



Hawaii Farm Bureau
F E D E R A T I O N

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TESTIMONY

HR236/HCR289 REQUESTING STATE PUBLIC ENTITIES TO COMMIT TO HEALTHIER AND MORE NUTRITIOUS MEALS IN THEIR PROGRAMS BY SPENDING TEN PER CENT OF THEIR FOOD DOLLARS FOR LOCALLY-PRODUCED PRODUCE OR OTHER HAWAII AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

HFBF on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations supports HR236/HCR289, seeking public entities to commit to healthier meals utilizing locally produced agricultural products.

Healthy and nutritious meal choices that are affordable and accessible will go a long ways to improving health of our citizens. Measures recommended to be explored in HR208(farm to school programs) will be critical to the success of this measure. Although HR208 refers only to farm to school programs, the various areas that need to be addressed for a successful program are the same.

I personally have been involved in a situation on Maui where the students begged for salads . Last year, the Student Council came before the Legislature asking for a farm to school program. I know the demand is there. It is our responsibility to find a way to provide healthy meals to our children.

The Report to the 2010 by the University of Hawaii on a Farm to School Feasibility Study identifies some of the challenges. It reports on the effort by HFBF to address the procurement system. It states that only 1 of 650 farmers sell via the procurement program. HFBF is in the process of developing a training program for our farmers and ranchers of how to access the program. Recently, I worked with the Public Safety Office on an RFP to farmers and ranchers to provide agricultural products to the prison system. We were given less than two weeks to respond. The forms were new to our people and many had no clue how to fill out the documents. Others even if they were interested did not have the resources to complete the forms. There is much to be done.

HFBF is intent on making this process work. We look forward to cooperating with the various agencies on coming up with solutions. We respectfully request your support of this measure and a timely appointment of members of the working group so work can commence on this important project. If there are any questions, please contact me, Warren Watanabe at 2819718. Thank you.

David Takaki
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HR 236 Testimony
Agriculture Committee

I take this opportunity to endorse HR 236 without reservation, with the understanding that lines 5-6, page 2 of said Resolution includes aquaculture and mariculture produced in the State of Hawaii.