

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2011

11:30 AM

CONFERENCE ROOM 308

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1380, H. D. 2
RELATING TO HAWAII-GROWN PRODUCE**

Chairperson Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 1380, H. D. 2. The purpose of this bill is to establish a farm-to-school program in the department of agriculture to increase the procurement of locally-grown fruits and vegetables; to establish the Hawaii-grown fresh fruit and vegetable program and appropriate funds for the program to increase school children's access to Hawaii produce; and to establish the farmers to food banks pilot program.

The Department of Agriculture supports the overall intent of this bill to increase procurement of locally-grown fruits and vegetables by public schools and recognizes that this measure could potentially support local farmers and leverage an increase in food self-sufficiency within the state.

In the current business environment, school procurement is driven by competitive prices of commodities to meet minimum administrative requirements. Locally grown commodities from smaller farms (with higher input costs) usually lack the volume,

consistency and price points to compete effectively. Additionally, many of our local farmers need to learn and to adopt food safety standards, practices and a better understanding of state procurement processes. While local fruits and vegetables are arguably fresher, more flavorful, and nutritious, the knowledge gap between institutional buyers and local farmers are still far apart.

While the department would like to bridge this gap, it does not currently have the capacity, or required personnel to support a successful undertaking of the tasks and expectations as outlined in this measure.

The department remains a steadfast supporter of the "Buy Local" concept. As provided in this measure, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Department of Accounting and General Services and the Department of Human Services will also play prominent roles in the determination of this bill. Thus, the department defers to the comments from these departments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819
PH: (808)848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921

TESTIMONY

H.B. 1380HD2 Relating to Hawaii Grown Produce

Chair Oshiro and Members of the Committee;

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of our farm and ranch families and organizations supports with amendments, HB1380 HD2, starting a Farm to School program.

Last year, HFBF worked with the Legislature to clarify Hawaii's procurement law. We found it frustrating that very few of our farmers and ranchers were able to enter the State procurement system. HFBF has come before this body many times, with bills requiring increased use of local products in the State procurement system. During those hearings, the procurement office objected stating that agricultural products were exempted from the procurement process so the request was unreasonable. We did not understand the discrepancy.

Annually, HFBF had supported HDOA's request to the procurement office to exempt Hawaii agricultural products from the procurement process. While the justification was that it would allow payment at higher prices, it also provided a condition that the Office was not required to consider local agricultural products. The Bill passed, removed the exemption and required the consideration of local products. Existing laws have other preferential requirements that would need to be considered. By being part of the procurement process, all of these requirements would be in effect. It took us a while to understand this as it was exactly in opposition to what we had been told in the past. Since the passage of the Bill, we have had objections from many entities including the Department of Education that asked that we repeal the law.

Unless the procurement process is remedied, the intent of this program will face challenges. We agree with the measure that the opportunity is huge. The new federal dietary guidelines for school nutrition provides opportunities for our farmers and ranchers. However, they must be able to sell into the system. The Department of Agriculture as our advocate in the system is the logical lead for the program.

We support the suggested amendment, requiring Food Safety Certification of School Gardens by HDOA. This provides a timely training tool for our next generation of consumers.

We strongly support the collaborative efforts proposed in this measure for without it good intentions may fail. We appreciate your consideration and am willing to work with you to implement this measure. If there are any questions, please contact Warren Watanabe at 2819718. Thank you.



TO: Marcus Oshiro, Chair, House Finance Committee
Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair, House Finance Committee

DATE: Feb. 24, 2011, 11:30 am, HCR308

RE: Support of HB1380HD2, Relating to Hawaii-Grown Produce

There is a groundswell of support for the intent of HB1380 HD2. A Pilot Farm-to-School program would yield valuable information and practices that will facilitate state procurement of Hawaii-grown produce in many state institutions.

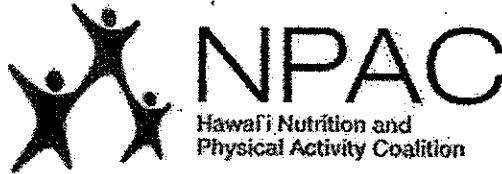
Gov. Abercrombie stated in "New Day in Hawaii" that "government, including schools, hospitals and prisons, must lead by example in supporting local agriculture by giving a preference to locally grown and produced products" and keep our tax dollars here in Hawaii.

- Farm to school (F2S) is a win-win for both local farmers as well as Hawaii school children, especially when combined with a robust school garden, cooking, agriculture and nutrition education program.
- A F2S pilot program is recommended to focus on procurement issues and other barriers with a few select schools, rather than the whole DOE system.

Since state coffers are low, the elimination of the Hawaii grown FFV program and farm to food bank pilot components would decrease the appropriations needed for this bill.

- Recommend eliminating the Hawaii-grown fresh fruit and vegetable program from HB1380HD2 since the current USDA FFV program already allows for the purchase of locally grown produce at market rate.
- Recommend eliminating Section 2, Farmers to food banks pilot program since the DHS has no funds to support the program

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jung Lee", is written in a cursive style.



RE: HB1380 HD2 Establishes a farm-to-school program in the department of education to increase the procurement of locally grown fruits and vegetables....

Before the House Committee on Finance

Thursday, February 24, 2011

Time 11:30am

Conference Room 308

Position: In Support, with Proposed Amendments

Organization: Hawaii County Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

Testifier: Kathie Pomeroy, Hawaii County NPAC Coordinator,
Testimony submitted on 2/23/11

Aloha Chair Mr. Oshiro, Vice Chair Ms. Lee, and Members of the Finance Committee

The Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition (NPAC) works statewide to address the obesity epidemic and concomitant diseases by advancing policies that enable people to make healthier diet and exercise choices. In Hawaii County, NPAC promotes ease of implementation of the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) and promotion of Hawaii grown produce to elementary school students via the USDA FFVP program. We work with the Office of Hawaii Child Nutrition, schools (both DOE and Charter), policy makers, farmers, processors, distributors, and the Hawaii Island School Garden Network, all important players in Hawaii's emerging Farm to School movement.

Hawaii County NPAC recommends the following amendments which would make HB1380HD2 effective and utilize existing resources:

SECTION 1:

1. Farm to School Pilot Program: Established in the Department of Agriculture a farm-to-school pilot program, including a minimum of three schools or three school complexes for three years. The purpose of the pilot program is to understand and increase procurement of locally-grown fruits and vegetables by selected public schools.

2. Exemption from Policy Constraints (ACT 175): All schools participating in the Farm to School pilot program will be exempt from Act 175, SLH 2009 which removed the exemption of fresh produce from Chapter 103D, Hawaii Public Procurement Code, HRS. *Discussion:* Please note that a repeal of Act 175 or an exemption from Act 175 may still not be sufficient to prompt farmers to sell to schools, however, it's an important obstacle to remove. The local cost of ag production is at least 20 percent higher than the

mainland. If the price of oil reaches \$150 a barrel and shipping cost goes up by another 33 percent, then local ag will be more competitive. At the current time, a Hawaii Preference of 15 percent applies in Act 175, SLH 2009 but local farmers are still not fully engaged, partly due to a lack of understanding of the state procurement process or an interpretation that the process is too costly for them (learning curve, compliance, time). HB1380HD2 with proposed amendments attempts to address this farmer education barrier.

3. Farm to School Pilot Program Study: This study, conducted by departments such as CTAHR, DOH, and DOA with data provided by the DOE, and even by NGOs in partnership with DOE, will measure the impact of the Farm to School Pilot Program.

4. Dedicated HDOA Staff Position: If there is an appropriation, it should be given to HDOA for staff person to implement, and work with CTAHR, DOE, DOH, and NGOs (including Kokua Foundation, NPAC, Hawaii Island School Garden Network, etc.) to help execute and evaluate the Farm to School Program and Study (Appropriation: \$50-70,000). The staff person would convene a working group of all these public and private parties to assist in the development of the Farm to School program. Such a working group is already partially organized and would benefit from a lead staff person in HDOA. Another option is to make more money available to contract out these duties.

5. Hawaii-grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP): Delete this section entirely as it is not a priority for funding. The USDA FFVP, already mandated and funded, can serve this purpose. Hawaii County NPAC is already doing so. If this part of the bill remains, depending on the extent of the program, it will need at least a half to full-time staff person to execute it plus an appropriation (at least \$40,000) to fund the program deliverables (produce, equipment, paper goods, etc.).

6. School Gardens: School gardens are for educational purposes, not production purposes on the scale of the school lunch program. A common sense variation of food safety certification specific to teaching gardens, without the required record-keeping and fees, would be sufficient to ensure food safety. The food could be served in the FFVP. Please note that the USDA FFVP does not require food safety certification from its vendors.

SECTION 2:

Farmer to Food Bank: Delete this section entirely. While the concept is important for immediate delivery of local farm produce to the hungry, it would require funding for a community food assessment, the development of distribution infrastructure to get the

Page 3, Testimony in support of HB1380HD2, by Hawaii County NPAC

food to the food banks, and a fair price to the farmers. This belongs in a separate piece of legislation with adequate funding.

Respectfully,

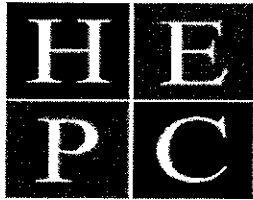
Kathie Pomeroy, N.D.

Kathie Pomeroy, N.D., NPAC Coordinator

Hawaii County Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition: www.npachawaiicounty.com

A Project of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, Office of Public Health Studies

Funded by the Tobacco Settlement Fund, Healthy Hawaii Initiative,
and the Hawaii Department of Health



HAWAI'I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER
Informing the Education Community

Testimony Presented before the
House Committee on Finance

February 24, 2011, 11:30 am, Room 308

by
Donald B. Young, Director
Hawai'i Educational Policy Center

HB 1380 HD2: Relating to Hawaii-Grown Produce

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and members of the House Committee on Finance

The Hawaii Educational Policy Center supports HB 1380 HD 2 Relating to Hawaii-Grown Produce.

A farm to school program has the potential to address many of the challenges facing Hawaii in a uniquely holistic way. It is also consistent with what Governor Abercrombie said during the February 22, 2011 joint Ways and Means and Finance Committees' informational briefing on the executive budget request that Hawaii needs to strengthen its agricultural sector and also enable schools to grow their own food.

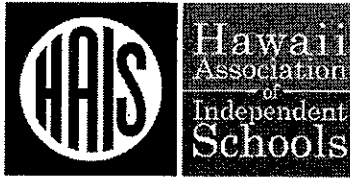
Levels of childhood obesity and diabetes have been increasing steadily in recent years and are reaching alarming rates. Increased access to local, healthy and fresh foods and enhanced education on nutrition and agriculture can help promote healthy eating habits in children. This would lower their risk for these and other related types of health disorders. Research shows a clear link between improved child nutrition and improved learning as well.

Enhancing the procurement of locally grown fruits and vegetables by schools also helps to strengthen and diversify our local economy and create jobs, aided by a multiplier effect. According to the Farm to School Collective "for every dollar spent on local foods in schools, one to three dollars circulates in the local economy." Furthermore, the vast majority of the food we consume here in Hawaii is transported to us from sources many thousands of miles away. Recent increases in the price of oil due to instability in some of the major oil producing countries of the world highlight our vulnerability. To the extent we can foster initiatives that facilitate local agriculture, we can also improve our food security. Finally, many of those of us in the modern world, adults as well as children, have lost touch with a concrete sense of how we get our food, knowledge far more common to us generations ago. Arguably, one of the negative impacts of this has been a lessened sensitivity to the vital need for responsible ecological stewardship. This program has the potential to significantly enhance practical knowledge in this arena.

We respectfully urge the committee to consider the following amendments:

- 1) Expand the scope of the program to include more than just fruits and vegetables;
- 2) Change the wording on page four line two from "throughout the school day" to "consistently throughout the school year"; and
- 3) Change the expending agency in section three from the Department of Education to the Department of Agriculture, if this program is to be established in the Department of Agriculture.

Thank your for the opportunity to testify.



Thursday, February 24, 2011

11:30 am

Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: HB 1380 HD 2 – Relating to Hawaii-Grown Produce

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

HAIS supports the intent of House Bill 1380 HD 2 and finds that the aspirations expressed in this measure are in many cases aligned with the goals of our own new farm-to-school initiative, GROW HAWAII.

Nevertheless, we are very concerned that this measure may be requiring the DOE and DOA to be in compliance with some very noble and urgently needed goals without enough “readiness” or internal “capacity.”

Whereas the DOE and HAIS and its various partners are moving in the direction outlined in this measure, this may be the kind of situation where “too much, too soon,” is being asked of a department already stretched to the limit, with regard to human and financial resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



American Heart Association | American Stroke Association

Learn and Live.

Serving Hawaii

Testimony Supporting the Intent of HB 1380, HD2, "Relating To Hawaii-Grown Produce"

The American Heart Association supports the intent of HB 1380, HD2, "Relating To Hawaii-Grown Produce."

The United States is addressing an obesity epidemic of historical proportion. More than 72 million adults have become obese, greater than 20% above ideal weight, and another one third are overweight; with the concomitant rise in medically costly weight-related complications. Unfortunately, these numbers are spreading to our nation's children where 32 percent are overweight, 16 percent are obese, and 11 percent are extremely obese. The American Heart Association supports a multi-pronged approach to address the nation's obesity epidemic which includes creating policies that improve access and affordability of healthy foods to all people.

While the Centers for Disease Control has not yet established "best practices" to address the obesity issue, it is monitoring and assessing community efforts throughout the country. Including an assessment requirement in HB 1380, HD2 for the programs to be funded would provide data that would help to add to the development of "best practices" to address obesity issues and provide feedback to legislators as to whether their investment of taxpayer funds are having the intended results.

Serving Hawaii since 1948

For information on the AHA's educational or research programs, contact your nearest AHA office, or visit our web site at www.americanheart.org or e-mail us at hawaii@heart.org

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677 Ala Moana Blvd., Ste. 600
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Phone: 808-538-7021
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95 Mahalani Street, No. 13
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Hawaii:
400 Hualani Street, Ste. 15
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Phone: 808-961-2825
Fax: 808-961-2827

Maui:
(represented by Oahu office)
Phone: 808-538-7021
Fax: 808-538-3443

*"Building healthier lives,
free of cardiovascular
diseases and stroke."*

Respectfully submitted by,

Corilee Watters, MSc, RD, PhD, CNSC
Asst. Professor Nutrition
Department of Human Nutrition, Food and Animal Science
American Heart Association Volunteer Spokesperson



The Official Sponsor of Birthdays

February 22, 2011

Committee on Finance
Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair

Hearing:

February 24, 2011, 11:30 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308

RE: HB 1380, HD2 – Relating to Hawaii-Grown Produce

Testimony in Support

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the Committee on Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB1380, HD2 which establishes the farm-to-school program in the Department of Agriculture to increase the procurement of locally-grown fruits and vegetables.

For over 60 years, the American Cancer Society in Hawaii has been leading the battle against cancer. We have made much progress in saving lives through early detection and new cutting edge treatments as a result of ongoing research. Research has shown that obesity increases the risk of multiple health conditions including diabetes, hypertension and number of cancers.

Obesity is a serious health concern for children and adolescents. Results from the 2007-2008 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, using measured heights and weights, indicate that an estimated 17% of children and adolescents ages 2-19 years are obese. Among pre-school age children 2-5 years of age, obesity increased from 5 to 10.4%; among 6-11 year olds from 6.5 to 19.6%; and among adolescents aged 12-19 from 5 to 18.1%.

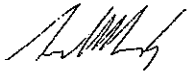
Alarminglly, obese children and adolescents are more likely to become obese as adults. One study found that approximately 80% of children who were overweight at aged 10–15 years were obese adults at age 25 years. Another study found that 25% of obese adults were overweight as children. Clearly something has to be done. Accoding to the CDC in 2003, Hawaii’s childhood obestity rate was 13.3%. In 2007, it more than doubled to 28.5%.

We fully support the school gardens program, and firmly believe that exposing our children to growing methods will hopefully lead to an increased consumption for fresh fruits and vegetables that will last a lifetime.

Because of the research potential this program could provide, we would encourage both the Department of Human Services in partnership with the Department of Agriculture to apply for a Childhood Obesity Research Demonstration Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to fund and evaluate the farmers to food bank pilot program. Additional funding could also be obtained from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Healthy Eating Research: Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding this important public health issue.

Respectfully,



George S. Massengale, JD
Director of Government Relations

Date: 02/24/2011

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1380,HD2(hscr463) RELATING TO HAWAII-GROWN PRODUCE.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the farm-to-school program in the department of agriculture to increase the procurement of locally-grown fruits and vegetables.
Establishes the Hawaii-grown fresh fruit and vegetable program to increase schoolchildren's access to Hawaii produce. Establishes the farmers to food banks pilot program.

Department's Position: The Department of Education supports HB 1380, HD2. The Department appreciates the amendments made to the original bill.

With regards to the cost of the fresh fruit and vegetable program, the DOE notes the following: factoring the 85 eligible schools (not including the schools participating in the federal program), enrollment in qualifying schools, times the minimum cost per student, the projected general fund baseline appropriation requirement will be \$2.8 million annually. This is based on the United States Department of Agriculture FFVP criterion of approximately \$63 million cost would be additional full- and part-time positions: grant manager, procurement specialist, data entry clerk, accountant, and cafeteria helpers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 9:56 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: janeyamashiro2020@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1380 on 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM HB1380

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jane Yamashiro
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: janeyamashiro2020@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2011

Comments:

What better way for students to learn about eating good local foods than to have it prepared for them at school.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
ent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 9:47 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: mlspadaro@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1380 on 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM HB1380

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mary Spadaro
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: mlspadaro@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2011

Comments:

Farm to table initiatives are important to Hawaii's economy and food security. Allowing schools to serve food grown in school gardens is a logical and easy next-step. It is only hard to believe that legislation is required to do such a sensible, simple thing.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
ent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 10:51 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: palmtree7@earthlink.net
Subject: Testimony for HB1380 on 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM HB1380

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: janice palma-glennie
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: palmtree7@earthlink.net
Submitted on: 2/23/2011

Comments:
A no-brainer. please support this bill.
mahalo.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 7:13 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: hokuokekai50@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1380 on 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/24/2011 11:30:00 AM HB1380

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mary Lacques
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: hokuokekai50@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2011

Comments: