



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

Date: 01/30/2024
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1969 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the shade and fruit tree program in the department of education to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees or fruit trees for planting in department schools. Appropriates funds for the program and to establish an arborist position.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB 1969.

The Department recognizes the importance of increasing tree canopies on public school grounds. The additional full-time arborist could provide much needed support to manage the Department's existing tree responsibilities as well as any proposed new trees. Existing tree responsibilities include managing the overgrowth of weed vegetation in undeveloped areas, streams, and other difficult terrain that are located on the Department's property as individual schools can no longer use their funds to maintain these difficult areas pursuant to Section 302A-1316, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Fast growing trees such as Albizia are especially problematic, but other weed trees like ironwood, opiuma, and African tulip also overtake school grounds and threaten adjacent school areas. The additional full-time arborist could help with the management of these types of trees.

When determining the appropriateness of planting fruit trees on school campuses there are additional factors that should be considered:

1. The pruning and all other aspects of maintenance for fruit and other agricultural trees are specialized;
2. Fruit trees may require chemical pest control which the Department generally doesn't allow on campus;
3. Fruit trees require specialized climate, soil testing, irrigation, and other needs that involve higher costs compared to typical shade trees;
4. Fruit trees will attract unwanted pests and people trespassing to pick the fruits; and
5. The Department may be liable for the consumption (or perceived consumption) of any fruits grown on campus.

The Department recognizes the educational and cultural importance of the propagation of native or fruit trees. The Department would request clarification on section 2, part 1 of the bill that seems to indicate that native shade or fruit trees "shall be planted or shared amongst all department schools." Since schools determine program focus areas, schools should not be mandated to participate in planting native shade or fruit trees if it does not align with their academic goals and curriculum.

The Department is committed to improving opportunities in agriculture and natural resources for students throughout the state but would like to suggest removing any mandate to plant fruit trees and nurseries on Department property.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1969.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/28/2024 10:56:37 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Fitzpatrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Woodson & the Education Committee,

My name is John Fitzpatrick, Mistah Fitz, and I teach integrated science at the brand new Kūlanihāko‘i High School. When I first arrived on campus I was so happy to see that there was an emphasis to plant native trees across our campus. We have a‘ali‘i, koa i‘a, ohia lehua, wiliwili, kukui, and Ma‘o to name a few. This allows us to investigate the native uses and propogation of these plants that have been severely deforested ober the past 250 years.

These plants on our campus will also allow our haumana to eperience the ethnobotanical purposes for these trees.

The first week of school my students asked me if we could plant a mango tree. It would so amazing if we had fruit trees so we could go pick the fruit straight off the tree and enjoy them throughout the year.

It would be awesome to have an harborist that can come in and teach how to propogate these plants. We are currently sprouting a‘ali‘i and watching them grow and develop.

I support propogating Hawaiian plants and fruit trees throughout Hawaii public schools.

Mahalo,
Mistah Fitz

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/28/2024 12:25:08 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen A Gagesch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to show support of HB-1969. Increasing support for DOE schools in their effort to have shade and food trees are greatly needed. Shaded campuses reduce heat and stress to our students and fruit trees draw awareness and education to food security and healthy interactions with our environment.

Please give this bill your support. Our campuses will be vastly improved with the care and protection of trees for many generations to come.

Mahalo,

Kristen Gagesch

Science Teacher at Kailua Intermediate School

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/28/2024 1:09:15 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is Climate Action - sequestering carbon and at the same time cooling & beautifying our campus and providing learning opportunities for our children to understand our natural systems and plant propagation. As a prior PTA mom and leader we did many tree plantings and know it is an excellent way to bring community together. This bill would add new continuity and meaning and skill building to school greening efforts. Strongly support



To: The House Committee on Education (EDN)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 2pm

In strong support of HB1969

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the EDN Committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii **strongly supports HB1969** which establishes the shade and fruit tree program in the department of education to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees and fruit trees for planting in department schools.

As more and more we face the impacts of climate change, including hotter temperatures, it is important to plan and implement actions that will help mitigate these harmful effects. One such effective measure will be to increase tree canopies, particularly in urban areas and on school campuses.

HB1969 will have multiple benefits, including lowering the temperature on campuses through shade, contributing to clean air, and campus beautification. Trees also play an essential role both in mitigating climate-warming greenhouse gases, as well as supporting and improving the quality of life in our living spaces. Moreover, planting trees, especially fruit trees, on campuses can provide generations of students with environmental education opportunities and a source of organic fruit.

Students need to be able to play, gather, and learn outside while attending school. Trees, especially fruit trees, contribute to healthier and more beautiful campuses and communities. Efforts to reduce our environmental footprint and improve quality of life are a win-win for everyone and need to be supported.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this very important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 7:39:41 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Latkiewicz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing in support of HB1969. The bill is fairly comprehensive in that it provided manpower for arborist activities, education of our keiki, We need solutions that address the climate crisis that show the interconnected nees of the climate problem.

Thanks for your attention.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:31:13 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i supprt this bill cause i believe that it will be good for the comunitty and good for the people i think its good for our aina and it will bring life back into our home

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:33:11 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hailey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Hailey and I am a senior at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. After reading the bill with my fellow classmates I can confidently say that I agree with this bill and that is why I am writing this testimony. Thank you!

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:34:19 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
shaysen akiona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill because we need more trees on campus. Also, because we need to stop climate change and help kids from any danger.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:43:38 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nehemiah Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree with this testimony and it will be great.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:45:17 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mason Kaeo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:47:54 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathaniel Te'o-Nera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

kids need more shade

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:49:46 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keola Mahoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm a student at Nānākuli High and Intermediate. I support this Bill and I think this will better my peers learning and a better understanding of the native Hawaiian plants.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 9:52:13 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Nera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree to this bill because of how hot it has been in our schools lately. A lot of students go outside to hang out with their friends and its hard for them to hang around eachother if they only have so little shade to go in. In school there are trees that dont have chairs.



Written Testimony before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

2:00 pm Conference Room 309

RE: HB332 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, Members of the House Committee on Education:

Trees for Honolulu's Future ("TFHF") is a nonprofit organization with a vision for a tree-filled island that preserves and enhances our quality of life, especially in the face of climate change.

We strongly support the above-referenced Bill, which establishes (and funds!) the shade and fruit tree program beginning in the DOE to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees and fruit trees for planting in public schools.

This Bill's preamble does a terrific job in making the case for trees and specifically for trees in our schools. It links the actions to student learning. We also appreciate the Bill's effort to involve students in ongoing care of trees. The end result is a trifecta of positivity: good for Hawai'i's environment; great for students; and a nature-based solution to help ameliorate the impact of climate change. TFHF has done work in this space and with various schools and would be happy to be involved when, and as, appropriate.

We urge this Committee to pass the Bill and send it to the Committee on Finance for further review and action.

Mahalo,

Daniel Dinell, President

HONOLULU is HOT TREES are COOL

Visit us: www.TreesForHonolulu.org Contact us: info@TreesForHonolulu.org Voice/Fax/Text: 808-707-6353

P.O. Box 12051, Honolulu, Hawaii 96828

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 11:21:07 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tilionapuanani Keohuhu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do believe we should have native trees to give us shade and other things. There's multiple reasons why besides the fact that our native trees could give us shade like giving us fruit trees that we could learn more about that! Mahalo for listening to my response!

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 11:22:07 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nahenahe Quartero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill moving forward because I believe it would be good and beneficial to the students not only for shade but also to provide food since a lot of kids are hungry most of the day at school. It also gets annoying to learn in heat and can be overstimulating for some.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 11:22:34 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jhanz Kaawa-kawai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill moving forward because I feel like our school in general just needs more shaded trees. Our side of the island is hot in general and we dont have that much tress on our campus and i think that more trees in our school would be beneficial to us as a school.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 11:22:58 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jezeree Ioane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support/agree that we need more shade on campus so its cooler and so we can learn better.



HIPHI Board

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Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

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: Monday, January 29, 2024

To: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair
Members of the Education Committee

Re: Strong Support for HB1969 Relating to the Department of
Education

Mtg: Tuesday, January 30, 2024

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 Hawai'i Farm to School Hui,ⁱ which collectively represents over 40 organizations from across the islands.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute appreciates the opportunity to provide Support for HB1969, which establishes and funds a shade and fruit tree program for the Department of Education (DOE) and funds an arborist position in the department.

This bill institutionalizes programs that have already existed for many years. Approximately 80% of DOE schools have a school garden of some variety. Many of these gardens include trees that can be used for shade, food, and education. Often schools have had to turn to outside funding programs and depended upon single teachers to plant and maintain agricultural trees on campus.

For several years the Farm to School Hui and HIPHI, along with other organizations, have coordinated the Food Trees for Schools program. This program has provided funding and technical assistance for roughly 20 schools to plant well over 100 trees across the state. These orchards have become living classrooms used for purposes as diverse as Counseling Sessions, Biology classes, and community events. The trees also provide shade, helping to cool campuses and support physical activity. Furthermore, if trees are planted near sidewalks, they cool walkways and provide a more welcoming environment for pedestrians.

Perhaps most importantly, increased nutritional education and knowledge 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.

Under Act 175, the DOE is required to purchase locally grown food as 30% of total procurement by 2030 and 50% by 2050. More food trees on school campuses will not just help reach this goal, it will help students and their families understand why this goal is important.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of HB1969.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Chase', written over a horizontal line.

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

ⁱ 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.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:13:45 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i support this bill

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:13:51 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kekona La?a	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:15:11 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zaylee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

yes I support if we have more plants and tree we will have more fresh produce.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:15:25 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul A. Nahulu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **support** this upcoming testimony!

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:15:35 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Calsyanna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support, I feel it is important to plant more native trees.

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:15:58 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alvin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support because I want hawaii to grow more plant like kalo, ulu, anything like that so we would all survive.

LATE

HB-1969

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 10:35:45 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Kahn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this bill. Mahalo.