

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that setting a target
2 goal of thirty per cent of food served in public schools to
3 consist of locally sourced products, as established pursuant to
4 Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, is of great benefit for
5 the health of Hawaii's students. The legislature believes that
6 establishing a recognition program that incentivizes schools to
7 plan for and meet the farm to school meals goal will ensure that
8 the goal will be met by 2030.

9 The legislature further finds that the average meat and
10 dairy products served in schools are highly processed and
11 treated with antibiotics and growth hormones, which can impact
12 health outcomes. Additionally, the agricultural industry,
13 including produce, animals, and grain, generates approximately
14 one fourth of all greenhouse gas emissions. A reduction in meat
15 consumption can be beneficial not only to the environment but to
16 the health of Hawaii's students.



1 The legislature additionally finds that a plant-based diet
2 has been shown to reduce the chance of developing diabetes,
3 cardiovascular disease, and cancers, among other things.
4 Offering vegetarian meals can also greatly increase demand for
5 local greens and promote local farming jobs and agriculture.
6 Providing vegetarian meals to students can promote not only a
7 healthy lifestyle for the State's youth but the making of
8 environmentally conscious personal decisions.

9 The purpose of this Act is to:

10 (1) Authorize the department of education to establish a
11 recognition program to incentivize schools to submit
12 to the department a plan for the school to reach the
13 local farm to school meal goal of thirty per cent of
14 food served in the school to consist of locally
15 sourced products by 2030; and

16 (2) Require department of education high schools to
17 provide a plant-based option as a school meal.

18 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended by adding two new sections to part II, subpart C to be
20 appropriately designated and to read as follows:



1 "§302A- Farm to school meals; recognition program. (a)

2 The department may establish a recognition program to
3 incentivize individual department schools to submit to the
4 department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to
5 school meal goal of thirty per cent of food served in the school
6 to consist of locally sourced products by 2030, established
7 pursuant to section 302A-405.6.

8 (b) The department shall establish guidelines for the
9 recognition program, including what incentives to award to
10 schools who commit to and reach the local farm to school meal
11 goals.

12 §302A- School meals; plant-based options. (a) The
13 department shall require all department high schools to provide
14 a plant-based meal as an option under the school meals program.

15 (b) Department high schools may establish a day within the
16 school week to provide only plant-based options for school
17 meals.

18 (c) Department high schools shall establish their own
19 guidelines, with the approval of the department, that
20 incorporate nutritional guidelines, menu planning, and staffing
21 to carry out the purposes of this section."



1 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

2 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

3

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gatto", is written over a horizontal line.

S.B. NO. 736

Report Title:

DOE; Farm to School Meals; Recognition Program; Department High Schools; School Meals; Plant-Based Option

Description:

Authorizes the Department of Education to establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit to the Department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of thirty per cent of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. Requires public high schools under the Department of Education to provide plant-based meals as an option under the school meals program.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

