



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/02/2023

**Time:** 02:30 PM

**Location:** 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 0249, HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM.

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes the Hawaii child nutrition programs agency in the department of human services. Establishes a grant program to support the funding of certain initiatives for the State's public schools. Establishes three permanent full-time equivalent positions (3.0 FTE). Appropriates funds. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on HB 249 HD1. The Department appreciates the intent of HB 249 HD1, which focuses on finding the best placement of the Hawaii Child Nutrition Program (HCNP) within the State government and restructuring the program.

The Department has concerns with the assertion in Section 1, that due to the current placement of the HCNP within the Department, the School Food Services Branch interferes with the HCNP's ability to conduct compliance audits and fiscal reviews. This is not the case. The Department took action in years past to address a perceived conflict of oversight by reorganizing HCNP to move it from within the Office of Business Services, which oversaw the School Food Services program, to the Office of the Superintendent, and then later to the Office of Fiscal Services. It should be noted that neither the Office of the Superintendent nor the Office of Fiscal Services falls under the control of the School Food Services Branch.

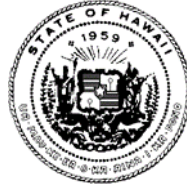
Despite this, if concerns exist with the current location of the HCNP, an alternative option is to reorganize the Department to place HCNP within the Department's compliance area, which would fall under the purview of Deputy Superintendent of Strategy, Tammi Oyadomari-Chun.

In addition, it is unclear why additional resources to advance the State's farm to school initiative would be provided to the HCNP, which is an agent of the United States Department of Agriculture that relies on federal funds for its operations except for an annual maintenance of effort general fund appropriation of approximately \$185,000. As noted in Section 1 of this measure, Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021 established a target for the Department of 30 percent of the food products served in public schools, as measured by the total cost of food, shall be locally sourced. Work by the Department is already underway with planning for centralized kitchens to meet this target. Assigning responsibility to advance subjective farm-to-school objectives in Hawaii to an agent of the United States Department of Agriculture that may or may not share the same strategic and operational plans as the Department has the potential to undermine the work necessary to meet the 30 percent target.

Furthermore, given the fact that the HCNP monitors the Department's School Food Service program for federal compliance and approves the payment of federal reimbursements, this measure may inadvertently formalize in state law a coercive dynamic should there be a difference of opinion in strategic and operational plans to meet the State's 30 percent target.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 1, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [HB 249 HD1](#) - RELATING TO THE HAWAII CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM.

Hearing: March 2, 2023, 2:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure and provides comments.

**PURPOSE:** This bill establishes the Hawai'i child nutrition programs agency in the Department of Human Services. Establishes a grant program to support the funding of certain initiatives for the State's public schools. Establishes three permanent full-time equivalent positions (3.0 FTE). Appropriates funds. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

The HD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Establishing the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs Agency in the Department of Human Services, and transferring all associated positions, books and records, and other relevant materials accordingly, rather than the Office of the Auditor;
- (2) Clarifying the grant program established by this measure is for all schools in the State that participate in the United States Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs, rather than just the State's public schools;
- (3) Clarifying that the Farm to School Coordinator shall head only the Farm to School Division within the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs Agency, rather than the Agency as a whole;
- (4) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and

- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

DHS appreciates the Legislature's interest to expand Hawaii's food production and to ensure that school children have access to nutritious meals. DHS is the State agency that implements the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) with oversight by the Food & Nutrition Service of the US Department of Agriculture. DHS provides monthly SNAP benefits to nearly 87,000 Hawaii households.

While DHS collaborates with other departments and programs to improve access to food and nutrition benefits and other services for Hawaii's children and residents, DHS does not have the technical expertise or experience to provide the kind of informed oversight to meet programmatic goals or the education programs executed by the Department of Education or Farm to School production programs. Further, as described in the measure, the purpose of the Child Nutrition Program Agency (page 3, lines 9-15),

"Hawaii child nutrition programs agency is to conduct audits, provide technical assistance, disburse federal funds to local program operators, and administer and award grants to promote the purchasing of locally grown foods by all schools in the State participating in the United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition programs."

Further, this purpose does not align with DHS' statutory mandate to:

"administer programs through an integrated and multigenerational approach designed to improve the social well-being, economic security, and productivity of the people of the State and to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty and dependence upon public benefits. Without limit to the generality of the foregoing, the department shall concern itself with problems of human behavior, adjustment, and daily living through the administration of programs of family, child and adult welfare, economic assistance, health care assistance, rehabilitation toward self-care and support, public housing, and other related programs provided by law." Section 26-14(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Therefore, DHS respectfully requests that the Legislature reconsider the placement of the Child Nutrition Program Agency to a more appropriate entity. Alternatively, if placed in DHS, DHS would need an extended effective date to implement the program, establish the positions, and will likely need additional resources to properly equip the new agency.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 2:45:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christian Zuckerman	Kuwale Ridge Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Christian Zuckerman and I am in strong support of HB 6249. I am a farmer in Waianae and also a member of the Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU).

Aloha

Christian Zuckerman

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 4:37:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Climate Protectors Hawaii supports this bill.

In particular, the establishment of three permanent full-time equivalent positions would ensure that the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs Agency has necessary resources.

Please pass this bill! Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawaii (by Ted Bohlen)

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 9:50:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leanne Kami	Kohana Family Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB249 to establish the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) agency within the department of human services. As well as establish a grant program to support funding initiatives for the State's public schools.



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Brynn Foster  
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Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki  
Kauai

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 HB249.**

As stated in Section 1, the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) can play a critical role in ensuring that Hawaii's public schools meet the state goal of providing at least thirty percent locally grown food by 2030. However, additional resources and staff dedicated to farm-to-school connections are needed to achieve this goal. Moving the HCNP from the Department of Education to the Department of Human Services will allow for greater independence and the ability to conduct compliance audits and fiscal reviews. Furthermore, HB249 will provide funding for grant-based programs to be administered through the Hawaii child nutrition programs, and establish three permanent positions to support the State's local purchasing goal.

HB249 also provides for the administration and award of grants to develop farm-to-school programs, purchase cafeteria equipment, train school cafeteria staff, and develop school garden cafeteria curriculum. We believe that this grant program will help schools purchase minimally processed local food products, increase the use and preparation of these foods in school meals, and provide education to children about good nutrition and farm-to-school connections. Overall, HFUU urges the legislature to support HB249 to improve the quantity and accessibility of local food in Hawaii's public schools.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF





## HIPHI Board

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Department of Pediatrics

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD  
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public  
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: March 1, 2023

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

Re: Strong Support for HB 249 Relating to Hawaii Child Nutrition  
Program

Hrg: Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 2:30 PM, Conf Rm 308

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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 Force<sup>i</sup> and The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui,<sup>ii</sup> which collectively represent over 60 organizations from across the islands.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute appreciates the opportunity to provide STRONG SUPPORT for HB 249, which establishes the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP), currently located in the Department of Education (HIDOE), in the Department of Human Services. It also appropriates funds to establish a grant program to support the funding of local food initiatives for the State's public schools, as well as creating three permanent full-time equivalent positions (3.0 FTE) within the HCNP.

The role of the HCNP is to audit, provide oversight, and technical assistance to the School Food Authorities (SFA) and Sponsors of Community Programs, including the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) School Food Services Branch (SFSB).

The creation and housing of 3 proposed Farm to School and Accountant positions will increase access of locally grown and raised foods for consumption by our keiki, which will positively impact their health while also supporting the development of Hawai'i sustainable food systems. State Agencies like the HCNP perform similar functions that include Farm to School initiatives and grants that have proven to be successful in other states.

This change will better support HCNP carrying out its responsibilities as the agent for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) concerning Child Nutrition Programs within the state. As stated in the proposed bill, "it is critical from an ethical standpoint for HCNP to be

independent of the HIDOE to prevent its preferential treatment.” For this reason, state agencies acting as USDA agents in other states are not under the same jurisdiction as the SFA.

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%.<sup>iii</sup> This measure helps to support reaching that 30% goal, which HIDOE cannot do alone. These goals need statewide collaboration to deliver the appropriate volume of locally sourced foods in order to serve the 100,000 plus meals that the HIDOE prepares daily.

Mahalo for considering this measure and for the opportunity to testify in STRONG SUPPORT of HB249.

Mahalo,



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

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<sup>i</sup> 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.

<sup>ii</sup> 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.

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/DOE\\_REPORT2023\\_FarmtoSchoolMeals.pdf](https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/DOE_REPORT2023_FarmtoSchoolMeals.pdf)

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 11:33:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nicole Galase	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council Supports this measure



Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association  
Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council  
Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation  
Hawai'i Farmers' Union United  
Hawai'i Food Industry Association  
Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association  
Kohala Center  
Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i  
Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)  
Ulupono Initiative  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources - University of Hawai'i at Manoa

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
March 2, 2023 – 2:30 p.m. – Conference Room 308 & Via  
Videoconference

## HB 249 HD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM – IN SUPPORT

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

The Local Food Coalition **SUPPORTS** HB 249 HD1, which establishes the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) agency in the Department of Human Services (DHS), establishes a grant program to support the funding of certain initiatives for the State's public schools, establishes three permanent full-time equivalent positions (3.0 FTE), and appropriates funds

The mission of the HCNP, which is currently attached to the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE), is to promote the importance of nutrition through federal compliance, education, and partnership with schools and childcare centers across the state.

Moving HCNP to DHS will make it independent of the DOE's School Food Services Branch and prevent its preferential treatment.

The grant program, which will be administered through the HCNP, will help the DOE reach its mandate established under Act 175, SLH 2021, which require 30% of food served in public schools to consist of locally sourced products by 2030.

Finally, the funding for the three positions will provide support and technical assistance so more farmers, ranchers and producers will be able to sell its products to the DOE and help the state reach its goal of doubling local food production.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprised of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

We respectfully request your support of HB 249 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Kendall Matsuyoshi  
808-544-8345  
[kmatsuyoshi@wik.com](mailto:kmatsuyoshi@wik.com)



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO**  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/02/2023

**Time:** 02:30 PM

**Location:** 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

**Testifier:** Sharlene Wong, SNS, Program Administrator,  
Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

**Title of Bill:** HB 0249, HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM.

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes the Hawaii child nutrition programs agency in the office of the auditor. Establishes a grant program to support the funding of certain initiatives for the State's public schools. Establishes three permanent full-time equivalent positions (3.0 FTE). Appropriates funds.

**Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs' Position:**

The Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) aka State Agency (SA) supports HB 249, HD1 and appreciates the Legislature's consideration to move the office to another state department. The role of the SA is to audit, provide oversight, and technical assistance to the School Food Authorities (SFA) and Sponsors of Community Programs, including the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) School Food Services Branch (SFSB).

This move will allow HCNP to carry out its responsibilities as the agent for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) concerning Child Nutrition Programs within the state. As stated in the proposed bill, "it is critical from an ethical standpoint for HCNP to be independent of the HIDOE SFSB to prevent its preferential treatment." For this reason, across the country state agencies are not under the same jurisdiction as the SFA.

HCNP also supports the creation and housing of the proposed two Farm to School and one Accountant positions. Other State Agencies across the country perform similar functions that include Farm to School initiatives and grants that are proven to be successful within their jurisdiction.

HCNP requests the following revision to provide clarity:

- Page 4, line 3: “(b) In addition to the Farm to School Coordinator, the agency shall employ two permanent full-time equivalent positions...”

The addition of this proposed amendments will allow HCNP to continue to expand and provide services to Child Nutrition Programs in Hawaii with integrity and ethics.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on HB 249, HD1.



**House Committee on Finance**

**Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB249 HD1**

Thursday, March 2nd, 2023 2:30 p.m. Conference Room

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

HAPA supports HB249 HD1 which establishes the Hawai'i child nutrition programs agency in the department of human services. Establishes a grant program to support the funding of certain initiatives for the State's public schools. Establishes three permanent full-time equivalent positions (3.0 FTE).

Please prioritize the health and wellbeing of our keiki. HB249 HD1 would help provide crucial support to Hawai'i public schools and ensure that our children have access to healthy and nutritious food.

By establishing a grant program to fund certain initiatives for public schools, HB249 HD1 would help to address the issue of food insecurity among our most vulnerable children, providing them with the sustenance they need to succeed in school and in life.

By establishing full time positions and investing in this program, we invest in the lives of our children and ensure that they have access to quality food.

Please support HB249 HD1.

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



# HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
H.B. 249 – Relating to the Hawai‘i Child Nutrition Program  
House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 2:30PM

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** for **H.B. 249**, which would relocate the Hawai‘i Child Nutrition Program (HCNP) office from the of the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) to the Department of Human Services, and establish a grant program and positions to support schools wishing to improve their food service operations.

HCNP is the federally-supported state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of all USDA child nutrition programs. This includes the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and others.

This “state agency” can be housed in any department or office that the governor appoints. In Hawai‘i, it is administratively attached to HIDOE. However, it is relevant to note that Hawai‘i is the ***only state in the nation*** with a statewide, state-run school district that operates its own school food authority—the School Food Services Branch (SFSB). See the attached diagram for context.

Since the same entity—HIDOE—operates both SFSB and HCNP, it has been historically challenging for HCNP to implement and enforce federal rules. The structure means the two offices often compete for funds, and HCNP has little authority to enforce federal program requirements for SFSB. In addition, it gives SFSB an unfair advantage over charter and independent schools, which have to operate their own school food programs without the same level of support from the state.

We are also supportive of the bill's intent to provide grant funding and administrative capacity to help schools improve their food service programs. ***While we agree that the centralized kitchen model currently proposed by HIDOE could be a constructive component of a farm to school plan, achieving the state’s “30 by 30” farm to school goal is much more than just purchasing.*** These positions will provide critically needed capacity to help schools actually get the ingredients that would come from a centralized kitchen onto the plates of students. Beyond purchasing, even the most basic plan will also require:

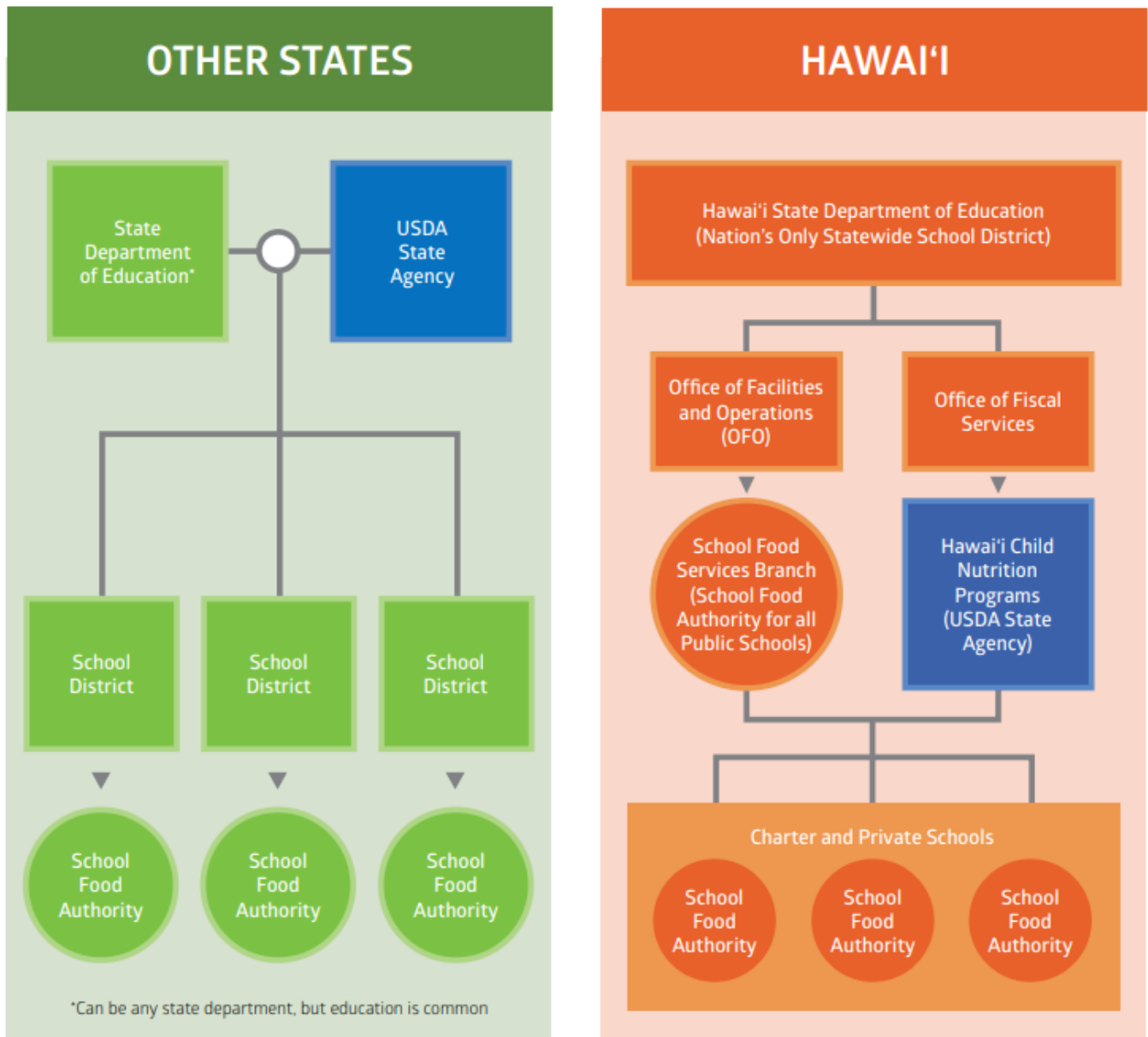
- Recipe development, including standardization, student taste testing, and nutrition analysis
- Menu development that accommodates the USDA meal pattern requirements
- Inventory management and contingency planning for when supply is low
- Standing up systems for data tracking and reporting on benchmarks at the school level, including staff training on these systems
- Other staff training, such as purchasing, inventory, and recipe preparation
- Quality control and monitoring systems



This list only considers the goal of getting local ingredients onto student plates. It does not include any kind of student, parent, or community engagement, specialty recipes, regionalization plans, nutrition or garden education. HCNP, particularly if relocated to another department, will be well-positioned to provide support and resources directly to schools to make the centralized kitchen's offerings actually accessible to schools and students.

Thank you for considering these comments in your deliberation of H.B. 249. Hawai'i Appleseed is one of several organizations that has been working with HCNP for over a decade on a wide variety of initiatives to improve food access for Hawai'i's children. With this experience, it is our belief that relocating HCNP to another state agency will provide clarity and improve the ability of HCNP to effectively monitor and administer all school food authorities equally. Our child nutrition programs are one of the best safety nets available to ensure Hawai'i children have access to the nutrition they need in order to learn and grow. We sincerely believe that this legislation will help us achieve this outcome.

**FIGURE 1**<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Figure taken from [“Feed Our Keiki; Support Our Schools; Help Our Farmers: The missed opportunity of federal child nutrition programs in Hawai‘i.”](#) Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, Ulupono Initiative, Hawai‘i Children’s Action Network, and Hawai‘i Afterschool Alliance. May 2022.



*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: House Committee on Finance

Re: **HB 249, HD1 - Relating to the Hawaii Child Nutrition Program**  
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference  
March 2, 2023, 2:30 PM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB 249, HD1**. This bill establishes the Hawai'i child nutrition programs agency (HCNP) in the department of human services, a grant program to support the funding of certain initiatives for the State's public schools, and three permanent FTE positions.

HCNP is the state agency that is responsible for the administration of the U.S.

Department of Agriculture's child nutrition programs -- such as school lunch, school breakfast, summer food, and afterschool snacks and suppers – in Hawaii.<sup>1</sup> State agencies are the link between USDA and local program operators – such as schools districts, schools, summer camps, and afterschool programs – ensuring that the programs are managed according to the federal requirements. In that role, state agencies are meant to facilitate communication between the program operators and USDA in order to guarantee the success of the child nutrition programs.

Unfortunately, Hawai'i consistently ranks near or at the bottom for state participation in the child nutrition programs. According to national reports, Hawai'i ranks 51st in the nation for afterschool suppers,<sup>2</sup> 44th for summer nutrition,<sup>3</sup> and 50th for school breakfast.<sup>4</sup>

HCNP's position within the Department of Education (DOE) is a factor that contributes to our state's poor performance in the child nutrition programs. Hawai'i is the only state in the nation with a single statewide school district, which means that we are also the only state with a statewide public school food program operator.

This structure places HCNP and the school food office at the same level within DOE, which results in the two offices often competing for funds, and making it challenging for HCNP to enforce federal rules, facilitate communications and ensure the success of the child nutrition programs. In contrast, in other states the state-level child nutrition agency oversees school food program operators that are at the local district level or individual school level.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fns.usda.gov/programs>

<sup>2</sup> <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/Afterschool-Nutrition-Report-2021.pdf>

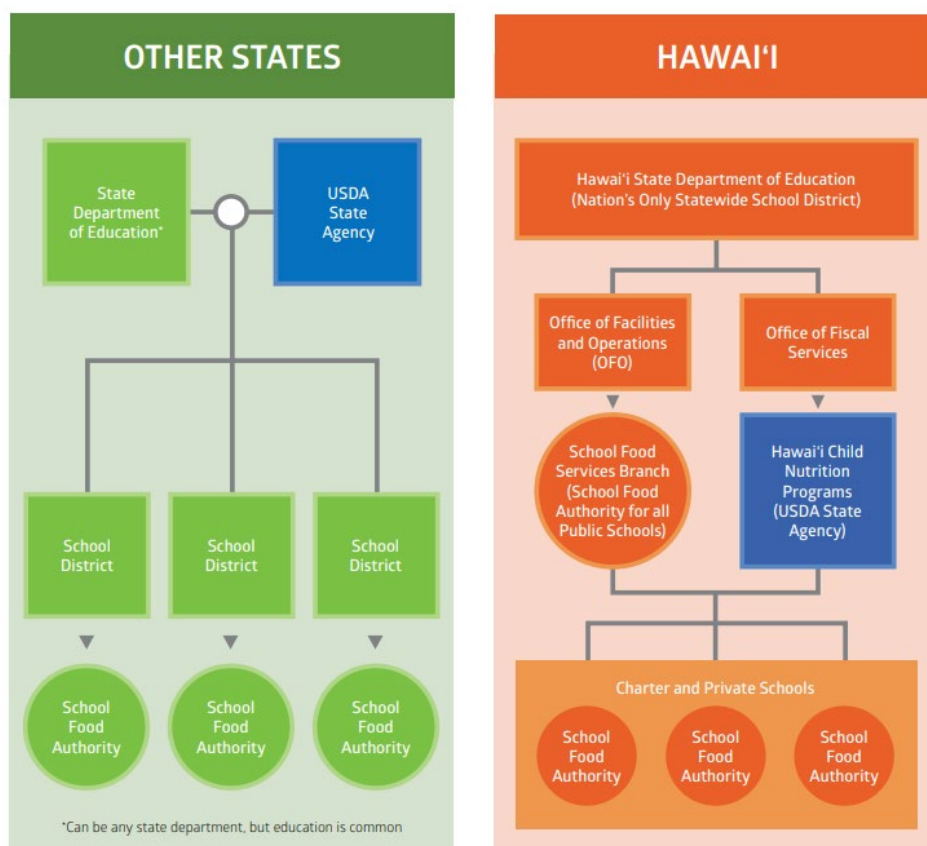
<sup>3</sup> <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/FRAC-Summer-Nutrition-Report-2020.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://frac.org/research/resource-library/breakfastscorecard2021>

<sup>5</sup>

[https://assets.nationbuilder.com/goodbeginnings/pages/2185/attachments/original/1661908583/Feed\\_Our\\_Keiki\\_Print\\_Final.pdf](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/goodbeginnings/pages/2185/attachments/original/1661908583/Feed_Our_Keiki_Print_Final.pdf)

## Hawai'i has a Uniquely Challenging Structure



While most child nutrition state agencies are housed within departments of education, some are housed at departments of human services or agriculture.<sup>6</sup> We believe that moving HCNP to a different department would enable it to more effectively administer and lead to better performance in the child nutrition programs in Hawai'i.

Act 175 (2021) establishes a programmatic goal for the DOE that at least 30 percent of food served in public schools shall consist of locally sourced products by 2030.<sup>7</sup> That goal will help ensure that our keiki have healthy, fresh food at school; boost our local farmers, ranchers, egg-producers, and other local food producers; and decrease our state's dependence on imported food.

For those reasons, we also support the creation of three farm-to-school program within HCNP. Farm-to-school programs in other states are often administered by the same agency that administers the other child nutrition programs, so it makes sense to do the same in Hawai'i.<sup>8</sup>

Mahalo the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this bill.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo, Director of Research and Economic Policy

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-contacts>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/slh/Years/SLH2021/SLH2021\\_Act175.pdf](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/slh/Years/SLH2021/SLH2021_Act175.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-contacts>

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 9:54:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 8:29:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Erika Kuhr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support to increase staffing to support the improvement of the food nutrition the keiki are served. Farm to school has had many setbacks, and we need monies and positions to help move this forward

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 9:28:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kurt Isaac Z Ferrer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

2/14/23

**HB249**

**To Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and members of Finance,**

**I am Kurt Isaac Ferrer, currently a student at campbell highschool and I strongly support HB249**

**During my time in attending school, most of the time I grab school lunch, I noticed that the food was mostly processed, stale, and had an odd aftertaste to it that would irritate my stomach until I went home to “alleviate” that irritation. So, at first, I thought nothing of the situation until I realized the health concerning the development of my future child if I were to try for one. Ever since that thought came to mind, I started realizing how students complain about what today’s lunch is, for example, repetition of the same lunches for days, weeks, and even months or complaints about how stale or concerns whether the food is expired or not. Which comes to the reason why I support HB249. I would like to see a change where healthier foods are being prepared for students as it may help encourage them to eat in school, which would lead to students focusing much better on their education, as well as reducing risks of going to the health room due to avoiding lunch for a consecutive amount of days.**

**Overall, I wouldn’t want my future child to experience the same issues as my generation is currently facing, so I hope that by putting this act into effect, the development of children would be much more healthier than processed foods, and perhaps help students being place**

**their focuses on education rather than devoting their time into sourcing foods from other places.**



**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 10:56:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Samantha Zepeda Silva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB 249 provides funding through a grant program for the purchase of local foods, equipment to prepare local foods, professional development to educate students about nutrition and farm to school connections, and technical assistance to increase participation in federal child nutrition programs.

I don't have children of my own, but as we begin to form a family of our own, interests in the future of our keiki becomes more important. Our children should grow up being closely connected to the land and its resources to gain an appreciation for our islands. This funding would support local farmers and establish a greater connection amongst schools, children, their families and the community.

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 2:15:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tatum Okamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Tatum Okamoto, I am a student of the University of Hawaii at Manoa and the eldest sister of three younger siblings, all of whom are currently attending DOE public schools. I fully support HB249 in establishing a grant program focused on providing local food and a means of preparation for our haumana. This is a profound step towards sustainability in both perpetuating our younger generations in health and in supporting our local farmers. I am a strong advocate for improving education, and food accessibility. Food is an essential part of how we live, and teaching students a healthy relationship with native and local foods is important for perpetuating a future that prioritizes health and sustainability. I feel that children as well as adults struggle with buying and eating traditional as well as healthier food options because the current market incentivizes highly processed and preserved foods; options that are unhealthy but more affordable and lasts longer. As representatives of Hawai'i I hope there is a shared understanding and realization that we have empowered foreign foods and have relied on imported goods for far to long. As policymakers and legislators I'm sure you are aware of Hawai'i and our disparities, that many homes today do not have the luxury to buy salad from the department store let alone grow their own vegetables. Feeding our kids canned peaches soaked in syrup with soggy smiley fries and a sad excuse for a fish stick in addition to returning home to receive a Mcdonalds happy meal, if their lucky, is not how we support healthy growing children. Please, consider how these changes will impact both local farmers and the children of Hawai'i for the better.

Mahalo,

Tatum Okamoto

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 9:47:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Yvonne Yoro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Yvonne Yoro and I am testifying IN SUPPORT of House Bill 249 HD1.

Hawai'i's children deserve nutritious food that are locally grown and locally raised on our islands. By allowing the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Program (HCNP) to carry out its responsibilities as an agent for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) concerning Child Nutrition Programs within the state, we increase our ability to make sure Hawai'i's children are fed and receiving the nutrients they need. I urge you to pass this bill and appropriate the necessary funds to establish three permanent full-time positions.

**HB-249-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 10:35:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debbie Millikan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita,

Thank you for the opporutnity to provide my strong support of HB249 which would establish the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs Agency in the Office of the Auditor. This legislation is needed to support our state's public schools and ensure that our children have access to healthy and nutritious meals. By establishing a grant program and positions for local food procurement, we can be certain young children will have the opportunity to develop healthy eating habits for a lifetime and support a healthy food system for Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.