



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/04/2021

**Time:** 10:00 AM

**Location:** CR 211 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 0463, SD1 RELATING TO GARDENS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Authorizes the Department of Education to develop programs to encourage the development of gardens on school property. Authorizes the Hawaii Community Development Authority to develop programs that provide incentives to establish gardens in housing projects, communities, and schools. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on SB 463, SD1.

The Department agrees that students should engage in a well-rounded curriculum, with topics including nutrition and obesity prevention; composting and waste management techniques; and cultural and historical aspects of the local food supply. The Department is deeply committed to wellness, as demonstrated in Hawaii State Board of Education (Board) Policy 103-1: Health and Wellness, and to 'āina-based education.

The Department has subject matter standards that include related concepts in content areas including Health, Science, and Social Studies. Existing Board Policies 105-1: Academic Program; 105-2: Responsibility for Curriculum Development and Implementation; and 105-3: Curriculum outline the role of schools in making curricular and instructional decisions to provide a quality standards-based academic program that aligns and fits the needs of their school communities. According to the 2018–2019 Safety and Wellness Survey (SAWS), 87% of the participating schools reported they had culturally relevant activities that are 'āina-based and hands-on, such as food preparation, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens.

The Department's school design strategy prioritizes a flexible and adaptive approach, empowering each school to make decisions about specific contexts and partnerships for developing high quality and relevant learning experiences based on the needs of their students and the local community. Every school in the Department can access supports within the tri-level system and through excellent stakeholder partnerships such as the Farm To School Hui.

Board policy 301-9: Sustainability includes a number of provisions that support the creation of school gardens on school properties. Decisions to create gardens fall under the purview of the school principal. However, large-scale land-use change may require collaboration with the Department's Office of Facilities and Operations and the surrounding community.

The Department respectfully requests greater clarity in whether administrative coordination with the Hawaii Community Development Authority will be required, the mechanisms for consultation with the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the means for funding these potential school gardens, and the effect on current staffing as all of these elements may pose a considerable impact on our schools.

Furthermore, the Department is concerned about the implications of having community gardens on school property. Community gardens on school property raise safety concerns with unknown strangers having regular access to the school campus and being in close proximity with students.

Given the programmatic efforts currently underway at the Department and the safety concerns, we feel this bill is not necessary at this time.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 463, SD1.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

March 4, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON SB 463, SD1**  
RELATING TO GARDENS

Conference Room 211  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 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.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 463, SD1**, which authorizes the Department of Education to develop programs to encourage the development of gardens on school property and authorizes the Hawaii Community Development Authority to develop programs that provide incentives to establish gardens in housing projects, communities, and schools.

HFB 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. School garden programs achieve this by helping to educate and reconnect our children with agriculture through hands-on learning. They serve not only to educate students on how to grow crops but also what it takes to turn a farm into a successful business enterprise that can be a career choice.

By participating in school and community garden programs our children can gain an understanding and appreciation for agriculture, adopt healthier eating habits, and develop stronger support for Hawaii's agriculture industry.

We still have a long way to go to educate our children and residents about agriculture. School and Community gardens are tools that will help in the education process. It is an investment to have well-informed, farmers, consumers, and supporters of Hawaii's agricultural industry in the future.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

**SB-463-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 4:48:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/4/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ruta Jordans	Testifying for Zero Waste Kauai	Support	No

Comments:

Zero Waste Kauai, working through a grant from the County of Kauai, has placed compost tumblers in eleven schools on Kauai. Teaching the students about composting has taught them how to compost, as well as the benefits such as improved nutrition from more fertile soil, the advantage of diverting food and greenwaste from our overworked landfill, and the sequestration of carbon by adding compost to their garden, thus actively responding to the climate crisis. Some of the garden products have even gone to feed the community during Covid. The fact that all of these schools have some form of garden enabled them to see the circular economy in action. We strongly support this bill and hope it passes!



March 3, 2021

To: Chair Inouye  
Vice Chair Keith-Agaran  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for SB463 SD1**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB463 SD1. Blue Zones Project was brought to Hawaii by HMSA to help increase the overall well-being of our communities and to make Hawaii a healthier, happier place to live, work and play. To accomplish that goal, we address ways that we can lower rates of obesity, tobacco use, and chronic disease.

Community and school gardens help the people of Hawai'i learn about growing their own food and improve access to healthy produce, especially in areas with inaccessible land and limited fresh produce retailers. As we're seeing during this pandemic, there is a clear need for solutions to address food access inequities in Hawai'i. When access to fresh produce is limited, family purchases shift towards fast-food meals and pre-packaged foods, both of which contain high proportions of preservatives, sodium, and unhealthy fats and sugars. When people garden, they are more likely to consume fresh foods, and with diabetes, hypertension, and obesity rates especially high in Hawai'i, this change in opinion can help to prevent and manage these and other chronic diseases through their diet. Community and school gardens also promote natural physical activity and social connectedness, which are both critical elements to well-being.

School gardens also increase exposure for students to agriculture education and drive career interest in agriculture and food systems. Additionally, agriculture education can improve personal well-being; Studies show that agriculture education, school gardens, and hands-on nutrition learning triples student consumption of fruits and vegetables in school lunches<sup>1</sup> and increases access to low-fat fruits and vegetables at home.<sup>2</sup> Agriculture education also plays a critical role in shifting student's perceptions about healthy foods and provide opportunities for students to experience growing and cooking their own food.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB463 SD1.

Colby Takeda, MPH, MBA  
Senior Manager

---

<sup>1</sup> Koch, P., Wolf, R., Graziose, M., Gray, H. L., Trent, R., & Uno, C. (2017) FoodCorps: Creating healthy school environments. Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy, Program in Nutrition, Teachers College, Columbia University.

<sup>2</sup> Wells, N. M., Meyers, B. M., Todd, L. E., Henderson, C. R., Barale, K., . . . Franz N. K. (2018). The carry-over effects of school gardens on fruit and vegetable availability at home: A randomized controlled trial with low-income elementary schools. *Prevention Medicine*, 112:152-159.

**SB-463-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/3/2021 12:03:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/4/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

As you already know, the COVID world wide pandemic has caused most of the people in Hawai'i to rethink where their food comes from. Educating the next generation on food systems knowledge requires a school garden to be the "infrastructure & strategy" for the classroom learning that will be connected to core subject areas. Every good science class has a "lab" and nutrition and food systems work is no different. Please lend your support to this important bill both for establishing school gardens but also community gardens in public housing, senior centers, and other community areas where folks can gather and grow.



## HIPHI Board

*Kilikina Mahi, MBA  
Chair  
KM Consulting LLC*

*Michael Robinson, MBA, MA  
Immediate Past Chair  
Hawaii Pacific Health*

*JoAnn Tsark, MPH  
Secretary  
John A. Burns School of  
Medicine, Native Hawaiian  
Research Office*

*Debbie Erskine  
Treasurer  
Kamehameha Schools*

*Keshia Adolpho, LCSW  
Molokai Community Health  
Center*

*Keawe'aimoku  
Kaholokula, PhD  
John A. Burns School of  
Medicine, Department of  
Native Hawaiian Health*

*Mark Levin, JD  
William S. Richardson School  
of Law*

*Rachel Novotny, PhD, RDN,  
LD  
University of Hawaii at  
Mānoa, College of Tropical  
Agriculture and Human  
Resources*

*May Okihiro, MD, MS  
John A. Burns School of  
Medicine, Department of  
Pediatrics*

*Misty Pacheco, DrPH  
University of Hawaii at Hilo,  
Department of Kinesiology  
and Exercise Sciences*

*Garret Sugai  
Kaiser Permanente*

Date: March 3, 2021  
To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
From: Lydi Bernal, Hawaii'i Farm to School Hui Coordinator  
Re: SUPPORT for SB463 SD1, Relating to Gardens  
Hearing: March 4, 2021 at 10:00am Via Videoconference

**LATE**

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB463 SD1**, which authorizes the Department of Education (HIDOE) to develop programs to encourage the development of gardens on school property, and authorizes the Hawaii Community Development Authority to develop programs that provide incentives to establish gardens in housing projects, communities, and schools.

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

**School gardens are essential to the success of Hawaii's farm to school efforts** by deepening students' connection to where their food comes from. They also contribute to meeting [HIDOE's promise](#) to ensure equity in education and its commitment to implementing [Nā Hopena A'o](#) by supporting diverse learning styles and a strengthened sense of Hawaii'i, responsibility, and total well-being for all students.

Thank you for your strong support of school gardens as a core component of farm to school and key to Hawaii's resilient future!

Me Ke Aloha,  
Lydi Bernal  
Hawaii'i Farm to School Hui Coordinator

<sup>i</sup> Created by the legislature in 2012, the **Obesity Prevention Task Force** comprises 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 Hawaii'i residents.

<sup>ii</sup> Founded in 2010, the **Hawaii'i Farm to School Hui** is a statewide network comprising 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 and on-campus farms, 2) education, and 3) school food improvements through local procurement.



**LATE**

**Strong Support for SB463, Relating to Gardens**

Date: March 3, 2021  
To: Senator Donovan M. Delacruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
  
From: Debbie Millikan, Coordinator, Oahu Farm to School Network  
Re: STRONG SUPPORT for SB463 SD1, Relating to Gardens  
Hearing: March 4, 2021 at 10:00am

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT of SB463** which authorizes the Department of Education to develop programs to encourage the development of gardens on school property.

Founded in 2012 and coordinated through 'Iolani School the Oahu Farm to School Network (OFSN) works to strengthen farm to school programs on O'ahu through networking school garden support organizations, administering professional development, and coordinating programs that support school gardens and farm to school efforts. We need to better coordinate these community efforts directly with the Department of Education in order to fully establish the programs in those public schools that are ready. OFSN is in strong support of this bill.

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to submit testimony. I respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debbie Millikan".

Debbie Millikan, Ph.D.  
Oahu Farm to School Network



**SB-463-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 5:10:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/4/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

Please support SB463.

Thank you,

Andrea Quinn

Chair Michelle Kidani  
EDU  
SB463  
3/4/21  
10:00am Video Conference



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

My name is Olivia Wilson and I am a student at the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health at UH Manoa. I am writing to you to testify in favor of Senate Bill 463.

If the Department of Education were to enforce gardening programs at schools, it would create a fun and exciting activity that is beneficial to the health of the keiki and the environment. Teaching kids where their food comes from should be a crucial part of education, but unfortunately, up until this point, it has not been treated as such. Kids spend a majority of their time at school, and if the meals offered consist of processed foods, we are promoting bad eating habits. When I was in elementary school, the food that I was eating was extremely unhealthy and it was normalized to eat this way. It took me a very long time to understand the importance of a natural, balanced diet. I wish I could have been taught the benefits of a healthy diet sooner. Not only would the passing of this bill assist with promoting physical wellbeing, but it would encourage kids to think twice about where their food is coming from and the work it takes to make it. It would also create an extracurricular activity that promotes making use of the land we have here.

Allowing our keiki to learn about gardening and farm to table would also be shedding light on some ancient Hawaiian educational values. Ancient Hawaiians saw the land as school, and taught their young how to live off of it and respect it all at once. He who had the most knowledge about using the land to survive was the most educated. Merging the ancient traditions of education with modern day traditions of education would create a well rounded program and students who are knowledgeable in many different fields.

The passing of Senate Bill 463 would be beneficial to Hawaii's students, teachers, and school staff by promoting healthy eating and an understanding of the land and how to respectfully use it. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony.

Warm Mahalos,  
Olivia Wilson  
oliviafw@hawaii.edu