

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

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TESTIMONY  
OF  
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ADMINISTRATOR  
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON  
WAYS AND MEANS  
APRIL 2, 2025, 10:01 AM

HOUSE BILL 1293, HD2, SD1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 1293, HD2, SD1. The State Procurement Office (SPO) recognizes the Department of Education's statutory duty to provide at least 30% locally sourced foods to Hawaii's public schools by 2030. The SPO provides comments to ensure compliance, accountability, and transparency, and recommends revisions to Section 2, page 2, lines 17-21, and page 3 lines, 1-11, to read as follows:

**§302A – Local edible produce and packaged local food products procurement; small purchases.** Notwithstanding section 103D-305(c) and any law to the contrary, procurements of less than \$100,000 for local edible produce and packaged local food products for the department shall be exempt from the requirement to conduct procurements through an electronic system and shall instead be subject to no less than three written quotes for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000; provided that the department may allow for no less than two written quotes for procurements of \$25,000 to less than \$100,000 for local edible produce and packaged local food products to supply schools in rural communities, as determined by the department; provided further that if the department is unable to receive the required number of written notifications quotes as required by this section, written justification shall be provided and kept by the department in the procurement file. All awards exceeding \$2,500 shall be posted electronically on the Hawaii Awards and Notice Data System (HANDS), or similar department of education procurement platform, and shall be compliant with section 103D-310(c). The State Procurement Office may request data from the department to evaluate the efficacy of this Act.

The purpose of the Hawaii Public Procurement Code is “to foster effective broad-based competition within the free enterprise program and to provide safeguards for the maintenance of a procurement program of quality and integrity.” The SPO continues to emphasize that all jurisdictions should utilize an electronic procurement system for improved transparency, better data-driven decision-making, enhanced operational efficiencies, and streamlined processes in the wake of labor shortages.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



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

**Date:** 04/02/2025

**Time:** 10:01 AM

**Location:** CR 211 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Ways and Means

**Department:** Education

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

**Bill Title:** HB 1293, HD2, SD1 RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT.

**Purpose of Bill:** Exempts Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than a certain amount from the electronic procurement system requirement. Requires at least three written quotes for Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts. Requires at least two written quotes for Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts for certain schools in rural communities. Sunsets 6/30/2028. Takes effect 7/1/2025. (SD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 1293, HD 2 SD 1.

Adjusting the Department's small purchase procurement capacity temporarily by increasing the threshold of \$100,000 for small purchase procurement, will help further support the goal of 30% locally sourced foods purchased by 2030. This will allow for the unencumbered purchase of locally produced foods from small businesses.

The Department recommends exempting purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system requirement.

The process proposed in this bill will allow us to purchase locally produced foods that currently are unavailable from our distributors.

The Department appreciates the language in the bill that allows for a written justification in the instances where the required quotes are not able to be generated as a result of the limited number of

vendors, which is a particular problem in our more rural communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY  
*KE KE'ENA LOLI ANIAU MĀLAMA 'ĀINA A ME KE OLA LOA*  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11<sup>th</sup> FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96813  
PHONE: (808) 768-2277 • EMAIL: [resilientoahu@honolulu.gov](mailto:resilientoahu@honolulu.gov) • INTERNET: [www.resilientoahu.org](http://www.resilientoahu.org)

RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
*MEIA*



BENJAMIN SULLIVAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &  
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER  
*PO'O HO'OKŌ & KAHU OLA LOA*

KEALOHA FOX  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR &  
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER  
*HOPE PO'O & HOPE KAHU OLA LOA*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024, 10:01 A.M.

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1293, HD2, SD1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT**

BY,

KEALOHA FOX, Ph.D.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER  
OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu ("City") Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency ("Resilience Office") **supports** HB1293, HD2, SD1, which exempts certain Department of Education (DOE) purchases of local agricultural and food products from the electronic procurement system requirement.

The Resilience Office coordinates implementation of the O'ahu Good Food Program, which is committed to increasing institutional purchasing of locally grown food to support local farmers, strengthen the island's food system, and improve access to fresh, nutritious food. By leveraging the DOE's significant buying power, this measure can help drive a broader shift in institutional food procurement, influencing not only schools but also hospitals, hospitality groups, and other public and private entities to prioritize local purchasing.

The DOE's farm-to-school goal of sourcing 30% local food by 2030 is a key step toward building a more resilient and self-sufficient food system. This measure will provide the department with greater flexibility to establish long-term relationships with local producers, reduce administrative barriers to procurement, and strengthen the local supply chain. These efforts align with the City's commitment to expanding access to fresh, locally grown food while supporting Hawai'i's agricultural economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1293, HD2, SD1.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
 Wednesday, April 2, 2025 – 10:01 a.m.  
 Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

**HB 1293 HD2 SD1 – RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF  
 EDUCATION PROCUREMENT**

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

- Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association
- Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council
- Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation
- Hawai'i Farmers' Union United
- Hawai'i Food Industry Association
- Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association
- Kohala Center
- Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i
- Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)
- Ulupono Initiative
- College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience - University of Hawai'i at Manoa

The Local Food Coalition **SUPPORTS** HB 1293 HD2 SD1, which exempts Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than a certain amount from the electronic procurement system requirement.

HB 1293 HD2 SD1 addresses key logistical challenges that have long hindered the Department of Education's ability to source local foods efficiently. By raising the small purchase threshold and providing flexibility in procurement processes, especially for rural schools, we are removing unnecessary barriers and empowering our educators to make choices that benefit both our students and our local farmers, ranchers, and livestock producers.

This bill's impact extends beyond the classroom, supporting job creation in agriculture, promoting food security, and reducing reliance on imports. This is a win-win for students, farmers, and the community, moving us closer to achieving the mandated goal of 30% locally sourced foods in public schools by 2030.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprised of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1293 HD2 SD1.

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 12:44:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii **SUPPORT** to facilitate more local produce in schools!

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 6:01:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Only today I was speaking with the VP of Kealakehe High School in Kona about "purchasing locally grown foods" being integrated into the school lunch program, and she was sharing that the rules and regulations are so onerous that they haven't been able to figure out how to purchase those foods. Perhaps this Bill will help folks like her who would like to but can't navigate the system of rules for the lunch program. Mahalo, Nancy



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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Wednesday, April 2, 2025 — 10:01 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1293 HD 2 SD 1, Relating to Department of Education Procurement.**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

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

**Ulupono supports HB 1293 HD 2 SD 1**, which exempts Department of Education (DOE) purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than a certain amount from the electronic procurement system requirement; requires at least three written quotes for DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts; and requires at least two written quotes for DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts for certain schools in rural communities.

Ulupono supports the State's farm-to-institution efforts, including the DOE's Farm to School Program, which has the potential to leverage the department's significant buying power to become one of the state's largest purchasers of local food (perhaps one day the largest) while also shaping the tastes, attitudes and eating habits of Hawai'i's keiki for healthy outcomes. The State has committed to local food procurement goals through 2050 (including the DOE's own statutorily required goal of 30% local by 2030), and it is important to provide opportunities for local producers to participate in institutional purchasing.

While the DOE's regional kitchen construction plans advance, the fact remains that these facilities won't be operational for many years. The department should seize current opportunities to strengthen relationships with local food producers. By engaging farmers now, we can align DOE's food requirements with local agricultural production and build supply chain capacity. This proactive approach not only serves today's students better

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*





than waiting for kitchen completion, but also sets up the regional kitchen strategy for long-term success — ensuring a robust supply chain is ready when these facilities open.

By expanding the small purchase exemption for the DOE, schools across the state will have an additional tool now to procure fresh products from local farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs



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

April 2, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1293, HD2, SD1**  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:01 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, 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 1293, HD2, SD1**, which allows the Department of Education to procure local edible produce and packaged food products under a certain dollar amount without using an electronic procurement system. It also requires the department to obtain written quotes for purchases within specific price ranges, with considerations for rural schools.

Hawai'i's Farm to School program is an essential initiative that improves student nutrition, supports local farmers and ranchers, and strengthens food security. Under Act 175, SLH 2021, the state has committed to sourcing at least 30 percent of school meals from local food sources by 2030. However, achieving this goal has been challenging due to procurement regulations that favor large, out-of-state suppliers over local farmers.

HB 1293, HD2, SD1 addresses this issue by streamlining the procurement process for the Department of Education. By exempting smaller purchases from the electronic system and requiring written quotes for mid-range purchases, the bill makes it easier for local farmers and ranchers to supply fresh food to Hawai'i's schools. The flexibility given to rural schools further ensures that they can access locally grown products even when fewer suppliers are available.

Expanding DOE's local food procurement will help create a stable and predictable market for Hawai'i's farmers. Many producers hesitate to scale up their operations due to uncertainty in demand. By simplifying the procurement process, HB 1293, HD2 encourages long-term investment in local agriculture, benefiting both farmers and students.

To fully support this initiative, HFB encourages additional efforts to assist local farmers and ranchers in navigating the procurement system. Educational workshops, technical assistance, and direct collaboration between DOE and local producers will further increase participation and ensure that Hawai'i-grown food reaches more students across the state.

We respectfully urge the committee to pass HB 1293, HD2, SD1 to strengthen Hawai'i's Farm to School program and increase the availability of fresh, locally grown food for students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



## HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS  
Chair

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University of Hawai'i at Hilo

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Kaiser Permanente

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Medical-Legal Partnership  
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai  
HMSA

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John A. Burns School of Medicine, 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 Network

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &  
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: Monday, March 31, 2025

To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Support for HB 1293 HD2 SD1, Relating to Department of Education  
Procurement

Hrg: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 10:01 am at Conference Room 211

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Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>1</sup> (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 Network. Hawai'i Public Health Institute and the Hawai'i Farm to School Network appreciate the opportunity to provide **strong support for HB 1293 HD2**, which introduces flexible procurement procedures for the Department of Education (DOE), including the requirement of at least two written quotes for certain purchases supplying schools in rural communities and a sunset clause to assess the effectiveness of these changes.

## More Straightforward to Work with Local Farmers

This bill increases flexibility for local food purchases from small and medium-sized farmers, particularly those in rural areas. Rural schools often face additional challenges, such as limited access to technology or fewer available vendors. Reducing the number of required quotes acknowledges these barriers and supports more equitable access to local procurement opportunities.

## Local Guidelines

HB 1293 HD2 requires the DOE to establish procurement guidelines with a geographic preference for locally grown or raised products and exempts purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products under \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system of the DOE. This smaller regional procurement model could be modeled after the School

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<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.



Food Authority (SFA) of New Mexico, which is notable for its success in smaller regional procurement from small to medium farms. To learn from this SFA model and to assess what staff positions, laws, and infrastructure are necessary, DOE will grant permission and allocate funds for a DOE procurement staff member, a dietitian, and a farm-to-school coordinator to travel to this SFA to study the smaller regional procurement model.<sup>2</sup>

### **Increased Accessibility**

Additionally, HB 1293 HD2 proposes increasing DOE-exempt purchases from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for the small purchase procurement program. The proposed policy increases the Department of Education's small purchase procurement threshold from \$25,000 to \$100,000, streamlining the purchase of locally sourced foods. This change supports Hawai'i's farm-to-school initiatives and the goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.<sup>3</sup> It reduces administrative burdens, allowing schools to quickly acquire fresh, nutritious Hawai'i-grown produce. The policy strengthens local agriculture, boosts economic self-sufficiency, and improves student health by providing fresher meals while advancing sustainability and reducing reliance on imported foods.

### **Uniform Purchase Limit**

It is important to note that all other Departments have a \$100,000 threshold (e.g., Department of Agriculture (DOA), Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Human Services (DHS), etc.). DOE is the only one with the lower \$25,000 threshold. This lower threshold dramatically limits the ability of schools to purchase local foods, as the amount demanded is usually well above this amount.<sup>4</sup>

### **Accountability Recommendations**

Furthermore, the State Procurement Office (SPO) shall suggest to DOE's School Food Services Branch (SFSB) financial system accountability recommendations to reduce the risk of financial mistakes that run afoul of parceling. SPO is welcome to review SFSB's progress in implementing SPO's suggested financial safeguard protocols.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> New Mexico Public Education Department, "Farm to School Procurement Guidelines."

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/student-success-wellness/nutrition/farm-to-school/>

<sup>3</sup> Hawai'i Farm to School Resource Hub - Advocacy, legislation, & policy. (n.d.).

<https://sites.google.com/hiphi.org/hawaiif2s/advocacy-legislation-policy>

<sup>4</sup> Hawaii DOE | Selling goods and services to the DOE. (n.d.).

<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/Vendors/Selling/Pages/home.aspx#:~:text=Schools%20and%20offices%20are%20authorized.or%20like%20goods%20and%20services.>

<sup>5</sup> Small Purchases Procurement method. (n.d.).

<https://spo.hawaii.gov/for-vendors/vendor-guide/methods-of-procurement/goods-services-construction/small-purchases-procurement-method/>



### **More Regionalized Purchasing**

For several years, the Hawai'i Farm to School Network, HIPHI, and partner organizations have advocated for regionalizing local food purchases. For example, bananas to be served in school breakfasts on Kaua'i should be purchased from farmers on that island. This arrangement fosters stronger relationships between the school community and local farmers, increasing nutritional education and knowledge of locally grown and raised foods among Hawai'i's students. HB 1293 HD2 will positively impact the health of our keiki and contribute to the development of sustainable food systems in Hawai'i.

### **Meeting our 30% by 2030 Goal**

Under Act 175, the DOE is required to purchase locally grown food as 30% of total procurement by 2030 and 50% by 2050.<sup>6</sup> The added flexibility in HB 1293 HD2 will help achieve these goals and support students and their families in understanding the importance of local food systems. Additionally, a sunset clause ensures that the policy can be evaluated and adjusted to meet the evolving needs of Hawai'i's schools and agricultural communities.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1293 HD2.

Mahalo,

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

Kawika Kahiapo  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute  
Hawai'i Farm to School Network Program Coordinator

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<sup>6</sup> Tagami, M.(2023, December 12). Hawaii Education Department takes 'Big first step' to increase local food in schools. *Honolulu Civil Beat*.  
<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/12/hawaii-education-department-takes-big-first-step-to-increase-local-food-in-schools/>



**The Hawai'i Youth Food Council**

Gigi Kiyabu - Mid-Pacific  
Shania Wilson - Mililani High School  
Vivienne Hill - Primsa High School  
Kaylie Hirayama - Honoka'a High School  
Star Woo - Kamehameha Schools Kapālama Campus  
Quingqing Quen - 'Iolani School  
Maya Gaudino - Punahou  
Jaden Tonyokwe - Maui High School  
Leilani Moran Hurtt - Mid-Pacific  
Alvis Agader - Maui High School  
Alliyanah Polido - Maui High School  
Chloe Hannsz - Kapaa High School  
Audrey Lin - 'Iolani School  
Talia David - Lahainalua High School  
Mia Nishiguchi - Kalani High School  
Erika Tien - Punahou

Date: 3/31/2025  
To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, WAM  
From: Maya Gaudino, Hawai'i Youth Food Council  
Re: **SUPPORT HB 1293 SD1, Relating to Department of Education Procurement**  
Hearing: Wednesday, 04-02-25 at 10:01 AM

Dear Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Moriwaki, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I am writing in **strong support** of HB 1293, to increase the small purchase procurement threshold of the DOE from \$25,000 to \$100,000. The current, limited budget has been slowing the DOE's ability to make strides in increasing fresh, locally grown food into their students' lunches. Increasing the procurement threshold will support our local economy through the purchase going to local farms and farmers, decreasing our state's immense reliance on mainland food imports. Fresh meals for the state's keiki that are healthy and locally grown will allow for better nutrition and learning, aiding our future generations.

Although I do not attend a public school under the DOE, I have seen the immense benefits of being able to switch over to locally grown foods. Classmates of mine will almost always opt for the fresh meals that have been prepared or grown locally when presented with the choice of a fresh meal and a processed one, shipped thousands of miles from the mainland. They enjoy taking part in learning where their food comes from, getting their hands dirty in a lo'i, or being able to pick fresh bananas from a tree outside their classroom.

[hiphi.org/HYFC](http://hiphi.org/HYFC) • 707 Richards Street, Suite 300 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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



Our island, once able to support a population of 400,000-1,000,000 people, pre-western contact, on a basis of regenerative agriculture and without any reliance on imports, has since been deprived of nutritious and local meals that can fuel our economy and keiki. This bill will be able to aid the state's 30% locally grown school meals by 2030 goal, which will allow us to be one large step closer to returning to a resilient and independent food system throughout Hawai'i. On top of this, the thousands of miles of shipment and immense processing efforts to our current imports has led to large carbon emissions, both from transportation and production, accelerating climate change and threatening our generation and future generations with a climate crisis, sea level rise, reduced crop yields, intenser storms, and much more. The unsustainable farming practices that once plagued our island during its plantation era in the 20th century have taken over the continental US through monocropping, overuse of fertilizers and pesticides, and aquifer depletion. If we do not allow for increased locally grown foods to be purchased in our DOE, the state continues to be responsible for an acceleration of climate change, loss of biodiversity, and crop failure.

When I grow up and have keiki of my own, I wish to be able to see their plates filled with food, grown from their own gardens or those in our community. I wish to be able to see children excited to learn about where their food comes from and the complexities of a local, resilient, and regenerative food system. Please pass this bill for our keiki and for the lives of future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Maya Gaudiano

On behalf of the Hawaii Youth Food Council

[hiphi.org/HYFC](http://hiphi.org/HYFC) • 707 Richards Street, Suite 300 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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



**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 4:23:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Noel Shaw	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo nui for hearing this bill! It's so important that the DOE is able to easily access the funding it needs to make our local food in schools goals a possibility. These are important steps to giving our local farmers opprotunities to particiapte in the school food market and bolster our local agriculture. I'd advise this committee to look to a similar bill SB659 that is currently awaiting a hearing and to possibly align the two so they provide the widest reach and the support the most local food in school. We can accomplish our goal of getting our students nutritious quality foods and exposing them to oppritunities to develop their palate for what we grow locally- even if that's just starting with staples like poi, kalo, sweet potato, local lettuce and tomatoes, papaya and banans, beef and pork!

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:28:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debbie Millikan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB1293 to raise the Department of Education's (DOE) small purchase procurement limit to \$100,000, to allow for the purchase and equitable distribution of locally grown products such as kalo in school food.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony,

Debbie Millikan, Honolulu, HI

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 6:09:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
J. Kehau Lucas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Kēhau Lucad and I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB 1293, which seeks to increase the Department of Education’s (DOE) small purchase procurement threshold from \$25,000 to \$100,000 to facilitate the purchase of local foods for Hawai‘i’s schools.

**The Benefits of Local Food in Schools**

Research has consistently shown that increasing access to fresh, locally grown foods in schools has multiple benefits for students, farmers, and the local economy.

- 1. Improved Student Health & Academic Performance**
  - A study published in *The Journal of School Health* found that students who consume fresh, nutrient-rich meals show higher academic performance, improved attention, and better classroom behavior (Burrows et al., 2017).
  - Farm-to-school programs, which emphasize local food procurement, have been linked to reduced obesity rates and better overall dietary habits in children (*American Journal of Public Health*, 2019).
- 2. Economic Benefits for Hawai‘i’s Agriculture**
  - According to the National Farm to School Network, every dollar spent on local food generates up to \$2.16 in economic activity within the state, supporting local farmers and food producers (NFSN, 2020).
  - A USDA Economic Research Service report found that increasing local food procurement strengthens regional food systems and creates new market opportunities for small and mid-sized farmers (Low et al., 2015).
- 3. Strengthening Food Security and Reducing Import Reliance**
  - Hawai‘i currently imports nearly 85–90% of its food, making it vulnerable to supply chain disruptions (*University of Hawai‘i Economic Research Organization*, 2021). Increasing local food procurement is a key strategy in improving food self-sufficiency and resilience.
  - A robust local food system can reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with long-distance food transportation, aligning with Hawai‘i’s sustainability and climate action goals.

**Why Raising the Procurement Threshold Matters**

The current \$25,000 threshold significantly hinders DOE's ability to purchase local food efficiently. Any purchases above this amount require a lengthy and complex bidding process, discouraging partnerships with local farmers who often cannot afford the delays. Raising the threshold to \$100,000 would:

- **Streamline** the purchasing process, allowing DOE to buy fresh local food without excessive red tape.
- **Help DOE meet the state's mandate** of sourcing 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021).
- **Level the playing field** by aligning DOE's procurement rules with other state agencies.

## **Conclusion**

HB 1293 is a necessary policy change that will allow Hawai'i's schools to provide students with healthier meals while supporting local agriculture and reducing our dependence on imported foods. This is an investment in our keiki, our economy, and our future food security. I urge you to pass this bill.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Aloha 'Āina,

J. Kēhau Lucas

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 8:01:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katie Folio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of increasing the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, bringing it in line with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold creates unnecessary hurdles for local food procurement, making it difficult for schools to access fresh, Hawai‘i-grown ingredients. The formal competition and public advertising requirements add delays and red tape that ultimately work against our keiki and local farmers.

Raising this limit will streamline purchasing, reduce barriers, and empower schools to source more local foods—helping Hawai‘i reach its goal of 30% local procurement by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS 302A-405.6). This is a win-win for our students' nutrition and for our agricultural economy.

Please support this much-needed change to ensure that Hawai‘i’s schools can better serve our keiki and our local food producers.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Katie Folio

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 11:21:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carmela Resuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 6:29:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support. Thank you.

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 8:43:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Kiefer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

Act 175 (2021) set a goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030. However, meeting this target has been challenging for the DOE. Lawmakers can help by exempting DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system requirement. This will also eliminate a barrier that hinders its ability to purchase local foods and support its goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.

Elizabeth Kiefer MD MPH



**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 9:38:54 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bryan Mih	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a parent and community pediatrician, I support raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. Please ensure that our keiki have access to fresh, nutritious meals that are locally sourced. Mahalo for your support.

Sincerely,

Bryan Mih, MD MPH FAAP

Pediatrician

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 10:39:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kiana Otsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am an O‘ahu resident writing in **STRONG support of HB1293 HD2 SD1**, which exempts Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than a certain amount from the electronic procurement system requirement, requires at least three written quotes for Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts, and requires at least two written quotes for Department of Education purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products between certain amounts for certain schools in rural communities.

This bill will support the State’s farm-to-institution efforts and leverage the Department of Education’s significant purchasing power. This bill will also help to provide more fresh and nutritious food for our keiki in schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.

Mahalo,

Kiana Otsuka

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 10:16:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Act 175 (2021) set a goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030. However, meeting this target has been challenging for the DOE. Lawmakers can help by exempting DOE purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products less than \$100,000 from the electronic procurement system requirement. This will also eliminate a barrier that hinders its ability to purchase local foods and support its goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 5:22:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheryl Reeser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Committee Members on Ways and Means,

I strongly support raising the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE’s ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai‘i’s goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

Mahalo for considering my testimony in strong support of this issue.

Cheryl Reeser  
Makawao, Hawai‘i

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:42:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathryn Braun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 1293 in its current version.

Act 175 (2021) set a goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030. However, the Department of Education (DOE) has struggled to make progress towards this goal – in School Year 2023-2024, only 5.43% of food purchased was locally sourced.

Increasing the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000 will align the DOE with all other state departments. This will also eliminate a barrier that hinders its ability to purchase local foods and support its goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030.

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 4:38:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Molly Mamaril	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Moriwaki and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1293 to raise the DOE’s small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE’s ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawai‘i’s goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

Mahalo for considering my testimony in strong support of this issue.

Molly Mamaril

Kaimukī, O‘ahu resident

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 9:30:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha

I SUPPORT HB1293 HD2 SD1. Let's get this done so that we can get the local food in our schools more readily.

**Committee on Ways and Means**  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 02, 2025  
TIME: 10:01 AM, Via Videoconference & Conference Room 211  
State Capitol

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB1293 HD2 SD1- RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT**

Aloha esteemed Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and distinguished members of the Committee.

My name is Traci K. Enriquez, and I am currently pursuing my Master of Social Work at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health. I am testifying in support of HB1293 HD2 SD1, which addresses a crucial aspect of procurement within the Department of Education. This bill seeks to exempt specific purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products from the electronic procurement system, provided they fall below a designated monetary threshold.

As a part-Native Hawaiian and a proud resident of Hawai'i, I am acutely aware of the pressing issue of food insecurity, particularly among our keiki in schools. It is imperative that we ensure access to locally sourced foods for our keiki, as food insecurity poses a considerable threat to their health and well-being. This is not just an isolated issue; it affects countless individuals and families throughout our communities.

In Hawai'i, families with children are disproportionately impacted by food insecurity, a reality that demands our immediate attention. With approximately 85-90% of our food supply being imported, our state's food system is alarmingly fragile<sup>1</sup>. Research by Reyes (2021) reveals that an estimated 25% of children in Hawai'i suffer from food insecurity<sup>2</sup>, highlighting the urgent need for systemic change to ensure equitable access to nutritious food.

I fully support HB1293 HD2 SD1, as it will significantly enhance the ability of our educational institutions to procure local food. This legislation is a vital step toward realizing the Department of Education's ambitious goal of sourcing 30% of its food locally by 2030, as outlined in ACT

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<sup>1</sup> Jany, P. (2023, April). Food Sovereignty In Hawai'i.  
<https://hilo.hawaii.edu/news/kekalahea/spring-2023/april/food-sovereignty-in-hawaii>

<sup>2</sup> Reyes, A. (2021, April). Food Insecurity Infographic. Ka Wai Ola.  
<https://kawaiola.news/columns/e-onipaa-kakou/sharing-food-is-part-of-our-culture/attachment/food-insecurity-infographic-2/>



175 (2021). Additionally, by exempting certain local purchases from the electronic procurement system, we are directly empowering our farmers, ranchers, and food producers across Hawai'i, fostering a sustainable local food economy.

Thank you for your commitment to this critical issue. I urge you to support this legislation, as it will create a profound and lasting positive impact on the health and future of our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Traci K. Enriquez, BSW  
[tka6220@gmail.com](mailto:tka6220@gmail.com)

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 9:51:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Deborah Schatz, and I am a former Aikahi Elementary and Kailua Intermediate mom and currently on the SCC (School Community Council) at Kailua Intermediate. I supports HB 1293. Since 2009 I have supported efforts to bring local foods to schools through the Jack Johnson 'Aina Is' programs. It is a win-win opportunity for the schools and our farming communities. The sooner the better please. Thank You.

**HB-1293-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 9:51:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

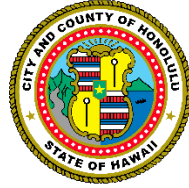
Comments:

Support

**OFFICE OF ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION  
KE KE'ENA HO'OMOHALA WAIWAI  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

711 Kapiolani Boulevard, FLOOR 12 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
PHONE: (808) 768-5764 • FAX: (808) 768-4242 • INTERNET: [www.revitalizeoahu.org](http://www.revitalizeoahu.org)

RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
MEIA



AMY ASSELBAYE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
PO'O HO'OKO

GAVIN THORNTON  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
HOPE PO'O

March 31, 2025

STATE OF HAWAII  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1293 HD2 SD1  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROCUREMENT  
BY  
AMY ASSELBAYE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

The City and County of Honolulu's Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) *supports* raising the DOE's small purchase procurement limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000, aligning it with other state departments. The current \$25,000 threshold hinders local food procurement due to burdensome formal competition and public advertising requirements. Increasing this limit will streamline processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance the DOE's ability to purchase local foods. This also supports Hawaii's goal to source 30% of school food locally by 2030 (Act 175, 2021 / HRS302A-405.6), strengthening our agricultural economy and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

OER started the O'ahu Good Food Program in 2022 to increase local food procurement among large institutions, including the DOE. This bill will allow the DOE, the largest department in the State with 295 schools and 42,000 salaried and part-time employees, to more easily purchase local foods to increase the State's local food goals.

OER's Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Program shares the goals of SB 1300 to increase the purchase of local food. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1300.



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Kona, Hawai'i

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

The Hawai'i 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. **HFU supports HB1293.**

HB1293 offers a commendable approach to enhancing the integration of local agriculture with Hawai'i's educational institutions by simplifying the procurement process for locally sourced food products. By exempting the Department of Education from the electronic procurement system requirements for purchases of local edible produce and packaged food products below a determined threshold, this legislation effectively removes bureaucratic hurdles that often make it challenging for smaller, local producers to compete. Such a measure not only streamlines the procurement process but also provides a meaningful boost to local agriculture by facilitating a more direct and beneficial alignment between local farmers and educational institutions.

Fawn Helekahi-Burns  
Hāna, Maui

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Mason Scharer  
Haleakalā, Maui

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union

Kaiea Medeiros  
Mauna Kahālāwai,  
Maui

Kaipo Kekona  
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy  
Moloka'i

Negus Manna  
Lāna'i

India Clark  
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman  
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich  
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kaua'i



# Food+ Policy Internship 2025

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

1 April, 2025

Subject: Support for HB 1293 HD2 SD1 (Relating to Department of Education Procurement)

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)

Aloha Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy strongly supports HB 1293 HD2 SD1, which seeks to address barriers to local food procurement for public schools. As the largest institutional food buyer in the state, the Department of Education (DOE) serves over 100,000 meals daily, yet its current procurement thresholds lag behind other state agencies, impacting efforts to meet the mandated 30% locally sourced school meals by 2030 and the 10% local food purchases by January 1, 2025 under Act 176, SLH 2021 and Act 144, SLH 2022.

This bill's exemption for local edible produce and packaged foods from electronic procurement requirements will allow schools to accommodate seasonal availability and potential "specials" for our schools. However, we would like to make comments to add an explicit exemption value which has been removed in House Draft 2 (HD2). Falling in line with SB659 SD2's proposed procurement exemption threshold of \$25,000 to less than \$250,000 from the Ways and Means (WAM) committee. We believe this would better enable participation from our local farmers, food hubs, and qualified vendors in contributing to specials planned such as via poi programs and more.

Alternatively, falling in line with the State of Hawai'i's executive branches small purchase threshold/monetary cap established via Act 173 SLH 2012, a threshold consideration up to \$100,000 for food products goods would bring the DOE in-line with what had been established for in the state procurement code (with the proposed \$250,000 limit matching the threshold for construction).

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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 2025, 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.



# Food+ Policy Internship 2025

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

To provide an example of the impact this bill would have, in May 2023, over 70 O‘ahu schools sought to participate in a poi program but were constrained by procurement limits that limited sourcing potential. HB 1293 HD2 SD1 would allow schools to bypass components of this bid processes for small-scale, culturally significant purchases like poi, enabling them to partner directly with local farmers and food hubs.

The DOE’s struggles to meet demand for poi in 2023 highlight the potential positive impacts of this legislation and increased procurement exemption thresholds. Current procurement channels bind schools to annual meal plans, leaving little room for partnerships or culturally relevant additions like Poi Day but this bill could modify that reality!

Mahalo for the chance to express our support for HB 1293 HD2 SD1,  
The Hawai‘i Food+ Policy Team

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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 2025, 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.