



OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

**DOUG CHIN**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**TESTIMONY OF  
THE OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 98**

**Requesting the Department of Education to reexamine the menu schedules for school meals to give local produce suppliers the ability to provide locally grown produce in each meal, in keeping with United States Department of Agriculture standards.**

March 28, 2018

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor appreciates this opportunity to testify on Senate Resolution 98 that requests the Department of Education to reexamine their menu schedules for school meals to give local produce suppliers the ability to provide locally grown produce in each meal, in keeping with USDA standards. The Office of the Lieutenant Governor supports the intent of this measure and offers comments as the Department of Education is already undertaking much of what is being asked of in this resolution through the 'Aina Pono Farm to School Program.

The vision of farm to school is to improve the health of schoolchildren and support local agriculture by incorporating fresh, local food into child nutrition programs. Since 2015, my predecessor former Lt. Governor Shan Tsutsui spearheaded the Hawaii Farm to School Initiative to test whether this vision is achievable for Hawaii. I am proud to continue to work to achieve this vision, now that a team of public and private partners has demonstrated that yes, it is possible but not without some significant changes made by the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) to its approach to school food, including (at a minimum):

- (1) Introduction of new menus with recipes that emphasize fresh, local food;
- (2) Institution of staff training to be able to prepare these new recipes;

- (3) Collection of data, financial analysis (including by school profit and loss statements), leadership training, and waste management to create the efficiencies needed to afford better quality food;
- (4) Conducting agricultural market research and networking to source local food and build supply over time;
- (5) Exploration of new approaches to procurement and contracts with multiple local food vendors; and
- (6) Implementation of nutrition education to encourage students to try new foods and make healthy food choices.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding, the 'Aina Pono Executive Committee which includes my office, HIDOE, the Kohala Center, and Beyond Green Sustainable Partners has worked tirelessly to show proof of concept – that reexamining and redesigning our school menus around what is available locally can support local agriculture.

As state leaders, we must support efforts to reexamine our menus and make 'Aina Pono a state priority through policy and legislation. At 24-million prepared meals annually, HIDOE is the state's largest purchaser of food. This program has the potential to support local agriculture, create jobs, increase food security statewide, and boost academic performance and childhood health through improved nutrition. A message from state leadership prioritizing the reexamination of HIDOE menu development processes through the implementation of 'Aina Pono will set the stage for prioritizing the project within multiple state departments.

We must also encourage and empower HIDOE – as the single largest public purchaser of food and lead implementing agency for 'Aina Pono – to undertake the significant efforts listed above to implement the program statewide, which amounts to broad-based systems changes within the HIDOE's School Food Services Branch.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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March 28, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
SEANTE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SCR 180 / SR 98**

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REEXAMINE THE MENU SCHEDULES FOR SCHOOL MEALS TO GIVE LOCAL PRODUCE SUPPLIERS THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCE IN EACH MEAL, IN KEEPING WITH UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE STANDARDS.

Room 229  
2:50 PM

Aloha Chair Kidani, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Riviere, and Members of the Committees:

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

Hawaii Farm Bureau **supports SCR 180 / SR 98**, which requests the Department of Education to reexamine the menu schedules for school meals to give local produce suppliers the ability to provide locally grown produce in each meal, in keeping with United States Department of Agriculture standards.

HFB 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. HFB also believes that learning where food comes from is an important part of our children's education. Agriculture education involves more than just learning the basics of food production, it provides the opportunity for our children to understand and appreciate the importance of agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Wednesday, March 28, 2018 — 2:50 p.m. — Room 229

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SR 98, Requesting the Department of Education to Reexamine the Menu Schedules for School Meals to Give Local Produce Suppliers the Ability to Provide Locally Grown Produce in Each Meal, in Keeping with United States Department of Agriculture Standards**

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and better management of waste and fresh water. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono strongly supports SR 98**, which requests the Department of Education to reexamine menu schedules to allow for more local produce to be supplied, because it aligns with our goal of creating more locally produced food.

The effort to incorporate more local foods into school cafeterias started decades ago with passionate advocates, was test trialed in the last year at the Kohala school complex via funding by private sector and non-profit foundation grants, and resulted in adoption by the Department of Education after demonstrating initial success thru data. The results were encouraging, including greater meal participation, less food waste, far higher local food and fresh food content, and, bottom line, lower cost per meal eaten. It also sets the foundation for our students to understand the value and benefits of a scratch-cooked meal and why fresh, locally produced foods are important, thereby influencing their behavior, health, and purchasing decisions for the rest of their lives.

We applaud the Department of Education's leadership in supporting this project. The Department of Education's school food services branch leadership and staff deserves credit for being much more flexible in accommodating local foods than in prior years.

Yet, to continue the momentum and scale the program, obtaining more local products from our local farmers and ranchers presents unique challenges. If menu schedules for school

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meals were to be reanalyzed and could be made to be more flexible with local suppliers, this could create a win-win scenario for our local agriculture industries and students.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become more complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that by collaborating, we can help produce more local food and support an economically robust homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta  
General Partner

**SR-98**

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 3:28:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/28/2018 2:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
lindsey whitcomb	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SR-98**

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 6:20:16 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/28/2018 2:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the use of FRESH local products in our children's school menus. This is a benefit to our children and local produce suppliers. Very healthy.

**SR-98**

Submitted on: 3/21/2018 3:27:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/28/2018 2:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments: