

Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i

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March 18,, 2011

Testimony for HB1380 and HB 198

Re: HB1380 and HB198 Hawaii Grown Produce Program

Aloha Chair Tokuda and Chair Nishihara and committee members

HB1380 and HB 198 helps empowers community to be part of the Wellness Policy that is implemented by the Department of Education across the entire U.S. and now the State of Hawaii. Community input is already starting ,Last month at a small community meeting we showed a film called 2 angry moms, Jennifer Ryan with the Department of Health was a panelist along with Kokua Foundation Lydi Morgan Bernal, Rep. Della Bellatti and community and general membership of the ECDPH . We all agreed together that the more we provide good fresh local produce we are building the future.

HB1380 and HB 198 keeps Hawaii dollars spent in and for Hawaii's economy will providing healthy nutritional meals for our Keiki.

Hawaii's money is better spent developing local agriculture for food sustainability and local agribusiness.

We cut down on potential invasive species – these could arrive on shipments of out of state feed.

We reduce carbon footprint because of less import..

We create agricultural and green jobs - more revenue for the State of Hawaii and an increase in UH agricultural students looking to apply for these green career oriented positions and job opportunities. Small family farms can feel good about passing on their knowledge and livelihood to the next generation.

The ECDPH supports this bill and appreciates the opportunity to testify.

Juanita Kawamoto Brown
Sub Committee Chair
Food and Farm Sustainability
Environmental Caucus
Of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

Debbie Schatz

HB 1300

I am in support of this bill.

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My experience with the garden and food programs at Aikahi Elementary school includes being a Nutrition docent, teaching classes as a volunteer, on nutrition funded and trained by Kokua Hawaii Foundation. I also supported the Fresh Choices program, introduced by and funded by Kokua at first, and now funded exclusively by the Aikahi PTSA.

To be successful these programs are not managed by the PTSA or other parent organizations, but managed through the school, or after school programs, in partnership with the schools. The pilot program is investing in a long term commitment that will allow for eco-literacy to increase it's effectiveness in the classrooms and on campus for all students.

For the pilot program to succeed please allow for a partnership to be managed and funded by private enterprise, DOA and or DOE. Integrating this program into the schools is a long term goal, and has a huge push from the private sector right now. There is a window of opportunity to allow for effective change in students and teachers diets.

Many Garden programs in schools are currently in place. Alna IS at the HawaiiKokua Foundation is one of the strongest donors state wide, but here are other programs like the Ulupono Initiative that are funding eco-literacy programs. For the most part the programs includes gardens, nutrition and food alternatives in addition to the school lunch.

The procurement process for local foods are based on guidelines that are tedious for local farmers and keep the supply low, and prices high. This process for the DOE needs to be revised, not just to notify farmers of the program, but to adjust the rules so that local farmers can comply and be easily certified. This too is a long term goal that needs to start now to allow for long term growth and support.

A quick example, is we are serving bananas from Ecuador in the cafeterias instead of local bananas.

Thank you for considering my testimony.