



TESTIMONY OF THE KAHANA FOUNDATION  
IN REGARD TO HB2740 HD3,  
RELATING TO A PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO BE HEARD BY  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
MONDAY MARCH 16, 2020 3:15PM ROOM 229

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alexandra Kahn, and I am the Co-Founder & Director of Media at the Kahana Foundation. We are a Hawai'i-based environmental awareness organization working to improve our community's understanding and support for sustainable change and I have been documenting the environmental shifts in the Hawaiian school systems for the past few years. It is crucial to support the sustainable school's initiative outlined in HB2740 HD3 for the future of our keiki, the environment, and the resiliency of our islands.

The elements of the Sustainable Schools initiative are not only feasible, but already underway. Working alongside HDOE, I have seen their push towards decreasing waste, increasing local food use, and incorporating more environmental elements, such as school gardens and outdoor learning spaces. Kahana Foundation **supports** HB2740 HD3, relating to a Public Schools, which requires the department of education to establish food waste and local-sourcing goals as part of the sustainable schools initiative.

**Setting a goal for a zero-waste initiative can decrease environmental impact while providing food to those in need, decreasing food waste costs, reallocating funding for fresh ingredients, teaching waste conscious behaviors, and creating compost.**

As a state, 35.5 percent of our waste is organics, some of which is still edible and can be donated to those in need prior to compost. There is no need to throw organic food waste into bins on route to H-Power, when there are options such as hungry community members and compost.

Reducing food waste can provide the following environmental and economic effects <sup>1</sup>

- Prevent pollution related to food production, such as fertilizers and pesticides, and save energy associated with growing, preparing, and transporting food
- Reduce methane emissions from landfills
- Save money by buying only what is needed and by avoiding disposal costs.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/how-prevent-wasted-food-through-source-reduction>

- Save labor costs through more efficient handling, preparation, and storage of food that will actually be used.

In order to fully realize the zero-waste initiative, one of the first steps is to conduct waste audits. Through HIDOE, 'Āina Pono is currently conducting food waste audits at a group of schools on Kauai to see what adjustments can be made to menus and purchasing in order to decrease food waste overall. A pilot program related to waste diversion that looks at scratch cooking and menu choice was previously conducted at Kohala schools complex as part of the Farm to School Initiative in 2015.<sup>2</sup> The result yielded improvement in several areas:

- *Local food purchases* increased from the baseline of 20 percent to an average of 42.5 percent during the first semester.
- *Fresh foods* increased from the baseline of 27 percent of food served to 92 percent at the end of the first semester.
- *Cost savings* in the first semester were 30 percent, during a time that included weighing waste daily.

In addition to waste audits to decrease waste at the source, there are additional ways, according to the USDA Waste Recovery Hierarchy,<sup>3</sup> to achieve net-zero food waste goals including food sharing, food donation, and compost. “Shared Tables”<sup>4</sup> is a program enacted by the schools itself, allowing for students to “share” food that they took and did not eat, and has remained suitable for consumption. Food donation programs can go through organizations such as Aloha Harvest,<sup>5</sup> which is currently working with 12 schools to rescue uneaten food and provide it to those in need.

Compost is the step prior to landfill for food waste. According to the Farm to School Hui, currently 80 percent of HIDOE schools have varying gardens: food, peace gardens, and flowers. The food harvested from these gardens is used in classroom activities, taken home, or even sold at school-run farmers markets. The compost created on campus helps to increase the fertility of these school gardens. Growing the compost program statewide is already a goal of the HIDOE, and there is currently a Windward School Compost Hui, as well as compost programs at different private, charter, and select public schools statewide.

**Setting 60 percent local goals can increase food security, create local jobs, support the growth of local aviculture, and decrease the carbon footprint.**

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/Organization/Offices/FacilitiesandOperations/SchoolFoodServices/f2s/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-recovery-hierarchy>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fdacs.gov/content/download/89078/file/Foodrecover-Sharetable-2019.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://alohaharvest.org>

HIDOE is currently on track for 40 percent local food by 2024 and upon discussion with Dexter Kisha, the HIDOE Farm to School Coordinator, a goal of 60 percent local produce and 60 percent local animal proteins is entirely achievable. As an island, we are currently importing roughly 90%<sup>6</sup> of the foods we consume as a whole at a cost of approximately \$3 billion, leaving our islands and schools vulnerable should an unpredictable shipping problem occur. HIDOE, however, is already incorporating 30 percent local ingredients into school meals and working with farmers statewide to supply more food items based upon FDA food requirements, increasing both jobs and food security.

The goals of HIDOE are in line with an overall growing trend in the federal DOE that shares a push towards local foods. According to the USDA, they already “encourage a push for school districts to use locally-produced foods in school meals and to use "farm-to-school" activities to spark students' interest in trying new foods.” They even established an official Farm to School Grant Program<sup>7</sup> as well as a grant program to help schools purchase kitchen equipment to help them provide healthier school meals. Hawai'i is one of the only states that has a growing season of 365 days/year and having this advantage truly allows for HIDOE to focus on local food production.

Setting local food production goals for proteins and produce means that both local farmers and fisherman can benefit. Currently, HIDOE offers no seafood options, but in their quest for local foods and the knowledge that seafood is more readily available than any other protein source, they are already testing seafood dishes. Additionally, 100% of HIDOE's fresh beef products are already locally produced so a shift from proteins like chicken to seafood could allow HIDOE to easily hit a 60 percent target.

There is a large environmental impact attached to food imports, and low prices provided through massive companies abroad undercut the prices of local farmers. By making these shifts to more local foods through HIDOE, we are paving the path for increased local food production and support overall for the entire state. Additionally, by adding this requirement we are creating an increased demand for local produce which will further stimulate the local farming economy.

**There is a direct correlation between local ingredients, fresh food, and local recipes, and overall waste reduction.**

In 2018, Mililani Schools launched a pilot program that analyzed the effects of changing ingredients and recipes on waste reduction. Traditionally, DOE schools serve prepackaged meals with minimal prep, but with food waste rates so high, Mililani wanted to test “scratch cook,” or, cook-

---

<sup>6</sup> [http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/spb/INCREASED\\_FOOD\\_SECURITY\\_AND\\_FOOD\\_SELF\\_SUFFICIENCY\\_STRATEGY.pdf](http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/spb/INCREASED_FOOD_SECURITY_AND_FOOD_SELF_SUFFICIENCY_STRATEGY.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/farm-school-grant-program>

ing with fresh ingredients, in the schools to see how the change would impact waste. After a food waste audit was conducted, the research showed that Mililani high school students wasted 19 percent of their meal daily, while students at Mililani Uka elementary schools wasted 35 percent, and Mililani Waena Elementary School wasted 32 percent. When the scratch cooking program was tested, the percentages of food changed from 60 percent processed to 60 percent scratch cooking, with an increase from 20 percent to 40 percent local ingredients. These menu changes reflected in a 40 percent waste reduction overall. To measure scratch cooking meals directly against processed meals within the same time period, styles of food were interspersed throughout the week. The audit during this time revealed that students threw away 9–21 percent less food on days they were served freshly prepared meals.

Making shifts to local ingredients and fresh foods additionally provides an opportunity for schools to teach students about nutrition, local agriculture, Hawaiian culture, food waste, plant life cycles, and more.

**Integration of sustainability into curriculum allows for more creative freedom for teachers, Hawaiian place-based learning, project-based learning, increased environmental awareness, and increased student engagement.**

In 2010, the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui was formed and in 2017 it became a part of Hawai'i Public Health Institute. <sup>8</sup> This hui provides resources to HIDOE schools including garden safety, foodservice tips, curriculum ideas, Āina Pono, and the Garden to Cafeteria Program. While this Hui is already there, it is underutilized as a whole and requires more support from a state level to reach its full potential and provide what it can for all HIDOE schools.

This bill will give that further support and resources for the hui, students and teachers, and provides aid to those looking for a way to start these changes. Farm to School programs (which encompass local food introduction, gardens, compost, and more) have been shown to have the following benefit to students: <sup>9</sup>

- Increase in knowledge and awareness about gardening, agriculture, healthy eating, local foods, nutrition, growing cycles, seasonality and other STEM concepts
- Enhanced overall academic achievement in K-12 settings, including grades and test scores; increase in opportunities for physical activity and social and emotional growth; increase in school engagement
- Provides children with an understanding of agriculture and the environment; provides children with opportunities for social and emotional growth; improves life skills, self-esteem, social skills and behavior
- Increased opportunity for innovative teaching platforms for core subjects, such as science, math and language arts

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.hiphi.org/farmentoschool/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.farmentoschool.org/Resources/BenefitsFactSheet.pdf>

- Greater opportunity for necessary experiential and hands-on learning
- Encourages low-income students and students of color to engage in food and environmental issues in their communities.

According to the Green Schools Alliance,<sup>10</sup> “students spend the majority of their day in a school building during their most crucial developmental years. [...] The journey to that goal begins with educating students in a healthy and sustainable environment.” The underlying goal for this bill is to make all DOE schools Net Zero Energy Green Schools by 2035, a first attempt of its kind in the nation. As defined by USGBC Center for Green Schools, “All green schools share three common goals: reduced environmental impact, increased health and well-being, increased environmental and sustainability literacy for all graduates.”<sup>11</sup> Our children are already more environmentally aware than many adults and it is a topic amongst the youth thanks to global youth leaders such as Greta Thunberg and local leaders such as Hawaii Youth Climate Coalition. Students around the world are demanding sustainability education in schools and working with their schools and student body to find ways to decrease their school’s environmental footprint.

Kahana Foundation **supports** HB2740 HD3 with proposed amendments and we urge this committee to pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and we are available for any further questioning.

Sincerely,

Alex Kahn  
Kahana Foundation

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.greenschoolsalliance.org/home>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.centerforgreenschools.org/what-green-school>



Bobby Farias  
President  
Hawaii Meats LLC  
91-319 Olai Street  
Kapolei, HI 96707

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

**Re: HB 2740 HD 2**

Monday, March 16, 2020, 3:15pm  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Aloha e Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bobby Farias, and I am the President and Partner of Hawaii Meats, LLC, a locally vertically-integrated ranch. I am writing in **support of HB 2740 HD 2**.

Hawaii Meats, LLC strongly supports the amended measure to replace the plant-based alternative meal goals with a goal of locally sourcing sixty percent of all animal proteins and sixty percent of all produce for meals in all public schools by January 1, 2035.

Hawaii's locally grown beef provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc, and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children.

Overly processed plant-based meat substitutes are higher in sodium and must be combined with starches and saturated fats to bind the product together.

Our Hawaii ranches utilize marginal or inaccessible lands that would otherwise be unproductive. Cattle "up-cycle" - they convert low quality forages into muscle and meat that provide high quality food for our communities.

We strongly support HB 2740 and respectfully ask that the committee acts favorably on the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important matter.

Mahalo,

Bobby Farias  
President - Hawaii Meats, LLC

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

**HB2740 HD2**

Requires the department of education to establish food waste and local-sourcing goals as part of the sustainable schools initiative. Takes effect 7/1/2050. (HD2)

DATE: Monday, March 16, 2020  
TIME: 3:15 P.M.  
PLACE: Conference Room 229  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and members of the Committee Education,

McCandless Ranch **supports HB2740 HD2.**

McCandless Ranch supports composting and reducing waste while providing nutritious meals for students. We strongly support the Aina Pono program, with the goal of increasing local food in student meals. Mahalo to you for replacing a plant-based requirement with instead, “Locally sourcing sixty per cent of all animal proteins and sixty per cent of all produce purchased for meals offered in public schools.”

Hawaii’s locally grown beef provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children. We support a healthy, balanced diet and active lifestyle for all our keiki. The cattle industry is proud to contribute to both.

McCandless Ranch supports HB2740 HD2 and appreciates the opportunity to testify on this important issue for our industry.

Keith K. Unger  
McCandless Ranch  
President - HCC





Pono Hawai'i Initiative

Josh Frost - President • Patrick Shea - Treasurer • Kristin Hamada  
Nelson Ho • Summer Starr

Monday, March 16, 2020

Relating to Public Schools  
Testifying in Support

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) **supports HB2740 HD2 Relating to Public Schools**, which requires the Department of Education to establish a food waste and local-sourcing goals as part of the sustainable school's initiative. This measure would increase the local food sourcing goals.

This measure will help Hawai'i public schools lower their waste and increase their purchasing of locally produced food. This will help better the local economy by supporting local farmers and creating jobs as well as taking steps to make better choices for our environment.

For all these reasons, we urge you to vote in favor of this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity,  
Gary Hooser  
Executive Director  
Pono Hawai'i Initiative

**HB-2740-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/14/2020 5:00:13 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2020 3:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
"Phil" Augustus Acosta	Testifying for Aloha Harvest	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani and Vice Chair Kim,

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB2740.

At Aloha Harvest, we strive to create a less wasteful and more equitable food system. By collecting and redistributing food that would otherwise be discarded, we are able to feed more than 56,000 of Hawaii's hungry individuals and families annually, while reducing the effects of food waste to the environment and our economy. This year, as we celebrate our 20th year anniversary, we are proud to say that we have rescued over 23 million pounds of food from going into the waste stream.

Major components of this bill, specifically the goal of net zero food waste and the use of waste diversion strategies in the schools that include food donation are very much aligned with our mission, and will help us to feed even more students and their families who are struggling with food insecurity. In 2019, we collected from over 300 different food donors to rescue 1.8 million pounds of quality food, and distributed to over 175 social service agencies to help the following:

- 46% Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders
- 36% unemployed (and working poor)
- 29% children
- 22% homeless
- 16% seniors
- 10% with mental illness, substance abuse or physical disabilities

Therefore, we urge this committee to pass HB2740 as it is important in our efforts to scale our operations and increase our impact in the community. Thank you.

Respectfully,  
"Phil" Augustus Acosta  
Executive Director, Aloha Harvest  
phil@alohaharvest.org  
(808) 208-4307



**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

**HB2740 HD2**

Requires the department of education to establish food waste and local-sourcing goals as part of the sustainable schools initiative. Takes effect 7/1/2050. (HD2)

DATE: Monday, March 16, 2020  
TIME: 3:15 P.M.  
PLACE: Conference Room 229  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and members of the Committee Education,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB2740 HD2.**

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports composting and reducing waste while providing nutritious meals for students. We strongly support the Aina Pono program, which aims to increase local food in student meals. We thank the legislators for supporting local nutritious food and reducing the carbon footprint of importing mainland food, by including in this bill, "Locally sourcing sixty per cent of all animal proteins and sixty per cent of all produce purchased for meals offered in public schools."

Hawaii's locally grown beef provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children. We support a healthy, balanced diet and active lifestyle for all our keiki. We are proud to contribute to both.

We support HB2740 HD2 and appreciate the opportunity to testify on this important issue for our industry.

Nicole Galase  
Managing Director





Date: March 16, 2020  
To: Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Education  
From: Lydi Bernal, Coordinator, Hawai'i Farm to School Hui  
Re: SUPPORT for HB2740 HD2, Relating to Public Schools  
Hrg: March 16, 2020 at 3:15pm at Conference Room 229

**LATE**

---

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB2740 HD2**, which requires the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) to establish food waste and local-sourcing goals as part of the Sustainable Schools Initiative.

The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) works to advance policy and systems change to reduce disparities and improve the health of Hawai'i residents. HIPHI is home to and testifies here on behalf of the Obesity Prevention Task Force<sup>1</sup> and the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui<sup>2</sup>, which **collectively represent over 60 organizations from across the islands**.

This bill sets important goals related to the continued rollout of a **successful, holistic farm to school program within HIDOE**, while contributing to increased food security and food self-sufficiency in Hawai'i. Importantly, composting of food waste will contribute to a reduced dependence on imported fertilizers and other inputs for the production of locally-grown foods.

We respectfully request that you to **please pass this bill**.

Me Ke Aloha,

Lydi Bernal  
Coordinator, Hawai'i Farm to School Hui  
Member, Obesity Prevention Task Force  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

---

<sup>1</sup> Created by the legislature in 2012, the **Obesity Prevention Task Force** is comprised of over 40 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawaii's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

<sup>2</sup> The **Hawai'i Farm to School Hui** is a statewide network comprised of five island-level networks, community organizations, schools, state agencies, and other food systems stakeholders with a collective mission to strengthen Hawaii's farm to school movement. The three pillars of successful farm to school programs are 1) school gardens, 2) agriculture, culinary, nutrition, and food systems education, and 3) school food improvements through local food procurement. The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui formed in 2010 and became a program of HIPHI in 2017.

**HB-2740-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/15/2020 9:39:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2020 3:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Saleh Azizi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY IS SUPPORT OF HB2740 HD2

SALEH AZIZI FARDKHALES,

PH.D. AWARDED 2019 IN URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING- LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND AS AN EXPERT IN THE FIELD

808-383 5224 AZIZI@HAWAII.EDU

Aloha, I would like to offer my support for HB2740 HD2 that would promote composting in Hawaii's schools and create stronger targets for farm-to-state procurement of local food.

A 2008 University of Hawaii (UH) at Manoa study on agricultural self-sufficiency shows that an increase in local food purchases can greatly contribute to creating economic opportunity in our local communities. In 2008, consumers in Hawaii spent \$6.09 billion on food annually (local spending \$3.678 billion, tourism spending \$2.42 billion).

Leung and Loke's 2008 study show that a one million-dollar increase in final farm-gate sales of locally grown fresh vegetable will generate 26 jobs. Every 1% increase in consumption of locally produced food would result in \$60 million in local sales and approximately 1,578 additional jobs.

This bill sets targets for public schools to purchase 60% local food for our keiki which would, in turn, increase consumption of local food and results in positive economic development opportunities for farmers.

**LATE**

**HB-2740-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/15/2020 4:00:10 PM  
Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2020 3:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

WHEN I taught in Hawai`i in the early 1990's we had plans for all the food and using it, giving it to local farmers etc. WHAT HAPPENED that we no longer have it?