

Date: 03/17/2008

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2571, SD1, HD1 HSCR1117-08 RELATING TO FOOD WASTE
RECYCLING.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education, in a partnership with the department of health, to establish a three-year food waste recycling pilot project within one or more public schools. Appropriates funds for the pilot program.
(SB2571 HD1)

Department's Position: The Department of Education (DOE) is not able to support SB 2571, SD1, HD1, because it requires a general fund appropriation. This program has a lower priority within the Department than other programs for which budget cuts are pending.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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March 17, 2008

House Committee on Education

Rep. Roy M. Takumi, Chair
Rep. Lyla B. Berg, Vice Chair

By: Richard C. Botti, President, or Lauren Zirbel, Government Affairs

Re: SB 2571, SD1, HD1 RELATING TO FOOD WASTE RECYCLING

Chairs & Committee Members:

The Hawaii Food Industry Association supports this measure, but asks that the definition of food waste recycling be more specific by including composting of food waste in a commercial composting facility, and that the collection of single service food trays utilized at schools for food be collected and separated to redirect them out of landfills for either recycling or sent directly to a WTE (Waste To Energy) facility for use as energy. For this reason, we suggest that at least one pilot project be on a neighbor island, preferably Maui or Kauai, since they rely on landfills only.

While the intent of this measure is to create a food waste recycling pilot project under the Department of Education, it does not discuss the importance of the positive affect this project can have on the private sector.

There is a movement to ban plastic bags, yet compostable bags will not solve the problem in that they will only compost in a commercial composting facility. This bill indirectly addresses that issue, since wet waste from schools would justify major expansions of commercial composting, creating a home for compostable grocery bags, paving the way for increased use which will in turn lower their price making them a move viable solution. All without government bans. We like to call it the carrot approach.

While the title of this bill does not address compostable bags or recycling of polystyrene, it does indirectly address commercial composting, as recycling. It is important that the State take the lead in this issue. The Dept. of Education generates large amounts of food waste.