



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

Date: 02/26/2025

Time: 10:03 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: SB 0894, SD2 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds to the Department of Education to fulfill the local farm-to-school meal goal requiring thirty per cent of the food served in public schools to consist of locally sourced products. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 894, SD 2.

This bill proposes to appropriate funds to the Department to fulfill the local farm-to-school meal goal requiring thirty percent of the food served in public schools to consist of locally sourced products.

The Department is tasked by Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, to meet the goal of having 30 percent of food served in public schools to be from locally sourced products by 2030. We believe that the appropriations that could be provided in SB 894, SD 2 could help us to move in that direction as it is incorporated as part of our larger regional kitchen endeavor.

The regional kitchen model is the idea of having a centralized production kitchen that is used to produce meals or the prepping of individual ingredients prior to it being sent out to various locations for plating and serving to customers. The benefits of a regional kitchen include fresh and healthy school meals; high-quality meals with local products; increased procurement of locally grown agricultural products; reduction in food waste and reduction in future demand for replacement of current food service equipment at end of service life.

Transitioning to a regional model will require conducting site feasibility studies looking at space availability, zoning and land entitlements, vehicular access, and utility capacity amongst other factors. Costs in moving to this model are not just in building a regional kitchen, but also in converting existing

school kitchens into satellite kitchens that are able to receive the meals or ingredients from the regional kitchen. The kitchen equipment for reheating and finishing meals has already been identified by the Department's School Food Services Branch.

We would respectfully request that the appropriations in the sum of \$55,650,000 or so be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and \$15,000,000 or thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 as follows:

For fiscal year 2025-2026:

1. \$55,100,000 for two (2) sites to service Honolulu, central, leeward, and windward district complex areas in the city and county of Honolulu. This also includes additional design and construction funding to provide for a 45,000 square foot facility expansion on approximately 4 acres to produce 60,000 meals a day at the Whitmore facility;
2. \$250,000 for two (2) sites to service the Hawaii district complex areas in the county of Hawaii; one on the east side and one on the west side of the island;
3. \$150,000 for one site to service the Maui district complex areas in the county of Maui; and
4. \$150,000 for one site to service the Kauai district complex areas in the county of Kauai.

For fiscal year 2026-2027:

1. \$3,000,000 for further due diligence, planning, design and land acquisition for the additional site and assessment of the receiving school kitchens in the city and county of Honolulu;
2. \$6,000,000 for further due diligence, design and land acquisition for two (2) sites and assessment of the receiving school kitchens to service the Hawaii district complex areas in the county of Hawaii; one on the east side and one on the west side of the island;
3. \$3,000,000 for further planning, design and land acquisition for one site and assessment of the receiving school kitchens to service the Maui district complex areas in the county of Maui; and
4. \$3,000,000 for further planning, design and land acquisition for one site and assessment of the receiving school kitchens to service the Kauai district complex areas in the county of Kauai.

The Department wishes to note that these appropriation amounts are just an initial estimate and additional funding will likely be needed, particularly in the districts of Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai, as further scoping and planning is completed following the longer term vision of regional kitchens across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 894, SD 2.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

LATE

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2025
10:03 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

SENATE BILL NO. 894, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO EDUCATION.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 894, Senate Draft 2 that appropriates funds to the Department of Education to fulfill the local farm-to-school meal goal requiring thirty percent of the food served in public schools to consist of locally sourced products.

The Department of Agriculture supports this measure that provides DOE with the capital to develop their regional and satellite kitchen model to meet its statutorily established goal and the State's longstanding objective of establishing institutional demand for locally-grown agricultural products.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.





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February 26, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 894, SD2
RELATING TO EDUCATION

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:03 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 SB 894, SD2, which provides funding to upgrade school facilities to better support the preparation and service of locally grown food in school meals. Strengthening the infrastructure of Hawai'i's school kitchens and cafeterias is essential for expanding the Farm to School program, increasing local food procurement, and ensuring students have access to fresh, nutritious meals.

Hawai'i has set a goal of sourcing at least 30 percent of school meals from local producers by 2030 under Act 175, SLH 2021. However, one of the significant challenges in meeting this goal is that many schools lack the necessary kitchen facilities to store, prepare, and serve fresh, locally sourced food. Many school kitchens were designed to accommodate pre-packaged, processed meals rather than whole, raw agricultural products. Upgrading these facilities will enable schools to handle fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and other local products, making it easier for food service staff to integrate locally grown ingredients into student meals.

Investing in school kitchen infrastructure also supports Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers by increasing demand for local food. The cost of local agricultural production remains higher than imported alternatives due to high land prices, expensive inputs, labor costs, and regulatory challenges. Expanding Farm to School efforts by improving school kitchens will create a more stable and consistent market for Hawai'i farmers, helping them compete with imported food and supporting long-term agricultural viability.

This bill also aligns with the broader goal of import replacement, where local agricultural products substitute for imported equivalents, reducing Hawai'i's dependence on food from outside the state. Strengthening the capacity of schools to prepare and serve fresh,

locally sourced meals will ensure that more food dollars remain within Hawai'i, supporting local agriculture and boosting the economy.

We urge the committee to pass SB 894, SD2, to invest in the necessary infrastructure improvements that will expand the Farm to School program, increase local food procurement, and provide students with fresh, healthy meals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-894-SD-2

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:14:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2025 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT TO HELP LOCAL FARMERS! MAHALO!

February 25, 2025

Subject: SB894, SD2 - Relating to Education

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice-Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Morgan Hom, and I am a current eleventh-grade student at Punahou School. I **support SB894, SD2**, which would appropriate funds to the Department of Education (DOE) to improve outdated school facilities and equipment that is unable to process fresh food products efficiently and effectively. This will help the DOE reach its farm-to-school goal of requiring thirty percent of the food served in public schools to be locally sourced by 2030.

As a student, I understand the importance of a healthy, well-balanced nutrition to not only support a student's physical health and academic performance, but also create healthy habits that will follow one throughout their life. Research shows that students who do not meet the nutrition recommendations of fresh foods are more likely to have lower grades and attendance rates than those who do.¹ Furthermore, increased fruit and vegetable consumption is linked to reduced rates of health issues such as cardiovascular disease and cancer.² Locally grown and raised, instead of processed food, is essential for students' success.

In addition to the health benefits, the advancement of the farm-to-school program supports local farmers and ranchers, which also benefits the State's agricultural industry. The increased need for locally produced food as a result of the program will help farmers and ranchers by creating new jobs, as well as ensure that the increased revenue derived from the program will be reinvested into the community. In turn, this will help the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture move further towards its goal of doubling local food production and increasing food exports by 2030, as set forth in the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan.³ Moreover, sourcing food locally will help lower the carbon footprint it takes to transport imported food, which not only benefits keiki by ensuring that the locally harvested food has the optimal amounts of vitamins and minerals at time of consumption, but also helps protect our environment.⁴

¹ "Health and Academic Achievement." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2014, [archive.cdc.gov/#!/details?q=https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf&start=0&rows=10&url=https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf&start=0&rows=10&url=https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf), PDF Download.

² Aune, Dagfinn, et al. "Fruit and vegetable intake and the risk of cardiovascular disease, total cancer and all-cause mortality—A systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis of prospective studies." *International Journal of Epidemiology*, vol. 46, no. 3, 22 Feb. 2017, pp. 1029–1056, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/dyw319>.

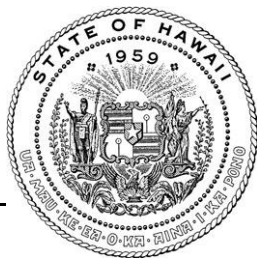
³ *Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan*, Hawai'i State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, hawaii2050.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/FINAL-Hawaii-2050-Sustainability-Plan-web-1.pdf, PDF Download, Accessed 25 Feb. 2025.

⁴ Murphy, Darlene. "What Are the Health Benefits of Eating Locally-Sourced Ingredients?" *Forage Kitchen*, 27 Dec. 2024,

Finally, the mandate set forth in Act 175, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, requires the Department of Education to serve school meals using thirty percent locally sourced products by 2030. If public school kitchens do not have the proper facilities and equipment to process locally sourced products efficiently and effectively, then how can the DOE fulfill the statutory mandate in a meaningful way?

For the reasons stated above, I strongly urge you to appropriate the requested funds to improve outdated school facilities and equipment to help the Department of Education reach its farm-to-school goal of requiring thirty percent of the food served in public schools to be locally sourced by 2030.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure,
Morgan Hom



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKAI

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 26, 2025
10:03 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB 894, SD2
RELATING TO EDUCATION.



Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 894 SD2, which appropriates funds to the Department of Education (DOE) to support the statutory mandate requiring at least thirty percent of school meals to consist of locally sourced products by 2030.

Hawai'i's economy must be diversified to ensure long-term sustainability, and a crucial component of that diversification is strengthening our local agricultural and food production industries. To achieve this, it is imperative that we invest in the necessary infrastructure and facilities that provide certainty to local producers while simultaneously reducing risk and financial burden. Regional kitchens play a pivotal role in anchoring Hawai'i's small farmers by providing them with a consistent and reliable market for their off-grade produce, ensuring that more locally grown food is utilized rather than wasted.

Moreover, regional kitchens serve as a critical component of the State's food security and resiliency efforts, particularly in times of natural disasters. In times of crisis, these facilities can be leveraged to prepare meals for communities in need, ensuring that emergency food assistance is readily available. By building and supporting these centralized food preparation hubs, we not only enhance the nutritional quality of school meals but also create an essential safety net for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations.

The challenges outlined in the 2024 annual report on farm-to-school meals—including invasive species, agricultural theft, labor shortages, inadequate capital, and climate change—demonstrate the urgency of this investment. By allocating funds to regional kitchens and food infrastructure, we empower local farmers, support the DOE in meeting its farm-to-school goals, and enhance Hawai'i's overall food security.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to pass SB894 SD2 to ensure the necessary investments are made in food infrastructure that will benefit Hawai'i's students, farmers, and communities for generations to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
HUI HO'OU LU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

February 26, 2025

10:03 A.M.

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 894, SD2
RELATING TO EDUCATION

LATE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of Senate Bill No. 894, SD2, that appropriates funds to the Department of Education (DOE) to fulfill the local farm-to-school meal goal requiring 30% of the food served in public schools to consist of locally sourced products.

Act 175, SLH 2021 had set a goal of sourcing at least 30% of school meals from local producers by 2030. The appropriations considered in this bill would allow DOE to better achieve this goal by upgrading the critical infrastructure, equipment, and facilities needed to provide our keiki with food made from locally sourced produce.

We defer to DOE regarding specific appropriation amounts for the several district complex areas considered in the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.