs. Additionally, increased procurement of locally grown produce for school lunches keeps dollars in the local economy, increases the market for local foods, and supports Hawaii's farmers.

Thank you,

Nicole Lowen
Honolulu, HI 96816