



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/23/2023

**Time:** 10:00 AM

**Location:** 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 0248, HD2 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the department of education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 20242025 school year. Provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs. Requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents. Establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions. Requires the office of talent management of the department of education to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on HB 248, HD2.

The Department remains committed to increasing locally sourced products for the school meal program in alignment with Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021. The School Food Services Branch continues to expand its reach to food vendors across the state, to increase the procurement of locally grown and locally raised products, and to assist with incorporating culturally appropriate meals into school menus. It also continues to support and include students in the recipe development and menu planning process.

The Department is concerned that the decentralization of the farm-to-school program to

complex areas will place an inordinate burden on Complex Area Superintendents to manage. School complexes do not have the ability to plan menus that are in federal compliance with the United States Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program, nor to procure food through competitive and fair bids that abide by state and federal laws.

The Department continues to streamline its school meal program operations so that it can continue supporting the needs of its students and the program at large.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 23, 2023; 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0248, HOUSE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO EDUCATION.**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 0248, House Draft 2, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Require the Farm to School Program and Farm to School Meals Program to be fully implemented by the 2024-2025 school year;
- (2) Empower complex area superintendents to implement the Farm to School Program and the Farm to School Meals Program'
- (3) Require certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents;
- (4) Create, define the scope of, and appropriate funds for additional cafeteria supervisor positions; and
- (5) Require the Office of Talent Management of the Department of Education to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions;

(6) Take effect on July 1, 3000.

The HPCA asserts that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. With so many people unemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also greatly exacerbated the need for programs like these. Our overreliance on tourism has weakened our ability to bounce back from COVID's dire economic realities. The only way for us to protect ourselves from the next global pandemic is for Hawaii to diversify its economic base and become more self-sufficient. And for us to do that, we need to grow more food.

**For these reasons, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this bill.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).



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Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU strongly supports HB248.**

The farm to school program provides a crucial link between our schools and local farmers, helping to ensure that students have access to fresh, locally grown food. The benefits of this program are numerous, including improving students' health and wellness, supporting local farmers and the local economy, and providing valuable educational opportunities for students to learn about where their food comes from.

This bill takes important steps towards fully realizing the potential of the farm to school program. Giving complex area superintendents the authority to implement the program will ensure that it is implemented in a way that is responsive to the needs of local communities. Establishing school cafeteria supervisor positions and requiring the Department of Human Resources Development to conduct a compensation review will help to ensure that these important positions are filled with highly qualified individuals. HFUU strongly urges the legislature to pass this bill and appropriate funds to fully implement the farm to school program. This will be a critical step towards building a more sustainable and equitable food system in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Thursday, February 23, 2023 — 10:00 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 248 HD2, Relating to Education.**

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports HB 248 HD2**, which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year; provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs; requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents; establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions; and, requires the Office of Talent Management of the DOE to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions.

Ulupono supports the State's efforts to meet its farm to school goal of 30% by 2030, in accordance to Act 175, SLH 2021. In addition to providing more fresh, nutritious locally sourced meals to our keiki, this will serve our local farmers and ranchers by providing market access so they can grow their food operations as the department makes progress each year toward that goal. However, we note that there are community and stakeholder concerns regarding the lack of urgency currently being communicated.

We believe there are immediate opportunities to make progress by re-establishing farm to school contracts with local vendors, such as the Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative, which were canceled at the start of the pandemic. Our understanding is that the department has yet to re-establish those contracts. The DOE also canceled the 'Aina Pono Meal of the Month program at the start of the pandemic and has yet to re-establish the program.

Meanwhile, the Farm to School Coordinator position within the DOE has remained vacant for some time.

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

The DOE school meal system runs an annual budget of more than \$100 million, which leads many to associate the school meal program as the largest “restaurant” in the state. The DOE’s most recent Act 175 report to the Legislature, submitted in December 2022, provided general terms and basic statistics, but lacked a strategy or plan outlining how the department will meet its 30% by 2030 goal. The 2.5-page report would not be sufficient for a \$100,000,000 private restaurant company, and should certainly not be sufficient for the DOE school meal system.

Furthermore, we believe it is critical to understand how, and ensure that, the DOE’s proposed centralized kitchens approach will enable and support the State’s efforts to meet our farm to school goal of 30% by 2030 and 50% by 2050. However, the DOE stated in back-to-back annual reports to the Legislature that the department could not do the necessary reporting accurately due to the lack of information technology (IT) system functionality. The centralized kitchen approach will require much larger volumes of food ingredients, volumes much too large for the majority of our farmers, potentially putting local producers at a disadvantage. Without sufficient IT support and data, a strategic evaluation of a centralized kitchen remains to be performed.

We understand that the task to implement local products into our keiki’s meals is complex, and we commend those within the DOE who are enthusiastic and willing to champion the State’s worthy farm to school goals. This bill enables and empowers those within the various complex areas to take action now, while ensuring that responsible due diligence by the administration, such as proper data gathering and analysis to develop a sound strategy, are expedited to meet legislatively mandated goals. We believe this bill is a good step in the right direction toward finding solutions to support the DOE’s farm to school efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

February 21, 2023

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair  
Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 23, 2023  
10:00 am  
via Video Conference



RE: **HB248 HD2** Relating to Education (**Strong Support**)

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa & Committee Members,

Chamber of Sustainable Commerce offers this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB248 HD2, which requires the department of education to fully implement the farm to school (F2S) program and F2S meals program by the 2024-2025 school year, provides that complex area superintendents (CASs) have the authority to implement the F2S and F2S meals programs, requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to CASs, establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions, requires the office of talent management of the department of education to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions and appropriates funds.

As business owners who believe we can strengthen our economy without hurting employees, consumers or the environment, we urge this committee to vote in favor of passing HB248 HD2 because everything we feed our children from knowledge to nutrition will have an immense return on our investment.

Too many of our schools' kitchens and culinary talent are underutilized. CAS's are the correct point person to identify available local food resources and talent. Schools themselves are centers of the community; local farmers already have relationships with schools in their district and are known food resources.

This bill has had three committee referrals in the House which offers sufficient discussion. We ask this committee to amend the counter-effective date of July 1, 3000, inserted by a previous committee; return to the original HB248 effective date of July 1, 2023.

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**Hawaii  
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Council**

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Island Naturals  
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Joell Edwards  
Wainiha Country Market  
Kauai

Kim Coco Iwamoto  
AQuA Rentals, LLC  
Honolulu

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Date: February 21, 2023  
To: Representative Yamashita, Kyle T., Chair  
Representative Kitagawa, Lisa, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Finance Committee, FIN  
From: Hawai'i Youth Food Council  
Re: **SUPPORT for HB248**  
Hearing: 23/02/2023, Thursday, 10:00 AM

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On behalf of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of House Bill 248**, which provides complex area superintendents the authority to implement the school meal programs and farm to school meals by the 2024/2025 school year.

This will provide students with nutritious food, while giving complex areas flexibility so schools can get more local and fresh foods. This will allow more opportunities for small farmers, create more cafeteria jobs, and will help accomplish goals of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council to sustain health and agriculture through supporting the stakeholders involved in the procurement of local foods in our schools. This in turn contributes to the council's priority of optimizing their health and wellness.

Providing our students with local foods at school ensures their health and gives them opportunities to support the close farms around them. Implementing complex areas authority to direct school meal programs allows the flexibility to buy from local grown agriculture. This gives financial support to local farmers, while allowing superintendents to make the best decisions for their individual school food programs. As a student, eating nourishing foods at school gives me energy, helps me focus in class, and improves my health both physically and mentally. Being provided a nutritious lunch at school shows the care and support from the community to us students. It will also raise awareness about local agriculture and the importance of nutrition while building a close community for both the present and the future, which is a core component of the islandwide Farm to School Hui that houses the council.

Localizing DOE school food has so many benefits for students, farmers, cafeteria workers, and our environment. Giving complex area authority builds a community based economy while supporting our local agriculture and optimizing students' health. Our Hawai'i islands have so many small farms and giving us students these local foods keeps us healthy while benefiting our community and sustainability.

*(Continued on next page)*

The **Hawai'i Youth Food Council** is a program of the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui and Hawai'i Public Health Institute, and includes students from public, charter and independent high schools across Hawai'i. The council was established in 2020 to engage and empower youth in the process of rewriting the present narrative of Hawaii's food system. Members identify and address systemic issues that exist throughout various dimensions of the food chain to promote community participation in the formation of resilient, equitable local food economies.

Thank you very much for your support of garden-based learning for all students. We respectfully request that you please pass this bill.

Sincerely,  
Members of Hawai'i Youth Food Council

Kaylie Hirayama, Hawaii Preparatory Academy  
Gigi Kiyabu, Mid Pacific Institute  
Jaden Joy Rosabia, Kealakehe High School  
Tyler Levine, Oak Meadows Homeschool  
Vinnerie Conner, Kea'au High School  
Shania Wilson, Mililani High School



## HIPHI Board

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Coalition for a  
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health  
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free  
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

Date: February 23, 2023

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Re: Support for HB 248 Relating to Education

Hrg: Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 10:00 AM, Conf Rm 308

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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>i</sup> and The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui,<sup>ii</sup> which collectively represent over 60 organizations from across the islands.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) appreciates the opportunity to provide Support for HB 248, which requires the Department of Education (HIDOE) to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year. It assures that complex area superintendents are able to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs. It requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents, establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions, and appropriates funds to complete these actions.

This bill will help the department comply with Act 175 (2021), which requires that the Department of Education procure 30% of the food it serves from local sources by 2030. According to the report they submitted to this body in December, they are currently at 6.2%.<sup>iii</sup>

Increased procurement of locally grown and raised foods for consumption by Hawai'i's students will positively impact the health of our keiki and the development of Hawai'i sustainable food systems. It will enable school complexes to regionalize their meals, supporting local food producers and suppliers on each island and tailoring menus to student preferences in that locale.

The decentralization created by this measure supports cafeteria managers at rural schools by increasing the ways that they can ensure a reliable source of fresh food and increase the nutritional value of their school meals.

Mahalo for considering this measure and for the opportunity to testify in support of HB248.

Mahalo,

Dennis Chase  
Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Program Manager  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

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

<sup>ii</sup> Founded in 2010, the **Hawai'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.

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/DOE\\_REPORT2023\\_FarmtoSchoolMeals.pdf](https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/DOE_REPORT2023_FarmtoSchoolMeals.pdf)

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:50:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do understand why such a Bill as this was written. When the State Agency responsible refuses to move forward and fulfill the promise of the Farm to School Act passed in 2015, and many years pass and there is no movement forward, then I could see why giving that Authority to the Complex Area Superintendent instead with the charge to move forward with their group of schools and work directly with Cafeteria Managers to "regionalize" menu and procurement, might be necessary in order to inspire the whole District. With some Complex Areas moving forward on their own they could possibly work together and create best practices for the whole District. But it is so against how the DOE has been organized, top down, one system instead of diversified. Many people can clearly see regional and diversified food systems for DOE could work. Especially now that there is a Hui of Food Hubs across the State. When this Bill is implemented, and does work, it can help guide agricultural policy for the whole state. We need such inspiration, as we need to build strong community food systems. We can no longer only rely on globalization to feed us. If this Bill is passed, enough funding must be attached to insure success. I'm sure there are Complex Area Superintendents ready to move forward.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Nancy Redfeather - Director Ka Ohana O Na Pua



**HAWAII APPLESEED**  
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
H.B. 248 – Relating to Education  
House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 10:00AM

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Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitgawa, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **H.B. 248**, which would create school food supervisor positions at each complex area, and move some school food oversight and duties from the central School Food Services Branch (SFSB) of the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE).

Hawai‘i Appleseed is one of several organizations that has been working with SFSB for over a decade on a wide variety of initiatives. These initiatives include (but are not limited to): farm to school, expanding access to school breakfast and summer meals, transitioning to grab and go meals during school closures, consulting on menu development, and increasing Hawai‘i’s child nutrition federal reimbursement rates. One of the longest standing and most-often cited barriers to quality improvement is the fact that school-based cafeteria managers and staff report to principals, while supervisors (currently housed at SFSB) have no authority to implement changes to program operations at the school level.

The issue was pointed out seven years ago, in a 2016 technical assistance report<sup>1</sup> commissioned by the USDA, noting the following:

*“Since SFSB does not have direct authority in schools, much is out of the control of SFSB, especially regarding efficiencies. [They] cannot adequately monitor point of sale transactions [and] do not get data they need.”*

The report goes on to note, **“Also, each supervisor has too many schools to adequately monitor.”**

Under recommendations, the report states, **“In so many situations, the lack of line authority is reported to create limitations** [emphasis added].” They recommend the following:

*“Work with the Human Resources team to develop an overall reporting structure for all personnel that will meet the needs and obligations of the School Food Services Branch and its commitment to the USDA, DOE HNCP, BOE etc.”*

Our organization has been working with a team of stakeholders—including some former HIDOE cafeteria managers and staff—that believe a number of systemic issues could be resolved by housing supervisors at the complex area, and giving Complex Area Supervisors (CASes) more direct authority over their school food programs:

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture and Institute of Child Nutrition. *Review of School Food Services Branch in Hawai‘i, Technical Assistance Report by Timikel Sharpe* (ICN consultant). May 2016.

1. **Menu flexibility:** Complex area-housed supervisors could tailor menus to regional and cultural preferences prevalent in their districts.
2. **Regional procurement:** Supervisors could utilize the geographic preference provision in the procurement code to source ingredients from small local food producers—many of whom would not be able to provide enough for the entire state.
3. **Participation in other federal nutrition programs:** There are a number of programs that SFSB is either unsupportive of or outright declines to participate in. These include the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), after school suppers, after school snacks, and garden to cafeteria. As a result, Hawai‘i consistently ranks at or near the bottom of the rest of the states in the U.S in participation rates for school breakfast, after school suppers and snacks, and summer feeding programs, leaving millions in federal dollars unused. We recommend allowing CASes the ultimate authority to determine whether schools in their district should participate.
4. **Financial and procurement data:** Supervisors would have the authority to collect data in a standardized format from schools, which they do not currently have.
5. **Agility:** Rather than having to wait for changes to come down from the branch, supervisors could pivot to quickly add or change the menu, procure needed ingredients or equipment, and provide training.

*Of particular concern is the underutilization of a vast resource: **Hawai‘i’s 193 production kitchens and 44 serving kitchens could be leveraged to provide meals not just during the school hours, but to students (and their families) during summers, school breaks, and after school.*** It is critical to note that there are still up to one in four children in Hawai‘i that regularly go without enough nutritious meals at home.<sup>2</sup> This means that when those kitchens are not offering meals, these children are not eating. It is our hope that a decentralized model would allow for more direct support of these kitchens, more partnerships with local community organizations, more federal funds being drawn down into Hawai‘i’s economy, and ultimately better community food security.

Thank you for considering these comments in your deliberation of H.B. 248. We understand that this is not a silver bullet solution, but we do think that—combined with some other reforms the legislature is considering this session—it will go a long way toward improving the way we deliver school meals to Hawai‘i’s public school children. Our child nutrition programs are one of the best safety nets available to ensure Hawai‘i children have access to the nutrition they need in order to learn and grow. We sincerely believe that this legislation will help us achieve this outcome.

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<sup>2</sup> Feeding America estimates of Food Insecurity among the Child (<18 years) Population in Hawai‘i (2020)



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)

February 23, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 248, HD2**  
RELATING TO EDUCATION

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 248, HD2**, which requires the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year, provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs, requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents, establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions, and requires the office of talent management of the DOE to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions.

HFB strongly supports the 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. Farm to School 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.

Many formal and informal studies have been done addressing farm to school programs. Our farmers and ranchers have tried to work with the procurement system and can speak to the shortcomings of the system. For example, supplying a school or schools within a geographic area is feasible. Providing to the entire school system is not. The focus should now be on working with the procurement system to make institutional markets accessible while considering the capacity of farmers and ranchers in Hawaii. Assistance to farmers on how to navigate the system should also be a priority. Many farmers and ranchers are



ready to understand the opportunity and identify crops and other products that can be grown and produced or these markets.

HFB continues to support the Farm to School Program because it helps to educate and reconnect our children with agriculture. Through the Farm to School Program, our children will gain an understanding and appreciation for agriculture which will result in healthier eating habits, stronger support for Hawaii's agriculture industry, and will contribute to Hawaii's food security. We still have a long way to go to educate our children about agriculture. Farm to School is another tool that will help in the education process. It is an investment in having well-informed consumers and supporters of Hawaii's agricultural industry in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 9:54:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeri Di Pietro	Hawai`i SEED	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai`i SEED SUPPORTS HB 248 HD2, a Farm to School program to delegate responsibility and authority for meeting farm-to-school goals from the statewide level to the complex area level. Provides complex area superintendents the authority to work with school principals and cafeteria supervisors on hitting farm-to-school goals by the 2024-2025 school year. We strongly support regionalized school food menus, and allowing the purchase of food from local farmers.

Mahalo,

Jeri Di Pietro, President

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:36:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Bernstein	Climate Future Forum	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Members of the FIN Committee:

On behalf of the Climate Future Forum, I'm writing to you in **strong support of HB248**. On December 3rd, 2022, the Climate Future Forum was held at the Hawaii State Capitol. The event included about 80 youth, eight state legislatures and staff members, and about 30 people from the community. One of the goals of this event was for youth to develop their legislative priorities for the 2023 legislative session. One of their priorities is centers around improving Farm to School programs. Therefore, the Climate Future Forum strongly supports this bill for the following reasons:

- improve student access to healthy, local foods (especially fresh fruit and vegetables) to improve nutrition
- expose students to healthy behaviors
- build student awareness of food systems and connection to food (various learning opportunities based around food)
- contribute to the local agricultural industry (new markets, more stability, more jobs)
- reduce food miles and associated greenhouse gas emissions

Please pass this bill with any needed amendments.

Respectfully,

Paul Bernstein

Founding member of Climate Future Forum



**HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

**RANDY PERREIRA**, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawaii  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 23, 2023

H.B. 248, H.D. 2 — RELATING TO EDUCATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO would like to provide comments on H.B. 248, H.D. 2, which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals by the 2024-2025 school year.

HGEA represents the DOE's school food service managers in bargaining unit 2 and the school cafeteria supervisors in bargaining unit 13 whose working conditions will be directly affected by the implementation of the farm to school program and the proposed reorganization of the school food services branch. While they are supportive of the intent behind the farm to school program, they are faced with farmers and vendors who cannot keep up with the demand for locally sourced products. Increasing the total number of supervisors positions may be helpful but finding substitutes and recruiting and retaining cafeteria workers at the school level is their biggest challenge, an issue that is not being addressed by this measure. They do not feel the Department is prepared nor ready to fully implement the program by the 2024-2025 school year.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on H.B. 248, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director



## House Committee on Finance

### Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB248 HD2

Thursday, February 23, 2023 10:00 a.m. Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports HB248 HD2, which requires the Department of Education (DoE) to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year.

We understand that HB248 HD2 is an important part of making sure that farm to school programs are successful. While Hawai'i has made great strides in setting goals for increasing locally sourced food in school lunch programs, the program is currently not on target to meet these goals.

One challenge has been a lack of decision-making power to implement farm to school purchasing at the local level. Shifting our local procurement for school meals towards more regionalized decision-making will empower more flexible sourcing from local food producers.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation.

Meeting our farm to school targeted goals is important. Locally sourcing food in our schools allows kids a more direct connection to their food system, enhancing their community pride and connection to place and identity. Local food has a shorter time between harvest and our kids, it is less likely that the nutrient value has decreased and it helps our children eat healthy food that supports them and Hawai'i.

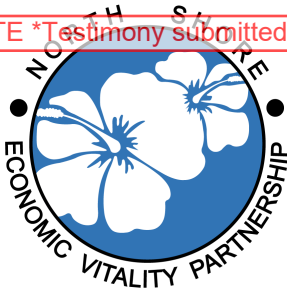
Please support HB248 HD2 and farm to school efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director



67-332 Kaiea Pl.  
Waialua, HI 96791-9501  
808-383-4481  
www.NSEVP.org

February 22, 2023

House Committee on FINANCE  
Thursday February 23, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

SUBJECT: Comments on HB 248 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership (North Shore EVP), I would like to extend support for HB 248, which requires the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year.

Since 2016, North Shore EVP has been working to prepare farmers to fully and equitably participate in Hawaii's commercial and institutional markets by providing food safety training and certification through our USDA GroupGAP program. Although the Department of Education (DOE) currently does not have procurement guidelines for locally sourced produce, food safety certification should be a qualifying criterion for any farm selling food products into our schools. Currently less than 2% of Hawaii's farms have obtained food safety certification and in some regions of the state the DOE would be hard pressed to identify growers that could provide the quantity and consistency of products needed to fulfill the needs of any given school complex.

In the proposed additions to §302A, we suggest the language of item (3) be amended from "Oversee the procurement of produce from local farmers and the creation of regionalized menus using that produce;" to "Document efforts and oversee the procurement of produce from local farmers and the creation of regionalized menus using that produce;" so that the legislature can track progress towards reaching the goals established by Act175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021.

We support this bill but ask that the procurement policies and procedures created under this bill provide adequate time for farms to acquire the necessary food safety certification that may be required for them to participate in the farm to school program

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Kevin M Kelly, President

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 12:09:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT this bill which requires the department of education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year. Provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs. Requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents. Establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions. Requires the office of talent management of the department of education to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions. Appropriates funds.

That this bill appropriates funds is extremely important to the success of this program. In addition, this is a positive step for feeding our students with quality, healthy meals that come from an understanding of our Hawaiian island culture and paths. Complex supt. should not only have the authority but should so understand the value of this program that they immediately implement it. From past experience, (Hā) we know that the process of the implementation and the people asked to do so determines the level of success. THIS bill is so important, so like other bills I ask, where is the accountability?

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 2:56:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kate Paine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Resolve critical off shore food reliance.



**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 3:57:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
pamela burrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha House Members,

I strongly support the farm to school bills. HB 248 takes the supply side and addresses the distribution side with a multi faceted local approach.

As people of Hawaii, we can perpetuate the health and vitality of future generations. This can affect Hawaii's economy and agricultural sector on a large scale!

Please support HB 248, 49, 50!!!

Mahalo,

Pamela Burrell. Kalihiwai , Kaua'i

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:06:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Lu Kelley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB248 HD2.

While Hawai'i has made great strides in setting goals for increasing locally sourced food in school lunch programs, the program is currently not on target to meet these goals.

One challenge has been a lack of decision-making power to implement farm-to-school purchasing at the local level. Shifting our local procurement for school meals towards more regionalized decision-making will empower more flexible sourcing from local food producers.

HB248 HD2 will support local food producers by increasing their markets, minimizing carbon emissions from transport, and providing more healthy and culturally appropriate food for keiki.

Mahalo,

Mary Lu Kelley, Lawai, Kauai

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:58:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lisa DeSantis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I support HB248, HD2.

Mahalo for your time and service to our islands.

Lisa DeSantis, Waimea, Hawai‘i Island

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:17:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

While Hawai'i has made great strides in setting goals for increasing locally sourced food in school lunch programs, the program is currently not on target to meet these goals.

One challenge has been a lack of decision-making power to implement farm-to-school purchasing at the local level. Shifting our local procurement for school meals towards more regionalized decision-making will empower more flexible sourcing from local food producers.

HB248 HD2 will support local food producers by increasing their markets, minimizing carbon emissions from transport, and providing more healthy and culturally appropriate food for keiki.

Mahalo,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:12:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this measure that would require the farm to school program and farm to school meals program, established by Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, to be fully implemented by the 2024-2025 school year. The sooner these programs are implemented, the faster they will promote good health for students and our local economy, as well as improving the health of our planet. Please pass this important measure. Mahalo.

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:16:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

While Hawai'i has made great strides in setting goals for increasing locally sourced food in school lunch programs, the program is currently not on target to meet these goals.

One challenge has been a lack of decision-making power to implement farm-to-school purchasing at the local level. Shifting our local procurement for school meals towards more regionalized decision-making will empower more flexible sourcing from local food producers.

HB248 HD2 will support local food producers by increasing their markets, minimizing carbon emissions from transport, and providing more healthy and culturally appropriate food for keiki.

Me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:30:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am very glad to see a bill like this that will create a support network to implement farm-to-school programs. I saw the Smart Farms on the news, and getting our students interested in agriculture is a win for all of us. I also believe that this helps the state support local food hubs, as well as local agriculture, aquaculture, and animal husbandry. Mahalo for your time.

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:58:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leanne Kami	Kohana Family Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou, my name is Leanne Kami. I work in Hilo as a strategy consultant for Kamehameha Schools, focused on sustainable food system development in Hawai‘i. I also own and manage Kohana Family Farms, a small organic farm in Pana‘ewa. I am writing this letter in my personal capacity as a farmer and member of the Farm-to-School Hui, Hawai‘i Farmers Union United, and the Hawai‘i Farm Bureau Federation.

I strongly support HB248, which supports farm to school programs and local farmers by shifting implementation to the complex area level

Farm-to-School programs support local farmers and this bill supports local food production, suppliers, and sustainable food systems in Hawai‘i. These shifts will help decentralize purchasing allowing more flexibility in procuring local products and supports achieving Act 175.



**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:13:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Yvonne Yoro	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,**

**My name is Yvonne Yoro, resident of Wahiawā, O‘ahu. I am testifying IN SUPPORT of House Bill 248 HD2.**

**We are in desperate need to decentralize our school’s food program. Empowering complex area superintendents will springboard the state’s efforts toward reaching our 30% target of food served in public schools. It’s been two years since Act 175 (2021) and we’re still only at 6.2% of local food being served in public schools. Empowering complex area superintendents to have that oversight over production kitchens and principals in the implementation will not only benefit the students, but our local communities as a whole.**

**Our students will benefit in witnessing the growth of our support for local agriculture. They deserve to know where their food is coming from, they deserve to know the farmers and stewards who took great care to get their food to their plates, they deserve to know and become more familiar with the foods that are grown locally, raised locally, and less processed. As noted in a study on local foods to communities, benefits include:**

- Reduced safety risks,**
- Conserving open space of farmland that aligns with the preferences of the community,**
- Positively impacting food security, and**
- Increased revenue and jobs for local economies.**

**In passing this bill, we open up opportunities for local farmers to work together with our complex area superintendents which will expedite the process of developing a more local**

**diet and identify gaps in nutrition needs so that we can address them now before the proposed 2024-2025 implementation year.**

**Mahalo for allowing me to testify IN SUPPORT of House Bill 248 HD2.**

**Aloha,**

**Yvonne Yoro**

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:44:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry SUPPORT HB 248 RELATING TO EDUCATION. However, more funding is needed for the additional cost of food, etc.

**HB-248-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 8:23:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB248 HD2 and urge your support vote to move this bill forward in favor of:

Delegating responsibility and authority for meeting farm-to-school goals from the statewide level to the complex area level. Providing complex area superintendents the authority to work with school principals and cafeteria supervisors on hitting farm-to-school goals by the 2024-2025 school year. This reorganization would also regionalize school food menus, allowing complex areas to work with and purchase from local farmers.

Respectfully submitted by,

Marsha Hee, life-long resident of Hawaii - current resident of Volcano, Hawaii