

LATE

SB 564

Testimony



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

2343 Rose Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Phone: (808) 848-2074 • Neighbor-Islands: (800) 482-1272
Fax: (808) 848-1921 • Email: info@hfbf.org
www.hfbf.org

February 6, 2013

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HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

TESTIMONY ON SB 564
RELATING TO HAWAIIAN-GROWN PRODUCE

Room 414
1:35 PM

Chair Nishihara, Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committees:

I am Dean Okimoto, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,950 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFBF supports the intent and submits the following comments and suggested amendments to SB 564 which establishes a farm to school program to increase procurement of locally grown fruits and vegetables.

HFBF strongly supports increased use of locally grown agricultural products, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy and poultry products in our schools and other public institutions. This will truly be a significant step towards increasing our levels of self-sufficiency. We however do not believe that a focus on providing vegetables from school gardens should be a priority.

Many formal and informal studies have been done addressing farm to school programs and we understand the Department of Agriculture has also done some work in this area within the past year. Our farmers and ranchers have tried to work with the procurement system and can speak to the difficulties with the system. For example, supplying to a school or schools within a geographic area will be feasible while providing to the entire school system is unreasonable. Focus should now be on working with the procurement

system to make it a reasonable process to the size of farmers and ranchers we have in Hawaii. Assistance to farmers on how to travel through the system should be a priority.

HFBF will support a program that partners with the Department of Education Procurement Office to develop programs that work in Hawaii and training sessions for farmers and ranchers to enter the system. Our farmers and ranchers may not be ready now but can be if they understand the opportunity and identify crops and other products that can be grown and produced at the required prices.

Students want fresh salads and other local options. The demand exists. HFBF respectfully requests funding be provided to Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education to amend their procurement process to work for local farmers and ranchers and provide training classes to enter into the system.

Thank you for this opportunity to address this important issue.

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HAWAII ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION

808-969-7789

76-789 'Io Place, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
hofa@hawaiiorganic.org www.hawaiiorganic.org
Toll Free: 1-877-ORG-ISLE (674-4753)

Wednesday, February 06, 2013

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RE: S.B. 564 Farm to School Program

Chairman, Vice Chair, Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill.

HOFA, established in 1994 is an Association of Hawaii organic farmers, distributors, retailers, other organic industry members, and organic consumers. HOFA's vision is to create a sustainable future for Hawaii and our mission is to further organic and sustainable agriculture, land care, and lifestyles in Hawaii, thus giving meaning and life to our state motto: *Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono* "The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness".

HOFA strongly supports passage of this bill and asks that you vote in favor of it.

As a comment we would suggest that consideration be given to adding language to the bill to give preference or priority to the sourcing of Hawaii foods farmed organically, as organically produced foods are best for the environment.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Fergusson
President

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Hawaii Organic Farming Association

Our Vision is to:

Create a sustainable future for Hawaii.

Our mission is to:

*Further organic and sustainable agriculture, land care, and lifestyles in Hawaii, thus giving meaning and life to our state motto:
Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono "The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness".*

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [AGL Testimony](#)
Cc: crystalkpaul@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB564 on Feb 6, 2013 13:35PM*
Date: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 8:46:43 PM

SB564

Submitted on: 2/5/2013

Testimony for AGL/EDU on Feb 6, 2013 13:35PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Crystal Kia Paul	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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