

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEXTER KISHIDA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024  
1:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2083, HD3  
RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2083, HD3. Authorizes the Department of Education to establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit to the Department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of thirty per cent of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. Allows the Department of Education (DOE) to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani high school no later than the 2025-2026 school year as an option under the school meals program. The Department supports the intent and offers comments.

Hawaii Department of Agriculture continues its commitment to support the DOE in achieving its goals of reaching 30% local by 2030. This includes plant-based options that are made from food grown and manufactured in Hawaii. Through market development and innovative programs which this pilot program can develop, Hawaii farmers can reach generational profitability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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

**Date:** 03/20/2024

**Time:** 01:00 PM

**Location:** CR 224 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Agriculture and Environment

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** HB 2083, HD3 RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Authorizes the Department of Education to establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit to the Department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of thirty per cent of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. Allows the Department of Education to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani high school no later than the 2025-2026 school year. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD3)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments for HB 2083, HD3.

The Department appreciates this bill's intent to support the thirty percent by 2030 local food purchases goal, and its advocacy for the health benefits of a plant-based diet. Further, the Department appreciates that this measure was amended in the HD 3 version to authorize, rather than require, the Department to establish guidelines for the rewards recognition program. However, the Department finds that this bill seeks to achieve two competing goals:

- Increasing locally sourced products under Act 175 Session Laws of Hawaii 2021 (2021); and
- Increasing plant-based meal options within our school menus as a way to promote health and be more environmentally conscious.

The bill suggests that establishing plant-based meal options once per week will ensure that our targeted goal pursuant to Act 175 (2021) will be met. However, to meet federal meal credit compliance statewide and maintain federal financial support, the Department must be able to procure plant-based meat/meat alternates or entrees that meet the definition of a locally sourced product to be able to serve a plant-based meal option.

The Department's School Food Services Branch (SFSB) is currently able to offer local plant-based meal items such as salads and sides, but for plant-based proteins, the SFSB finds that Hawaii farms and vendors are not prepared to provide local plant-based meats/meat alternatives sufficient for meals at 257 schools statewide at this time. The SFSB's assessment of the capacity of local vendors, through its 2023 Request for Information campaign, found that Hawaii's agriculture and food manufacturing industry does not yet have large-scale vendors producing sufficient plant-based proteins made from local ingredients. To meet the demands of this bill by the school year 2025-2026, the unintended consequence of this measure may compel the Department to purchase plant-based manufactured products from the mainland to meet this bill's mandate and, therefore, reduce the demand for locally raised animal proteins that we currently purchase to pursue the thirty percent by 2030 local food purchases goal.

The Department appreciates the plant-based meal being defined, however, a plant-based meal option by definition would not serve both USDA Child Nutrition Requirements for reimbursable meals nor the targeted local purchase goals of Act 175 (2021) at this time. The Department has and will continue to work towards increasing plant-based meal options within the federal guidelines while prioritizing local food purchases in support of Act 175 (2021), sensitive to the environmental impact it may have.

Additionally, the Department must raise concerns that this bill's designed intentions to focus on one school runs into conflict with the Department's statewide functions and operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**HB2083 HD3**  
**RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

March 20, 2024

1:00 pm

Conference Room 224

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) provides testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB2083 HD3, which seeks to enhance the health and well-being of Hawai‘i's students by promoting locally sourced, nutritious, and environmentally conscious school meals. **OHA recognizes this legislation to be pivotal for the future of our youth and the sustainability of our local food systems.**

OHA believes that this measure provides the opportunity for the Department of Education to improve the quality of school meals while supporting local agricultural producers. Hawai‘i’s food system is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, viral pandemics, and military conflicts. According to research, Hawai‘i imports over 90% of its food<sup>1</sup>, while also only having the sustained capacity to feed our population of 1.4 million for a week if imported supply chains are disrupted.<sup>2</sup> OHA recognizes that the foresight in establishing a target goal of 30% for locally sourced products in school meals, as initiated by Act 175, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2021, is commendable. Hawai‘i’s food system statistics underscore the importance of this goal. Currently, the average meat and dairy products served in schools often contain processed elements and additives, impacting the health outcomes of our students negatively. HB2083 suggests that schools can improve meals while being an important part of local agriculture’s future.

Additionally, the emphasis on introducing plant-based options in high school meals aligns with contemporary research demonstrating the copious amount of health benefits associated with a plant-based diet. Beyond health considerations, offering vegetarian meals fosters increased demand for local greens, thereby supporting our local farmers and

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<sup>1</sup> HNL Port Flood Vulnerability Assessment: Sea Level Rise and Food System Infrastructure Impacts 2050, 2070 (1m, 1.5m SLR by 2100).

<sup>2</sup> Hawai‘i Public Radio by Mark Ladao, Catherine Cluett Pactol, and Sophia McCullough, “State Working Group Calls for Improvements to Food Reserves and Disaster Response,” Hawai‘i Public Radio, November 10, 2023, <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/local-news/2023-11-09/state-working-group-calls-for-improvements-to-food-reserves-and-disaster-response>.



**HB2083 HD3**  
RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS  
House Committee on Finance

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cultivating a culture of environmental awareness among our youth. OHA appreciates the added definition of “plant-based” to ensure clarity for the Department.

OHA acknowledges the amendments to require an interim report prior to the convening of the regular session of 2026 with a final report to be submitted prior to the convening of the regular session of 2027. We also would like to recognize that this program may require added funding and staffing for the Department to actualize these goals. We defer to the Department on these needs and support additional funding and positions to ensure effective implementation.

This legislation represents a crucial investment in the future of Hawai‘i, and we are confident that its enactment will contribute significantly to the overall well-being of our community. By supporting HB2083 HD3, we are taking proactive steps to prioritize the health and well-being of our community members, foster sustainable agricultural practices, and instill values of environmental stewardship among our youth.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS HB2083 HD3**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.



## HIPHI Board

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Medical-Legal Partnership  
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Native Hawaiian Research Office

## HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a  
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &  
Evaluation

Community Health  
Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

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/Healthy Aging &  
Community Living

Public Health Workforce

Date: March 18, 2024

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

Re: Strong Support for HB 2083 Relating to School Meals

Hrg: Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 1:00 PM, Conf Rm 224

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

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) appreciates the opportunity to provide **Strong Support** for **HB2083**, which would incentivize individual schools to submit a plan to the Department of Education (HIDOE) for that school to reach the Farm to School goal of 30% locally sourced products by 2030. This bill would also create a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani High School as part of the school meals program.

The first aspect of this bill would, theoretically, give principals and cafeteria managers at individual schools more control over their vendor choices. This decentralization could benefit rural schools, who may have an easier time finding local farms with the capacity to meet the schools need for specific products. Molokai High School, for example, might only need a few thousand pounds of carrots per year, and farmers based on that island could easily meet that need.

The second aspect of this bill is more challenging. USDA reimbursable meals require five components on the plate: Milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates. This bill is specifically referring to meat alternatives. Locally grown alternatives such as ulu and kalo are an allowable substitute for grains. To substitute for meat, products will have to be analyzed by a lab and nutrition information submitted to the USDA. This will take time, and should be taken into consideration when setting an effective date for this aspect of HB2083.

Mahalo for considering this measure and for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2083.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Chase', is written over a faint circular stamp.

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



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Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kauai

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union 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 supports HB2083.**

By establishing a recognition program to incentivize schools to reach the goal of thirty percent locally sourced food by 2030, the Department of Education would be taking a proactive step towards supporting local farmers and promoting food sustainability in our communities. Increasing the availability of plant-based meal options in public high schools is also a commendable aspect of this bill, as it promotes health, environmental sustainability, and compassion towards animals.

To ensure this program is enacted, we request that this measure be amended on page 3, lines 2 and 8 to replace "may" with "shall". Such an amendment would shift from a permissive tone, where actions are optional, to a mandatory tone, emphasizing the importance of these initiatives.

We strongly believe that supporting local farmers and promoting healthy meal options in schools is essential for the well-being of our communities. By passing HB2083, the legislature can help create a more sustainable food system in Hawaii and provide students with nutritious meal options that support their health and the health of the planet.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



To: The Honorable Chair Mike Gabbard, the Honorable Vice Chair Tim Richards, III, and Members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

**Re: Hearing HB2083 HD3 RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 20 1:00 p.m., room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seeks to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help Hawai'i show the world the way back to a safe and stable climate.

**The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2083 HD3 and we request the bill be amended so the pilot program**



**for plant-based meals at Mililani High School will be expanded to at least one school in each county!**

More local food in schools, especially with plant-based options, is a win-win-win!

This bill would recognize schools, providing incentives to plan for and meet the farm to schools meals goal.

- Moving toward the **goal of 30% local food in schools by 2030** will lead to **fresher, more nutritious food for our keiki**.
- It will also **help local farmers** by expanding markets for their produce.
- It will **mitigate climate warming** by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from shipping food great distances and help the State reach its target of sequestering more carbon than we emit as soon as feasible but not later than 2045.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



# Food+ Policy Internship 2024

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

March 19, 2024

Subject: *HB2083 - Relating to School Meals*

Aloha Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert Richards III, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

We are writing **IN SUPPORT** of **HB2083**, which enables the Department of Education to establish an incentive program to encourage schools to devise a strategy aimed at reaching the local farm-to-school meal goal of having thirty percent of their food offerings locally sourced by 2030, while also mandating that public high schools offer plant-based meal options.

Many parents, despite trusting that their keiki will be taken care of at their school, have their children come home starving each day because the lunch being provided looks and tastes unappetizing. They report lunch meats looking gray and cold, and thousands of students simply throw away their meals. This phenomenon causes an insurmountable amount of food waste every single week throughout Oahu's school system, which is not only a waste of money but a waste of resources. Tens of millions are spent each year for food in our public school system to feed our keiki, only to end up being fed to pigs.

We are testifying in favor of **HB2083** because it stands to benefit our agricultural sector by promoting the inclusion of locally sourced foods in school meals. Additionally, it offers nutritious meal options to students, which can enhance their learning outcomes and potentially reduce annual food waste. This legislation has the potential to stimulate the demand for locally grown fruits and vegetables, ensure access to healthy food for the numerous children in the public school system, and diminish reliance on imported goods.

We urge the committee to pass HB2083. We would like to thank Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert Richards III, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment for considering the comments herein.

Mahalo,  
Hawaii Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2024, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 12:57:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristina Cacpal	Testifying for Farm to School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha,**

**I am Kristina Cacpal. A Farm to School Extension Agent under the University of Hawaii CTAHR on the island of Molokai. I work closely with students, teachers, food producers, community members, and other stakeholders in an effort to create and foster the connection between students and locally grown nutritious food. Food that is unprocessed and provides the right nutrition for our minds and bodies are needed to function properly. It is also important that our students start young in understanding and making the connections to where their food comes from as well as being provided the opportunity to eat it. Children spend the majority of their time at school, which means being offered 10 meals a week. Those meals should be nutritious, appropriately balanced, and adequate to meet their needs. I am writing in support of HB2083 to incentivize schools that are moving towards the goal of 30% of locally sourced food by 2030 and thinking about what is best for our keiki.**

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

**Mahalo,**

**Kristina Cacpal**



To: The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)  
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 1pm

**In support of HB2083 HD2 (with suggested amendments)**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the AEN committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org **strongly supports the original version of HB2083. We support the HD2 version of this measure, but with an additional suggested amendment.** This measure authorizes the Department of Education to establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit to the Department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of 30% of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. Submitting a plan will help ensure that this very important goal is met.

Incentivizing schools to reach the local farm to school meal goal of 30% of food served in the school is a common-sense idea that supports our farmers and at the same time helps our keiki by providing local, fresh, healthy options. We know that by promoting healthy lifestyle choices and providing access to meals that contain less processed food, and more fruits and vegetables, we can help keiki reduce their risk for developing chronic diseases and improve their overall health.

Efforts to support our farmers also builds our resiliency and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping food in for meals offered at public schools. In addition, it stimulates our economy by creating local jobs and supporting the growth of local agriculture. These efforts and more are the type of actions needed to move Hawaii to a decarbonized economy. Truly this is a win:win proposition.

Unfortunately, this measure has been significantly watered down from its original intent. The HD2 version, which 350Hawaii supports, **required** the Department of Education to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani high school no later than the 2025-2026 school year. Plant-based meals provide a healthy, tasty, climate-friendly option our keiki can enjoy. Moreover, **the original version** of this measure aimed to require **all public high schools** under the Department of Education to provide plant-based meals as an option under the school meals program. It is very disappointing that despite numerous examples of school districts on the continent that are **already** successfully providing vegan options to students, that the HD2 version of this measure chose to launch only a small pilot project limited to just one high school. This, after numerous testimonies provided by youth at the hearing which stated their concern about food choices that

contributed to the climate crisis, wanting to have options for locally sourced, plant-based meals that would be less carbon-intensive, in addition to those currently following a vegan diet, yet noting there were no meaningful school meal accommodations to address their dietary preference, and as a result, they were simply left to go without. Yet, at the least, HD2 had a mandate to begin the process to address this concern. However, the HD3 amendment changed 'require' to '*allow* the department of education to establish a plant—based meal pilot program.' This only served to further watered down this measure.

**We strongly urge that this important measure be amended back to specify 'require' rather than 'allow'** the department of education to establish a plant—based meal pilot program, and further amend this measure **to expand the pilot to more than one location**, as piloting at only one school would be insufficient if the intent of the pilot is to truly flush out issues to ensure success for a subsequent statewide implementation of this program. Anything less would be a slap in the face of the engaged, committed youth who have testified on this measure, and unequivocally articulated their concerns and need for a plant—based meal program.

Some of our 350Hawaii members who were in high school in the 60s and 70s recall going hungry at school because a vegetarian lifestyle was considered 'too fringe' to be accommodated back then. Here we are now in 2024 and youth are still going hungry because we still can't provide a real meal option for youth following a vegan diet. This is wrong and unacceptable. If we are to solve the climate crisis, it will require all of us working together. We all need to be part of the solution. Importantly, we need to offer opportunities to empower our keiki by giving them the opportunity to make sustainable food choices that will help mitigate climate breakdown.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support with a suggested amendment** to this measure.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 11:53:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kruze Lani	Testifying for H.A.Y.C. Molokai	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kruze lani. I am 15 years old and the President of the Homestead Agriculture Youth Council. I am testifying on behalf of my council. We as a council agree to and support House Bill 2083 because most of our members are students of Molokai High and Middle School, and we are sickened, disgusted, and so forth by the food we are being served. We feel that we students NEED be served HEALTHY, LOCAL, SUSTAINABLE FOODS! Not frozen imported processed foods. We ask for all the panel's support in passing the House Bill 2083. It will not only help our youth now but also help us in the future to become esteemed leaders, exactly like most of the leaders we have now; it's the small things that matter the most! The bill will also support the small local farms thrive! Mahalo!



Date: Tuesday March 19th, 2024  
To: COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
  
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair  
  
From: Hawai'i Youth Food Council  
  
Re: **SUPPORT for HB2083, HD3**  
Hearing: 03/20/2024, Wednesday , 1:00PM

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On behalf of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of bill #HB2083 HD3, which authorizes the Department of Education to establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of thirty percent of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030 to the DOE.

This bill will improve the health and opportunity for students and help take a step forward in the Farm to School movement. It is exciting for there to be a possibility of having an incentive for schools that partake in this because it creates much needed change for the now and the future. Having 30% of food locally sourced is something very achievable by 2030 and seeing that it is under 30% should be alarming to many. As a student myself eating school lunch, I can see the processed and packaged food everyday and the health of my peers and I are slowly decreasing in front of my eyes. Family members of students are now getting sick and unable to be active with their children anymore. Not only will this better the health in communities, but it will also create financial opportunities within our island that are not yet available for local farmers. So all in all, if the future is your priority then it should be this bill as well.

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

Sincerely,  
Shania Wilson & co-members of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council

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Shania Wilson, Mililani High  
Kaylie Hirayama, Hawaii Preparatory Academy  
Gigi Kiyabu, Mid Pacific Institute  
Sabina Funasaki, Punahou School  
Audrey Lin, 'Iolani School  
Vivienne Hill, Honolulu Waldorf School

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.





## **Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

### **Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB2083 HD3**

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 1:00p.m. Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee,

HAPA supports HB2083 HD3 which authorizes the Department of Education to establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit to the Department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of thirty percent of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. Allows the Department of Education to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani high school no later than the 2025-2026 school year.

Supporting locally sourced food in school meals benefits our local agricultural sector, while providing students with nutritious, culturally appropriate foods. Sadly, progress in Hawai'i's goals of sourcing 30% locally grown/produced food in school meals by 2023 has lagged. This bill seeks to incentivize schools to take action to meet the goals of the Aloha+ Challenge.

Leveraging the power of public procurement to increase markets for Hawai'i's farmers and producers is one critical way Hawai'i can support local producers while decreasing dependency on imports.

Additionally, children will have greater access to more culturally appropriate and nutritious foods, such as kalo, sweet potatoes and others while becoming more connected to where their food comes from. Access to healthier foods will also support better learning outcomes.

Local food has a shorter time between harvest and your table, and it is less likely that the nutrient value has decreased. Food imported from far-away states and countries is often older, has traveled and sits in distribution centers before it gets to your store. This is exacerbated in places like Hawai'i, where our food is treated and shipped such long distances.



Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation.

It is critical to our sustainability and survival as an island chain to increase our local food production and agricultural sector and support regenerative agriculture and local production. The expansion of agriculture will allow us to broaden our economic streams and make us less reliant on tourism.

Please support this win-win for local food producers and students and pass HB2083 HD3.

Please support HB2083 HD3.

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

THE SENATE  
KA 'AHA KENEKOA

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, March 20, 2024  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

H.B. No. 2083 HD2

In SUPPORT of HB2083 HD2 Relating to School Meals.

I, Bonnie Parker, a teacher at Mililani High School, am submitting the following written testimony on behalf of the students of our Sustainable Foods Systems classes. The following statements are written by my students in support of HB2083 Relating to School Meals:

I, Chaunev Joines, am a supporter of HB2083. In the class of 2024, at Mililani High School. The food served here is less than 2-6% local. This would be important for us to act on by knowing we made what is eaten and waste will come back to us at the end. This would create a great cycle and system for High Schools.

I, Peter Aoki, am a supporter of HB2083. As a student of Mililani High School, I believe having the option to choose healthier, locally sourced meals, and of higher quality will encourage students to choose local

I, Sydnee Nakamura, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current student at Mililani High School, I believe that having the opportunity to supplement imported food with local foods for our school lunches will be very beneficial to our health.

I, Carlee Dowsett, am a supporter of HB2083. If we support our local farmers here in Hawai'i, we can be less dependent on other big corporations. I believe that we should be given more healthy and nutritious foods.

I, Ani Briley, am a supporter of HB2083.

Good Morning, My name is Michael, and I am a student representing Mililani High School. I am here to express support regarding HB2083. In my testimony, I will address the incentives on why we should swiftly implement this bill and take more initiative, highlighting reasons why locally grown meals should take top priority into school lunches. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective on this crucial matter.

I, Nicole Lariosa, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current student at Mililani High School, I believe that having locally supported foods will make meals in school more nutritious and healthy.

I, Akeliela Wade, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current student of Mililani High School, I believe having local and plant based foods added to our meals at school would benefit students greatly by being healthier and more nutritious.

I, Skylar Kaneshiro, am a supporter of HB2083. As a student of Mililani High School, I think that having locally grown food will greatly benefit our school lunches.

I, Kaira Kee, am a supporter of HB2083. As a student of Mililani High School, I think that having locally grown food will greatly benefit our school lunches.

I, Chase Mizoguchi, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current student of Mililani High School, I believe that it is best to have locally grown foods used for our school lunches.

I, DAngelo Paulo, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current student at Mililani High School, I know having local and plant based foods in our school lunches will benefit the students, and their health and it will give our local farmers more support and recognition.

I, Callie Toguchi-Nebre, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current student at Mililani High School, I believe that having locally produced food will benefit our health and lessen food waste; making lunch more appealing.

I, Azaryah Enos, am a supporter of HB2083. Being a Mililani High School student, I believe that locally grown produce has many benefits in relation to earth and individuals. It would help support our environment sustainability & lower carbon emissions. It also helps support local farmers which could possibly help out with our community economy. Choosing locally grown food would contribute significantly.

I, Jerahmyah Maafala I agree that 30% of my lunch should be locally grown , to better our environment

I, Malia Gilbert, am a supporter of HB2083. As a current Mililani Highschool Student, I believe locally grown food lessens the urge to reach for fast food, resulting in a healthy, nutritious diet.

I, Dasia Flores, am a supporter of HB2083. Being a current MHS student I firmly believe that locally grown and produced food will help our students enjoy lunches better and be excited to eat it.

My name is Champ Aipoalani and I support HB2083.

Jahshua Starkey, I am a supporter of HB2083 as well as a student of Mililani High School. I believe that locally grown foods are very important and will allow Hawaii as a whole to thrive.

I, Kade Smathers, am a supporter of HB2083. Being a current MHS student I firmly believe that locally grown foods are better for the environment and our community.

My name is Hayden and I am a junior at Mililani High school. I am testifying in support of HB2083. As a student over the years I have seen and experienced changes to not just myself but others around me . Lots of perspectives we have change and opinions of others can tie into the changes we make to wanting a better lifestyle . Growing up in Hawaii I've heard many things about school lunch and have gotten many opinions on how some students won't eat because of how it's made or just because it doesn't look edible. I believe that having the option to choose whether or not we want to eat better/ having specific days to eat better will improve and better us as students. Allowing schools to offer these types of changes can help dig into other programs in schools that aren't really known like the Agriculture class that can help provide the food for us to eat and help students to get into and learn where food should come from. Which will help us as an Island to be less dependent on the Mainland to provide our food where most of the time we don't know where it's getting made or how . I hope you will consider passing H.B. No.2083 HD 2 because it will help us better. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

I, Bonnie Parker, am a teacher at Mililani High School. On behalf of the students of the Sustainable Foods Systems and Agriculture classes, we urge the passing of HB2083 to not only uphold ACT 175 which was put into effect July 1, 2021 but for the sake of the total well being of all students under the care of the Department of Education across the pae 'āina of Hawai'i.

We believe that the passing of this bill will not only benefit students, it will benefit the people of Hawai'i as well as the land in which we reside...our 'āina, the land which feeds and nourishes us extending from our oceans, to our soils, to our freshwaters, to our skies, to our heavens.

We are in a climate crisis, we are one natural disaster away from a total food system collapse. Is it not our responsibility to give our future generations something better than this?? The DOE is the state's largest institutional consumer of food products, serving over 100,000 students a day. 100,000 meals each day equals 100,000 opportunities every single day school is in session to make a better choice. Imagine if each of these choices was to support a healthier diet for our keiki, to support our local farmers, to support total food sovereignty.

Imagine if each of these 100,000 choices each day were opportunities to decrease our reliance on 98% imported foods, opportunities to revitalize and maintain the health of our waters and soils, opportunities to develop infrastructure that does not contribute to the devastating effects of climate change.

This is a crucial and pivotal moment for our future. We need this committee as well as every committee in the Senate and the House to work together to take charge in the leadership role we entrusted you with, and lead us towards a more food secure and environmentally sustainable future.

We believe that HB2083 will help create and support a more viable food system to benefit the people and the land of Hawai'i. The solutions are right in front of us, we need to put them into action now.

Mālama pono,

Bonnie Parker

[bonnie.parker@k12.hi.us](mailto:bonnie.parker@k12.hi.us)

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 6:12:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Seems strange to ask each school to essentially develop their own Farm to School program, develop a unique menu cycle based on what kinds of local foods might be available in that geographical area, form economic relationships with farmers and producers and coordinate the purchasing and deliveries just in time for meal service. Why would the DOE want to develop a program like that? Would it be so that they can see what works and what doesn't? This is a Federally funded program, with very specific rules and regulations, is each school also supposed to become competent in all these areas and make food for the whole school? Seems unlikely.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 10:30:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caden Salois	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Nourishing our keiki's joy, intelligence, and community through sustainable food in schools.

My name is Caden Salois, and I am a student at Hawai'i Pacific University working on my master's degree in sustainability. Before this program, I started a master's in public health at the University of Nevada Reno, which I am happy to acknowledge I am still currently working on. I want to note that I have a strong understanding of both subjects, and to me, this bill is more than a shift towards a sustainable future, or the health and well-being of our keiki. This bill brings joy to our children. I have been lucky enough to be a part of two unique programs, KUPU 'Āina Corps, where I have been a farm-to-school intern under the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH CTAHR). My other position with Sustainable Coastlines is as a (re)learning educator. With both of these jobs, I have been able to witness firsthand the experiences our keiki has had with local food, and it brings nothing but joy, intelligence, and a sense of community in the classroom. While my experience has been personal, I am sure I speak for hundreds of STRONG, young voices that are not always heard. They want to eat this food in their school. They want to grow this food in their school. Most importantly, these kids care more about our future than I could even imagine, pushing me to do what I do to help uplift these voices. It is now our time to take care of them, nourish them, and provide an environment for our future growth.

Mahalo for your time when you read this testimony!

- Caden Salois



**COUNTY COUNCIL**

Mel Rapozo, Chair  
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair  
Addison Bulosan  
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.  
Felicia Cowden  
Bill DeCosta  
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Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk  
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Telephone: (808) 241-4188  
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349  
Email: [cokcouncil@kauai.gov](mailto:cokcouncil@kauai.gov)

**Council Services Division**  
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209  
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

March 19, 2024

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN  
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON  
HB 2083, HD 3, RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Wednesday, March 20, 2024  
1:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 224  
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2083, HD 3, Relating to School Meals. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of HB 2083, HD 3, which would greatly affect the Kaua'i community.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2083, HD 3. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to [cokcouncil@kauai.gov](mailto:cokcouncil@kauai.gov).

Sincerely,

**ADDISON BULOSAN**  
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AAO:mn

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 8:17:22 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Skow, MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha everyone!

Hope you are having a good week, remember to stand up and stretch!

As a physician on Kauai, I **strongly support HB2083** for the health benefits to the students.

I appreciate that Mililani students have advocated for and will be a pilot school for the plant based school lunch option.

Fortunately we have examples across the country of plant based school lunches; so we will not have to reinvent the wheel, we'll just modify our plant based lunches with locally grown plant protein and produce, maybe the locally made Braddah Dave's Taro Burger. (From Kauai)!

Here's what Santa Barbara schools are doing. Also, as an FYI, all public schools in Illinois are offering plant based meals to all 2 million students, so is DC, and LA and NYC. Back to Santa Barbara:

"SBUSD serves a plant-based option at each meal. Options include plant-based chili, rojo burritos, Thai green curry bowls, vegan "meatball" subs, and veggie pozole. Of the 2 million meals SBUSD serves every year, approximately 50 percent of the meals are vegan. The plant-based options often sell out more quickly than the meat-based meals! SBUSD is also home to many school gardens, where students learn about the benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables."

**And the health benefits to the kids:** per PCRM, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine:

Plant-based meals provide excellent nutrition—they are rich in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that boost students' health. Children who are raised on healthful vegan diets have a reduced risk for heart disease, cancer, obesity, diabetes, and other conditions. Adolescents raised on a plant-based diet often find they have an easier time maintaining a healthy weight. **They also have fewer problems with acne, allergies, and gastrointestinal problems than their peers who eat animal products.**

Plant-based school meals can also help address rising rates of chronic disease. **Projections from the CDC show that 1 in 3 children will develop type 2 diabetes during their lifetime.** More

and more children are gaining excess weight, paving the way for health problems later in life. Twenty-five percent of children ages 5 to 10 years have high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, or other early warning signs of heart disease. In fact, American children often have fatty streaks in their arteries before they finish high school. Plant-based meals promote health, because they are free of cholesterol, low in saturated fat, and full of fiber, and protein.

And of course, plant based eating is the easiest change we can make for the environment, per the UN, animal agriculture contributes to more greenhouse gas emissions than all planes, trains, cars, trucks, ships combined. And animal agriculture is the major contributor to pollution of our ocean, rivers, streams; and commercial fishing is depleting our oceans.

And lastly, plant based eating is kind to all, our animals, our planet, and our health. Choose Kindness!

Thank you for your consideration and time. Have a great rest of your week!

Sincerely,

Stephanie Skow, MD

Kauai, HI

[stephanieskow@yahoo.com](mailto:stephanieskow@yahoo.com)

**Date: March 19, 2024**

**To: FIN**

**From: Debbie Millikan**

**Re: STRONG SUPPORT for HB2083 Relating to School Meals**

**Hearing: Wednesday, March 20, 1pm, 2024**

**Dear Chair Gabbard,**

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2083 HD3 which will establish a recognition program to incentivize schools to submit to the Department a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of 30% by 2030. This also allows the Department of Education to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani high school.

I have worked with children in school gardens for the past 20 years and have seen firsthand how providing local, fresh foods in school lunches improves the health of our children and the health of Hawai'i's food system.

In terms of providing plant-based meals, the real intention is not to address every individual's interest but to recognize that when we focus on plant-forward meals we support the health of children and the health of 'āina in Hawai'i, we encourage and support locally grown, healthy options for nutrition and energy. We all know the downsides to animal agriculture in terms of human health and environmental impacts. Why can't we make it easier for our students to make wise food decisions by offering them options that are healthier for all!

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill,

Debbie Millikan, Ph.D.

Honolulu, Hawai'i

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 9:35:56 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
katherine skow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a retired 5th grade teacher, I **strongly support HB2083. Healthy diets are so important for student success. Kudos to the Mililani students who are advocating for a plant based school lunch program!**

Fortunately we have examples across the country of plant based school lunches; so we will not have to reinvent the wheel, we'll just modify our plant based lunches with locally grown plant protein and produce, maybe the locally made Braddah Dave's Taro Burger. (From Kauai)!

Public schools in Illinois are offering plant based meals to all 2 million students, so is DC, and LA and NYC.

"SBUSD (Santa Barbara school district) serves a plant-based option at each meal. Options include plant-based chili, rojo burritos, Thai green curry bowls, vegan "meatball" subs, and veggie pozole. Of the 2 million meals SBUSD serves every year, approximately 50 percent of the meals are vegan. The plant-based options often sell out more quickly than the meat-based meals! SBUSD is also home to many school gardens, where students learn about the benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables."

PCRM, (Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine):Plant-based meals provide excellent nutrition—they are rich in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that boost students' health. Children who are raised on healthful vegan diets have a reduced risk for heart disease, cancer, obesity, diabetes, and other conditions. Adolescents raised on a plant-based diet often find they have an easier time maintaining a healthy weight. **They also have fewer problems with acne, allergies, and gastrointestinal problems.**

Plant-based school meals can also help address rising rates of chronic disease. **Projections from the CDC show that 1 in 3 children will develop type 2 diabetes during their lifetime.** More and more children are gaining excess weight, paving the way for health problems later in life. Twenty-five percent of children ages 5 to 10 years have high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, or other early warning signs of heart disease. In fact, American children often have fatty streaks in their arteries before they finish high school. Plant-based meals promote health, because they are free of cholesterol, low in saturated fat, and full of fiber, and protein.

Plant based eating is the easiest change we can make for the environment. Per the UN, animal agriculture contributes to more greenhouse gas emissions than all planes, trains, cars, trucks,

ships combined. In addition, animal agriculture is the major contributor to pollution of our ocean, rivers, streams. Commercial fishing is depleting our oceans.

And lastly, plant based eating is kind to all....our animals, our planet, and our health.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Katherine Skow

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 9:52:59 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT TO HELP LOCAL FARMERS.

MAHALO!

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 9:59:16 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeannette Soon-LUdes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This testimony is being submitted in support of HB2083. When passed, this policy will be a tremendous economic driver for our small farmers, as well as provide healthy, environmentally conscious foods for youth enrolled in our public schools. Reaching the Farm to School goal of 30% locally sourced products by 2030 will provide direct, positive impact for our farmers by providing markets for locally-sourced agricultural products. It will also be a net positive for our local economy by preventing our monies flowing outside the islands through out-of-state procurement practices. Increasing local procurement via a continuum of incremental goals through 2050 will enable a gradual transition that is achievable by our schools.

For these reasons, I strongly urge passage of HB2083 HD3.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Hearing on March 20, 2024 at 1:00 pm

SUPPORTING HB 2083 HD 3

My name is John Kawamoto, and I support HB 2083 HD 3 with a amendments.

This bill advances Hawaii's food security and improves nutrition for the children of Hawaii. The intent of the bill is worthy, but it does not go far enough.

Hawaii produces only about 15% of its food. About 85% of food consumed by Hawaii residents is imported. Disruptions on the mainland and other parts of the world threaten the food supply chain, and therefore Hawaii's food security. To encourage more food to be produced in Hawaii and make Hawaii more food secure, the Legislature set a goal of 30% food served in public schools to be locally sourced.

This bill authorizes the Department of Education (DOE) to establish a program to incentivize individual public schools to submit to the DOE a plan for the school to reach the local farm to school meal goal of 30% of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. A plan would make each school more likely to attain the goal. However, the bill authorizes, but does not require. The bill should be amended to require each school to submit a plan to the DOE.

This bill also authorizes the DOE to establish a pilot program at Mililani High School to provide a plant-based meal as an option under the school meals program. Plant-based diets offer all the necessary protein, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals for optimal health. Plant-based diets are associated with lower risks of developing coronary heart disease and high blood pressure, and also with increased longevity.

School districts on the mainland have already proven that plant-based school lunch options can be offered extensively. For example, the New York City School District and the Santa Barbara Unified School District both serve a plant-based option at each meal. This bill should be amended to require each public school to offer a plant-based school lunch option.

With the foregoing amendments, I support the bill.

March 19, 2024  
*Testimony of Elise Rogalski*  
*Student - Hawai'i Pacific University*  
*on*  
*HB2083 HD3 Relating to School Meals*  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment - Senator Gabbard  
March 20, 2024 1pm

Aloha Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support** of bill HB2083 HD3 relating to school meals. This bill addresses multiple issues that I believe need legislation for impactful changes to be made including supporting the local economy and healthy living. What children experience in grade school forms who they are. Bringing in locally sourced products and offering healthy meal options will not only impact the health and wellness of our community right now, but will likely have lasting impacts.

The changes that this bill would initiate could be used as a great tool for education within schools. This bill has the potential to support a variety of concepts we teach including but not limited to our local economy and healthy living. I feel there is no better tool for education than real life examples that affect the children themselves.

Furthermore, offering healthy, plant-based options allows for children to have more of a choice when it comes to their diet. In my personal experience, this leads to an increase in emotional and physical wellbeing.

Lastly, there are many ideas on how to best support our local economy, I feel this is an ideal scenario. Public schools can offer local farms a consistent demand for products. I believe this is a strong way to ensure local farms are being supported.

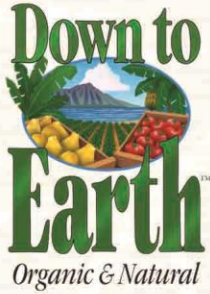
*I urge the committee to support HB2083 HD3. For our children, community, and local economy.*

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony.

Kind regards,

Elise Rogalski

Love Life!



HB2083 HD3 RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS  
House Committee on Agriculture and the Environment  
March 20, 2024, 1:00pm State Capitol

Aloha Sen. Mike Gabbard, Chair, Sen. Tim Richards, Vice Chair, and Committee Members.

**Down to Earth Organic and Natural testifies in support of HB2083 HD3.**

*Down to Earth Organic and Natural has six locations on Oahu and Maui. Since we opened in 1977, we have supported healthy lifestyles and preservation of the environment by selling local, fresh, organic and natural products, and by promoting a healthy, plant-based and vegetarian lifestyle.*

We are strongly in support of HB2083 HD3 to establish a program to incentivize schools to reach the local farm to school meal goal and to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani High School. We would like to encourage the pilot program to be established at other DOE schools in the near future.

A 2020 *Nutrients* systematic review concluded that consuming five or more daily servings of fruits and vegetables is linked to better mental health, particularly less depression. According to recent scientific studies, for example a 2021 study published in *Advances in Nutrition*, eating a vegetarian diet can help prevent and treat type 2 diabetes. Plant-based diets improve insulin sensitivity, help with weight management, and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. As you know, diabetes is a serious concern in Hawaii; over 11% of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes and an additional 39,000 are estimated to have the disease but have not been diagnosed yet (American Diabetes Association, 2021). Diagnosed diabetes costs an estimated \$1.5 billion in Hawaii each year.

The outcome of this legislation will be: keeping more funds in our economy, supporting our local farmers and producers, encouraging schools to use more fresh ingredients containing less preservatives in school lunches, and providing plant-based meal options to increase the fruit and vegetable component of our keiki's diets while adding to their understanding of how to eat healthy. Everyone can agree that getting more fruits and vegetables into the diets of our keiki is highly beneficial. By allowing our youth the opportunity to try plant-based meals (which they may not be exposed to at home), they are more likely to consider eating a diverse diet containing more fruits and vegetables for the betterment of their physical and mental health now and in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Alison Riggs  
Public Policy & Government Relations Manager  
Down to Earth

2525 S. King St., Suite 309  
Honolulu, HI 96826  
Phone (808) 824-3240  
Fax (808) 951-8283  
E-mail: [alison.riggs@downtoearth.org](mailto:alison.riggs@downtoearth.org)

Corporate Office  
P.O. Box 1166  
Kailua, HI 96734  
Phone: (808) 484-5890  
Fax: (808) 484-5896  
[corporate@downtoearth.org](mailto:corporate@downtoearth.org)

**Oahu Locations**

Honolulu  
2525 South King Street  
Honolulu, HI 96826  
Phone: (808) 947-7678  
Fax: (808) 943-8491  
[honolulu@downtoearth.org](mailto:honolulu@downtoearth.org)

Kailua  
573 Kailua Road  
Suite 101  
Kailua, HI 96734  
Phone: (808) 262-3838  
Fax: (808) 263-3788  
[kailua@downtoearth.org](mailto:kailua@downtoearth.org)

Pearlridge  
98-211 Pali Momi Street  
Suite 950  
Aiea, Hawaii 96701  
Phone: (808) 488-1375  
Fax: (808) 488-4549  
[pearlridge@downtoearth.org](mailto:pearlridge@downtoearth.org)

Kapolei  
4460 Kapolei Parkway  
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707  
Phone: (808) 675-2300  
Fax: (808) 675-2323  
[kapolei@downtoearth.org](mailto:kapolei@downtoearth.org)

Kakaako  
500 Keawe St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 465-2512  
Fax: (808) 465-2305  
[kakaako@downtoearth.org](mailto:kakaako@downtoearth.org)

**Maui Location**

Kahului  
305 Dairy Road  
Kahului, HI 96732  
Phone: (808) 877-2661  
Fax: (808) 877-7548  
[kahului@downtoearth.org](mailto:kahului@downtoearth.org)

[www.downtoearth.org](http://www.downtoearth.org)



Center for Getting Things Started supports HB2083 HD3. C4GTS works in educating for sustainability, regenerative agriculture and place-based education. We share the following reasons in support of the bill:

- This bill incentivizes individual schools to submit a plan to the Department of Education (HIDOE) for that school to reach the Farm to School goal of 30% locally sourced products by 2030.
- This bill also creates a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani High School as part of the school meals program.
- The bill supports an increase in local procurement via a continuum of incremental goals through 2050. Every 5 years the locally sourced food goals increase by 5% for the Department of Education, culminating in a 50% locally sourced goal by 2050.
- 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.

Mahalo nui loa,

Koh Ming Wei, PhD  
Executive Director  
mingwei@c4gts.org

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 12:54:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Luke Stumfall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee,

My name is Luke Stumfall and I on Maui. I support HB 2083. The right of to have adequate food should be a priority for our schools. Nutrition is the basis of our Keiki's growth and future. If we as a community want the best for our next generation,then we need to giving them a nutritious life which includes the healthy foods they eat and good quality teaching.

Mahalo

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 12:47:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Delacruz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a DOE public school teacher at Keonepoko Elementary School in Puna, Hawaii. My students require nutritious meals provided by the school to grow into healthy, strong learners. If we can connect students to local food at school, the conditions for academic and personal growth flourish. Please consider passing this bill to help nourish all students in Hawaii.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 12:58:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Amanda Stumfall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Committee,**

**As a DOE teacher, I am in support of this bill to source local, healthy food for our students—a basic human right. To continue to support whole-child education, this fundamental need for access to nutritious food must be met. This bill will provide our students with equitable access to safe, locally-sourced food, meet their diverse dietary needs, and enable them to pursue a healthy life-style.**

**Mahalo**

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 12:58:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lydi Morgan Bernal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

Thank you very much for hearing this bill. I strongly support this bill to incentivize schools to create school-level plans for implementation of HIDOE's Hawaii Farm to School Program (including the 30% by 2030 local school food goal), and to develop a pilot program for plant-based meals.

Farm to school will thrive if and when communities are directly involved in its implementation. We also need to pursue an increase in locally-grown plant-based meal options.

The farm to school community is ready to support implementation of this bill. We urge you to pass it into law.

Mahalo nui!



**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 12:56:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eileen Carr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Eileen Carr and I am a 4th grade teacher at Waikiki School. Previously, I taught for 3 years on Molokai, 4 years at Mānoa Elementary School, and 12 years with the NYCDOE. I have been a proud public school teacher for over 20 years, and have spent my career teaching my young students to be advocates for the change they want to see in their lives, communities, and schools.

This year, my 4th graders did a project researching foods served in their HIDEOE school lunches. They found that the vast majority of items being served for school lunch were imported. Even items that could be locally sourced, such as oranges, beef, and eggs, are being imported. My 4th graders wrote op eds and filmed op ed videos asking the grownups of our state to please prioritize the contents of Act 175 by providing more locally-sourced foods in HIDEOE meals.

HB2083 gives you, the grownups in power who have a great deal of control over what our keiki eat each day, an opportunity to feed our children better. Please support this bill and feed our kids foods that come from local farmers rather than barges and container ships. Our state as a whole is overly reliant on imported foods, and even our 4th graders know that we can do better.

To provide over 100,000 students in the state of Hawai'i with better food that is locally-sourced, we ask your committee to support this bill.

Respectfully,

Eileen Carr

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 1:03:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jonathan Kissida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Imagine joyful food feeding joyful minds. This bill is driven by students and offers the Legislature an opportunity to empower; student voice, student choice, and students to learn healthy behaviors early in life. Imagine a school in Hawaii where the administration, cafeteria managers, teachers, and students work together to promote joyful minds. This is the opportunity to pilot, empower, and create that joyful future for Hawaii. Imagine the academic effect.**

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Tim Richards, III, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Wednesday, March 20, 2024  
1:00PM, Senate conference room 224  
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for H.B. No.2083 HD 3

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

My name is Jenny Kuwahara and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I am testifying **in support of** H.B.No. 2083 HD3.

I am testifying specifically in support of the plant-based meal part of the bill. I believe it is necessary to implement this part of the bill for the health of the environment and the youth who depend on school meals. At Mililani High School we have the support of the principal, the cafeteria manager, students, and teachers to implement a pilot program that we hope could be adopted by the rest of the DOE, in a similar way that the New York public school system implements a “plant powered Friday” menu for all students. The bill should include amendments about expanding the program to all Hawai'i DOE campuses if the pilot is successful. As we all know, many students live in food deserts and may benefit from increased access to whole plant-based foods. Further, our continued reliance on highly processed and imported foods procured in our industrial food system means that we are perpetuating support for an environmentally destructive food system.

Whole food, plant-based meals need to be reintroduced to our diets and our schools should be morally obligated to set students up for a healthy future. While this may require fundamental changes to the way the DOE approaches school meals, the long term benefits far outweigh the short-term potential inconvenience some may feel implementing this change will have on the current system.

To quell concerns of members of the House finance committee, I would argue that kids do and will eat vegetables, especially when included in hearty main courses, being “pro-carnivore” is not sustainable, and that if food waste is already a problem then providing students with nutritious plant-based meals will not make that problem worse. In fact, if this bill succeeds, it may provide students with a glimmer of hope in people with power—that they will step up to the plate and help to address the role of the food system in the climate crisis. If the bill succeeds, we have a fun task ahead of us, to envision a future of school meals in which students clean their plates of vegetables because they are included in delicious, nutritious, culturally relevant meals while decreasing the carbon footprint of the DOE's food system.

I hope you will consider passing H.B. No. 2083 because it is necessary to move our state towards a more sustainable, food secure, and healthy future. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Mililani High School

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 4:57:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Brooks	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear AEN Commitee,

Please vote yes on HB 2083. I see this bill and eventual policy, as having 3 major benefits. Firstly, as an educational tool, it introduces students to locally grown, fresh, and wholesome food that they might not have otherwise considered. Secondly, it moves Hawaii in the direction of food sovereignty and less dependence on imported food. Third, Hawaii-grown food means fewer greenhouse gases that come from the transport and over-dependence on, mainland grown food.

Mahaolo nui loa,

James Brooks

Chairperson, [thinkbeyondthepump.org](http://thinkbeyondthepump.org).

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 7:20:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John & Rita Shockley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

We support HB2083 that will support our local farmers as well as supply local produce for our schools.

Mahalo for your time.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 11:40:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Miura-Aguinaldo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a parent and teacher, I support the measure that would allow public schools to be able to increase the amount of locally sourced ingredients in our public school meals. I also support the pilot program to include plant-based meals at Mililani High School (although I would hope that this could be expanded to ALL schools in the future). With the increases in effects from climate change, lowering the carbon footprint of school meals (both by reducing transportation emissions from importing food and by increasing plant-based meal options) make sense. Having healthier and tastier choices in school meals would also go a long way in improving the health and nutrition of our keiki.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 11:48:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
KIMBERLY LANI	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I am a parent of 3 children who attend DOE schools on Molokai. The food service is extremely unsatisfactory. Packaged foods are simply unhealthy, not to mention it is disgusting. I would never eat it -why do we serve it to kids?

I work at a DOE school, so I actually see the meals and hear the feedback. A huge concern was the videos taken by students on social media...of the clumpy milk that does not appear to be outdated. Why is it clumpy?! The kids will take their meal plate to eat a few pieces out of hunger and dump the rest. The pigs who consume the swill are the biggest winners.

My son and I attended the Food Summit back in December to help provide mana'o towards priority bills, and I do believe this is an important one.

Speaking as Hawaiian Homesteaders there is much to gain if Molokai DOE kitchens will increase their locally sourced items. Many farms would benefit from the business, as our island economy is in crisis.

it's a no brainer, win-win situation. The island makes money and the keiki eat healthier meals.

The students are also becoming aware that they need to voice their opinion on the creation of these meals. We will stay informed on those future bills.

We support this bill. Please consider moving it forward.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 11:52:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Karen Luke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2083 to help the DOE establish farm to school programs. This bill will sustain our children both mentally and physically. We are what we eat and this bill really brings it home.

Please support HB2083.

Mahalo,

Karen in Ewa Beach



**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 12:09:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
EZEKIEL LANI	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. I want better food at school for my classmates, and that comes from our farms and gardens. That's what we learn in school and in our clubs like Homestead Agriculture Youth Council and 4H.

The food served at school is gross. Kids dump a lot of it away. I bring home lunch every day. I am allergic to wheat.

Please help to change our menu and it starts with getting more local fresh food.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 7:04:25 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Randall Suzuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support anything that will increase fruits and vegetables in the school and support our local farmers.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 7:17:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Logue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 8:08:31 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mericia Palma Elmore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 8:13:11 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Braeden Cabel-Kaahanui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Senators Gabbard, Richards, DeCoite, Rhoads, and Awa,

My name is Braeden Cabel-Kaahanui. I am the Vice President of Molokai's Homestead Agriculture Youth Council (HAYC), now in our second year. I am a Freshman at Molokai High School, an athlete (Football, Soccer), and have been in leadership positions every year since 5th grade. I am not just a Molokai Farmer at school, but my family farms on our Ho'olehua homestead. I am the 5th generation of farmers on this homestead.

I attended the We Grow Hawai'i Youth Food Summit on Oahu last month and visited many senators and representatives at the State Capitol to support this and other bills relating to us as youth. We learned a lot about food sustainability and security in Hawai'i and becoming a healthier community.

I support HB 2083 because it not only supports our health, but our economy as farmers. This bill encourages schools to switch to more locally sourced products instead of those bad packaged products. If we switch to a more locally based diet, it decreases the amount of greenhouse gases being released into the air. And if we incentivize our schools to switch, we have a better chance of avoiding global warming. It also gives us a better chance of survival because we need to learn to make better health choices to keep us away from diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, etc. that plague our Hawaiian community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Braeden K. Cabel-Kaahanui

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 8:22:34 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Isabelle Enriques	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the passing of this bill, because I am a student at Mililani High School, Class of 2026, and I would like to see more locally grown meals at my school. Improving the health of students, in specifics to how they eat, should be made a top priority by our legislators & Department of Education.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 8:33:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel C. Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill. It will support local farmers, build community resiliency and help get students in the habit of eating local. A pilot program is a good way to test the concepts.

Mahalo,

Dan Smith

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 8:56:52 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
De Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable chair and committee members,

I support this bill to incentivize schools to submit a plan to reach the local farm to school meal goal of thirty per cent of food served in the school to consist of locally sourced products by 2030. Increasing demand for in-state agriculture is a key component of creating and maintaining a sustainable food system, for public health and for employment for Hawai'i nei.

I applaud the goal of having the Department of Education to establish a plant-based meal pilot program at Mililani high school no later than the 2025-2026 school year. Plant-based options are an excellent path toward lowering overall youth obesity and increasing health goals for the people of Hawai'i, which, in the long run, will reduce medicare and healthcare costs.

I hopw this move will be an inspiration for other schools.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

With respect,

D. Austin

Kihei, Maui



**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 9:00:15 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alice Kaahanui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators Gabbard, Richards, DeCoite, Rhoades, and Awa,

My name is Alice Kaahanui. I am a parent and grandparent of students at Molokai High School and Ali'iolani School; community advocator; homesteader; and I sit on several local/state boards and committees in the areas of health, education, and culture (Filipino and Hawaiian).

Mahalo for your efforts to support our youth, our schools, and our farmers through HB2083. As a former educator in both private and public schools, with children who graduated from both and a child currently at Molokai High School, I have seen firsthand the difference between locally sourced food in private schools and mostly packaged (as my son calls it) foods in public schools. I fully support Farm to School efforts in our public schools - it is a community-wide effort that effectively touches on not just education, but agriculture, health, business development and social impacts. Most important, it begins with our youth to establish a foundation for better lifestyles and habits.

I appreciate the amendment to incentivize schools. While Mililani would be a good pilot program, Molokai schools have already introduced this concept. One need only drive to the schools to see how we are farming small plots (including goats at the high school!). When growing our own food becomes a habit, wanting more locally-sourced foods becomes natural to the palate. We know this for a fact having moved from Oahu to Molokai a few years ago and seeing our diet of choice change. Unfortunately, sourcing local foods is expensive. These small steps could ultimately help lower costs to local producers if DOE becomes a primary consumer.

Thank you for allowing this Bill to progress.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Alice Ka'ahanui

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 9:26:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tony Radmilovich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Positive thinking!

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 9:41:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sascha Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to say that I am in full support of this bill. Food insecurity is a very real thing and our keiki should not have to worry about it. Let prisoners have less to feed the kids instead.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 9:58:41 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Candace Vizcarra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Praying for GOD's hand over this matter.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 10:42:35 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald K Tran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HB-2083-HD-3**

Submitted on: 3/20/2024 11:22:30 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Charles A. Kaahanui, III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators!

My name is Charles A. Kaahanui, III. I am writing in support of HB2083 with amendments on record.

I am a 4th generation homesteader on Molokai. I have been an Education Assistant since 2001 at Molokai High School (MHS) and Washington Middle School. I am now a Substitute EA at MHS. I am also the President of the Ho'olehua Homesteaders Association (sponsors of Homestead Agriculture Youth Council - Molokai) and member of the Hui Ho'okahua Molokai.

I testify as a farm owner (Molokai Bred), homesteader, parent (my child is a Freshman at MHS and VP of HAYC), educator, and community advocate. Health and education are important to me. This bill is a way to combine both. By making Farm to School initiatives a priority in the largest education system in Hawaii, we are teaching our youth that we value food sustainability/security, we value healthy food not just in the home but in the place they spend more than 1/4 of their day, and we value their future health.

My family has a history of chronic diseases including diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. We learned to rely on processed foods and fast food. Changes in federal guidelines resulted in kids hating our school lunches even more, when all they needed to do was change the type of food being served. There are a lot of locally produced, culturally based food/herbs with ingredients that could come straight from our farms. This Bill could change the face of "school lunch" in Hawaii. This is a great way to invest our taxpayer money in our education system that would positively affect local agriculture, business development (our farm businesses need consistent consumers like DOE), and social health (we are what we eat). There's so many ways this bill could make positive strides in all aspects of our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Aloha,

Charles A. Kaahanui, III (aka Charlie)

