

MAR 16 2026

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF AUDITOR'S REPORT NO. 26-08 REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HAWAII'S FARM-TO-SCHOOL AND LOCAL FOOD PROCUREMENT INITIATIVES.

1 WHEREAS, this body recognizes the importance of
2 strengthening Hawaii's food resilience, supporting local
3 agriculture, and improving the nutritional quality of school
4 meals through policies that encourage the procurement of locally
5 grown and produced foods for public school meal programs; and
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7 WHEREAS, the Department of Education was tasked with
8 meeting goals for increasing the use of locally sourced food in
9 school meals, including a statutory benchmark that at least ten
10 percent of food served in public schools be locally sourced,
11 reflecting the State's commitment to strengthening local food
12 systems and reducing dependence on imported food; and
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14 WHEREAS, the Auditor issued Auditor's Report No. 26-08,
15 evaluating the Department of Education's progress in
16 implementing the State's Farm-to-School and local food
17 procurement policies; and
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19 WHEREAS, the audit identified several systemic challenges
20 that have limited progress toward the State's goals, including
21 the absence of a comprehensive strategic plan, limited
22 coordination with local agricultural producers and distributors,
23 procurement processes that do not readily identify locally
24 sourced products, and the need for improved data collection and
25 reporting systems; and
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27 WHEREAS, the audit further highlighted the importance of
28 improved coordination between the Department of Education's meal



1 system and Hawaii's agricultural sector to strengthen food
2 system resilience while supporting local farmers and producers;
3 and
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5 WHEREAS, addressing these challenges requires collaboration
6 among educators, agricultural producers, food distributors,
7 policymakers, nutrition professionals, and community
8 organizations working to strengthen Hawaii's local food systems;
9 now, therefore,
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11 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
12 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026, the
13 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
14 Education is requested to convene a Farm-to-School and Local
15 Food Procurement Working Group to review the findings of
16 Auditor's Report No. 26-08 and identify strategies for
17 strengthening the Department's ability to meet its local food
18 procurement goals; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
21 to consist of no more than seventeen members, representing key
22 stakeholder groups involved in the school food system and local
23 agriculture sector, and include the following representation:
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- 25 (1) The Administrator of the School Food Services Branch
26 of the Department of Education, or the Administrator's
27 designee;
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- 29 (2) The Department of Education's Farm-to-School
30 Coordinator, or an equivalent staff member responsible
31 for local food procurement initiatives;
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- 33 (3) One representative from the Department of Agriculture
34 and Biosecurity, to be designated by the Chairperson
35 of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity;
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- 37 (4) One representative from the Department of Education's
38 Office of Facilities and Operations or procurement
39 administration, to be designated by the Superintendent
40 of Education;
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- 1 (5) Two representatives of Hawaii agricultural producers,
2 including at least one farmer currently supplying or
3 seeking to supply food to institutional buyers, to be
4 invited by the Superintendent of Education;
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- 6 (6) Two representatives of food distributors or vendors
7 that supply food to the public school system, to be
8 invited by the Superintendent of Education;
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- 10 (7) One public school principal, to be invited by the
11 Superintendent of Education;
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- 13 (8) One public school cafeteria manager or food service
14 supervisor, to be invited by the Superintendent of
15 Education;
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- 17 (9) Two representatives of child nutrition or school
18 nutrition professionals, including individuals with
19 expertise in federal school meal program
20 administration, to be invited by the Superintendent of
21 Education;
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- 23 (10) Three representatives of nonprofit or community
24 organizations engaged in farm-to-school, food system
25 development, or agricultural education initiatives in
26 Hawaii, to be invited by the Superintendent of
27 Education;
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- 29 (11) One member of the House of Representatives, to be
30 designated by the Speaker of the House; and
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- 32 (12) One member of the Senate, to be designated by the
33 President of the Senate; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Working Group is requested
36 to review and discuss the findings of Auditor's Report No. 26-08
37 and identify practical strategies to:

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- 39 (1) Improve the collection, accuracy, and reporting of
40 data regarding locally sourced food in public school
41 meals;
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- 1 (2) Identify procurement practices that better support the
- 2 identification and purchase of locally produced food
- 3 items while maintaining compliance with applicable
- 4 procurement laws and federal program requirements;
- 5
- 6 (3) Strengthen coordination between the Department of
- 7 Education and Hawaii's agricultural sector;
- 8
- 9 (4) Identify opportunities to strengthen local food supply
- 10 chains capable of serving public schools; and
- 11
- 12 (5) Provide recommendations for administrative or
- 13 legislative actions that may help the Department of
- 14 Education meet its local food procurement goals; and
- 15

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
17 requested to submit a report to the Legislature no later than
18 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
19 2027 summarizing the Working Group's discussions, including any
20 findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation; and

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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
23 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of
24 Education, Chairperson of the Board of Education, and
25 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

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OFFERED BY: Mike Gabbard

