

JAN 27 2021

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that approximately
2 fifty-one per cent of children in public schools in Hawaii
3 qualify for federally supported free and reduced lunch programs
4 and live in households that are food insecure. Most children in
5 public schools do not eat the daily recommended allowance of
6 fresh fruits and vegetables or whole grains, and their diets
7 include too many "empty calories" and high sodium levels. Often
8 this is because local families cannot afford to feed their
9 children nutritious food; workers in Hawaii have the lowest
10 average income in the United States and Hawaii is one of the
11 most expensive states in which to live, with food costing more
12 than sixty-one percent higher than in the rest of the country.

13 The legislature also finds that many health issues in
14 children are closely related to lack of nutritious food. Short
15 attention spans and lower academic performance are associated
16 with undernourished children, whether this is the result of
17 hunger or poor diet quality. Moderating fat intake and



1 increasing the amount and variety of fruits and vegetables
2 children eat have been highlighted as integral to improving
3 student nutrition and academic performance. Further,
4 introducing breakfast, snack, and supper programs that are
5 connected to fresh, local farm produce ensures that children
6 have access to adequate and nutritious meals at regular
7 intervals to support their work in class and at home.

8 The legislature further finds that farm-to-school programs
9 generally increase participation in school food services by
10 students and school faculty. Higher participation can lead to
11 increased revenue for local food service operations through the
12 national school lunch program and reimbursements from the
13 federal government for breakfast, snack, and supper programs.
14 Additionally, efforts show that cafeteria production planning
15 with regional growers can provide greater control over budgeting
16 and increased fiscal rigor. The farm-to-school work being done
17 nationally, along with the Aina Pono pilot project, demonstrate
18 that farm-to-school programs can provide increased revenue and a
19 consistent, three-season market to local growers. Many farm-to-
20 school programs also include an educational component that
21 teaches children and their families about locally produced food



1 and the farmers who grow it; this can further encourage families
2 to "buy local" via retail and farmers' markets.

3 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
4 education to conduct a comprehensive cost analysis of the
5 department's food services and student meals program in order to
6 make recommendations regarding the ways in which the department
7 can increase the use of locally grown agricultural products.

8 SECTION 2. (a) No later than September 30, 2021, the
9 department of education shall conduct a comprehensive cost
10 analysis of the department's food services and student meals
11 programs.

12 (b) The cost analysis shall identify strengths and
13 weaknesses within the department of education's food services
14 and student meal programs, including, but not limited to, the
15 cost of:

- 16 (1) Increasing the use of locally grown agricultural
17 products in food services and student meals programs;
18 (2) Reducing reliance on imported agricultural products
19 and other food imports for food services and student
20 meals programs;



- 1 (3) Empowering complex area and school-level
2 administrators with greater authority in purchasing
3 and decision-making over food services; and
4 (4) Instituting new data and food service delivery systems
5 necessary for decentralizing the governance of food
6 services and student meals programs.
- 7 (c) In conducting the cost analysis, the department of
8 education shall employ a triple bottom line approach that
9 evaluates the social, environmental, and financial costs and
10 benefits of activities related to food services and student meal
11 programs.
- 12 (d) The department of education shall submit a report of
13 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
14 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
15 to the convening of the regular session of 2022.
- 16 (e) The department of education shall invite a
17 representative from the cost analysis team to brief the members
18 of the legislature once the written report is finalized.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Ante Gilbo



S.B. NO. 943

Report Title:

Department of Education; Food Services; Student Meals Program;
Local Agricultural Products; Cost Analysis

Description:

Requires the department of education conduct a comprehensive cost analysis of the department's food services and student meals programs to, in part, increase the use of locally grown agricultural products. Requires a report to the legislature.

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