



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

Date: 02/01/2023
Time: 09:45 AM
Location: 325 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: House Agriculture & Food
Systems

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 0248 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year. Provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs. Requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents. Establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions. Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions. Appropriates moneys.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on HB 0248.

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

The Department is concerned that the decentralization of the farm to school program to complex areas will place an inordinate burden on Complex Area Superintendents to manage. School complexes do not have the ability to plan menus that are in federal compliance with the United States Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program, nor to procure food through

competitive and fair bids that abide by state and federal laws.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 3:04:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Kelly	North Shore EVP	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

HB248

RELATING TO EDUCATION

Wednesday, February 1, 2023, 9:45 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB248** which requires the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports the purchasing of locally sourced food, and Hawaii's ranchers are ready to contribute to that by providing local beef, a nutritious protein. The implementation of the Farm to School program will have a positive effect on our ability to continue to provide locally grown beef to the community. Hawaii's locally grown beef provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children. This bill will help ensure that the farm to school program is implemented in a way that serves the schools, the students, and the food producers.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Wednesday, February 1, 2023; 9:45 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0248, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Chair [CHAIR], Vice Chair [VICE CHAIR], and Members of the Committee:

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

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

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Allow complex area superintendents to implement the Farm to School Program and Farm to School Meals Program;
- (2) Require certain school supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents;
- (3) Establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) permanent school cafeteria supervisor positions;
- (4) Appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, to be expended by the Department of Education, to establish the five positions;
- (5) Require the Department of Human Resources to review existing classification and compensation schedules for school cafeteria supervisors, consider the additional

responsibilities assigned to these positions, and report findings and recommendations to the 2024 Legislature; and

- (6) Take effect on July 1, 2023.

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

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

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

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



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

February 1, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 248
RELATING TO EDUCATION

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:45 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

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

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

HFB strongly supports the increased use of locally grown agricultural products, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, and poultry products in our schools and other public institutions. This will truly be a significant step towards increasing our levels of self-sufficiency. HFB also believes that learning where food comes from is an important part of our children's education. Farm to School involves more than just learning the basics of food production, it provides the opportunity for our children to understand and appreciate the importance of agriculture.

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

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



House Committee on Agriculture

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

Wednesday, February 1st, 2023 9:45 a.m. Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee,

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

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

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

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

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

Please support HB248 and farm to school efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

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

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



January 30, 2023

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House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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Dear Chair Gates and Members of the Agriculture & Food Systems Committee:

Re: SUPPORT FOR HB 248, Relating to Education

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Aloha, my name is Herb Lee, Jr. and I am the CEO of the Pacific American Foundation. Established in 1993, the Pacific American Foundation (PAF) is a national 501c (3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization with the mission to “improve the lives of Pacific Americans through service with dignity, courage, humility, and competence.”

We fully support HB 248 for the following reasons:

1. Farm to School programs support local farmers! This bill supports local food production, suppliers, and sustainable food systems in Hawai‘i.
2. Sourcing Farm to School meals at the Complex Area level enables greater flexibility in procurement, which removes barriers for the complex areas to procure locally sourced food by island.
3. The decentralization created by this measure supports cafeteria managers at rural schools, by increasing the ways that they can ensure a reliable source of food, fresh food and increase the nutritional value of their school meals.
4. This bill supports achieving the goal of serving 30% locally procured foods by 2030 as required in Act 175 (2021).
5. Eating unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products has a positive impact on the health of our keiki.

Pacific American Foundation
C/O 111 Hekili Street Suite A
170
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

Phone: (808) 664-3027

www.thepaf.org

Mahalo for your consideration and support!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Herb Lee, Jr.", written over a white background.

Herb Lee, Jr.
President & CEO



HAWAII APPLESEED
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
H.B. 248 – Relating to Education
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 9:45AM

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and members of the Committee:

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

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

The issue was pointed out seven years ago, in a 2016 technical assistance report¹ commissioned by the USDA, noting the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. HFUU strongly support HB248 to require the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year. The farm to school program provides a crucial link between our schools and local farmers, helping to ensure that students have access to fresh, locally grown food. The benefits of this program are numerous, including improving students' health and wellness, supporting local farmers and the local economy, and providing valuable educational opportunities for students to learn about where their food comes from.

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



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State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public
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: January 31, 2023

To: Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

Re: Support for HB 248 Relating to Education

Hrg: Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 9:45 AM, Conf Rm 325

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mahalo,



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

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

ⁱⁱ 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.

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/Reports/DOE_REPORT2023_FarmtoSchoolMeals.pdf

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 12:42:04 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Committee Members of Agriculture and Food Systems,

Hawai`i SEED strongly SUPPORTS requiring the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year. Provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs. Requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents. Establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions. Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions. Appropriates moneys.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 3:20:26 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am in support of HB248

The promise that children can grow whole within and from their community was a YES naturally known to be the right way long ago.

Eat from home.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 2:36:46 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katie Meadows	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair and Members, I Katie Meadows would like to show my support of bill HB248. Please do what needs to be done in order to get public school cafeterias using mostly or all locally grown food. Studies show the benefits of eating locally grown food- it's more nutritious. Research shows that buying locally grown food should be better for the local economy- this helps your budget while literally giving back to the community/supporting local farmers. Having locally grown food provided by our school cafeterias models sustainability- appropriate for people who live on an island. Clearly there are many benefits to this bill and the sooner it passes the better. Thank you Committee Chair and Members for the opportunity to testify in support of bill HB248. Aloha, Katie Meadows

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 8:20:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl Burghardt.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT and strongly encourage the House to support requiring the Department of Education to fully implement the farm to school program and farm to school meals program by the 2024-2025 school year. Provides that complex area superintendents have the authority to implement the farm to school and farm to school meals programs. Requires certain school cafeteria supervisors to report directly to complex area superintendents. Establishes school cafeteria supervisor positions. Requires the Department of Human Resources Development to conduct a compensation review of school cafeteria supervisor positions. Appropriates moneys.

As a retired elementary educator, I have seen the benefits of farm to school meals in various schools in my 40 years. This is a win/win for everyone but especially the students and the community. I encourage the House to ensure that the moneys do not come from the Feds. who have so many policies and rules that make providing these foods a challenge and that the House equally provides a smooth pathway for schools to get the funds for these programs.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 12:10:48 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please pass this important measure. Mahalo.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 8:22:51 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Seegal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you strongly to support the passage of HB248. This bill supports local food production, suppliers, and sustainable food systems in Hawai‘i. We need to remove barriers for local procurement and can do this by sourcing at the Complex Area level. The decentralization created by this measure supports cafeteria managers at rural schools, by increasing the ways that they can ensure a reliable source of food, fresh food and increase the nutritional value of their school meals. This bill will help achieve the goal of serving 30% locally procured foods by 2030 as required in Act 175 (2021). As I know from many years working in public elementary classrooms, fresh locally grown foods increase children's health and happiness. Please support the passage of bill HB248.

David Seegal

Farm to ECE Coordinator

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 9:02:10 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cailyn Schmidt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

1. This bill supports local food production, suppliers, and sustainable food systems in Hawai‘i.
2. Sourcing Farm to School meals at the Complex Area level enables greater flexibility in procurement, which removes barriers for the complex areas to procure locally sourced food by island.
3. The decentralization created by this measure supports cafeteria managers at rural schools, by increasing the ways that they can ensure a reliable source of food, fresh food and increase the nutritional value of their school meals.
4. This bill supports achieving the goal of serving 30% locally procured foods by 2030 as required in Act 175 (2021).
5. Eating unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products has a positive impact on the health of our keiki.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 9:26:01 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marissa Matsushige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairperson, Vice Chair, and Agriculture Committee,

In support of HB248, regarding Farm to Table food for public schools in Hawai'i

Aloha! My name is Marissa Matsushige and I am a senior at Kaua'i High School. I am writing this testimony in support of House Bill 248 regarding utilizing local produce from local farms for school meals. I am in full support of this bill as this provides our community an opportunity to support our local farmers. Further, this provides our schools with meals that carry the right nutrients and reduce the preservatives and unhealthy components that go into the food that is imported from the mainland. Having the proper nutrients enhances students' performance during school and makes them feel ready to learn as they are properly fed. This also reduces the cost of storing the food in industrial freezers and refrigerators as the product should be directly imported and fresh.

In conclusion, I am in full support of HB248. Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-248

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 12:17:12 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ming Wei Koh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB248. Here are several reasons to support this Bill:

1. Farm to School programs support local farmers! This bill supports local food production, suppliers, and sustainable food systems in Hawai‘i.
2. Sourcing Farm to School meals at the Complex Area level enables greater flexibility in procurement, which removes barriers for the complex areas to procure locally sourced food by island.
3. The decentralization created by this measure supports cafeteria managers at rural schools, by building their capacity, increasing the ways that they can ensure a reliable source of food, fresh food and increase the nutritional value of their school meals.
4. This bill supports achieving the goal of serving 30% locally procured foods by 2030 as required in Act 175 (2021).
5. Eating unprocessed locally grown and locally raised food products has a positive impact on the health of our keiki.

Please pass this Bill.

Koh Ming Wei, PhD

Executive Director

Center for Getting Things Started

HB-248

Submitted on: 2/1/2023 8:57:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nadezna Ortega	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

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

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

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

Mahalo,

Nadezna Ortega, Ewa Beach

HB-248

Submitted on: 2/1/2023 9:30:28 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannette Gurung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

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

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

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

HB-248

Submitted on: 2/1/2023 10:32:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marissa Matsushige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice-Chair, and Education Committee,

In support of HB603, regarding funds allocated for youth mental health specialists in Hawai'i public schools

Aloha! My name is Marissa Matsushige and I am a current senior at Kaua'i High School. I am writing this testimony in support of House Bill 603 regarding allocating funds to hire and implement youth mental health specialists for public schools in Hawai'i. Looking at the statistics provided in HB603 and hearing stories of fellow peers that have lost friends to suicide it shows to be an epidemic in our Hawai'i community. An epidemic that not only affects that person but the community around them. These statistics are so high because students receive the adequate help and support that is needed to prevent suicide.

Although this bill doesn't really solve the root of the problem because students are afraid their parents will find out or don't feel comfortable talking to staff at school resulting in them not reaching out for help, this bill is a step in the right direction.

I have personally faced my own mental health issues. I took the leap to reach out however, I did not feel I had the right support for these issues. Implementing this bill provides students with someone they can turn to the provide them the adequate help that they need to subside these problems. Further, with the trained youth mental health specialists, I hope that this bill brings down the suicide rates in our community.

HB-248

Submitted on: 2/1/2023 11:07:17 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Fox	Malama Kaua'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

While Hawai'i has made great strides in setting goals for increasing locally sourced food in school meal programs, the program is currently not on target to meet these goals. Nor is there a public plan to do so, or the ability or interest in partnering with communities who wish to support these efforts.

One of the key challenges has been a lack of decision-making power to implement farm to school purchasing at the local level. Farm to school work has been stuck in government bureaucracy and power struggles for far too long, even though many willing community partners have been working on this, and actively supporting efforts, for over a decade.

Shifting our local procurement for school meals towards more regionalized decision-making will empower more flexible sourcing from local food producers, and allow more community resources to benefit these efforts.

This will support local food producers by increasing their markets, minimizing carbon emissions from transport, and providing more healthy and culturally appropriate food for keiki. Having worked directly in farm to school efforts since 2010, this one piece of legislation could make a larger impact than all similar efforts combined.

Please empower our communities to do what is best for our farmers and keiki!

Mahalo,

Megan Fox
Mālama Kaua'i

HB-248

Submitted on: 2/1/2023 11:11:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pam Murphy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

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

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

This will support local food producers by increasing their markets, minimizing carbon emissions from transport, and providing healthier and culturally appropriate food for keiki.

Mahalo,

Pam Murphy, Kilauea, HI