



SCR191 SD1/SR126 SD1
ENCOURAGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH
A VOLUNTARY FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

April 8, 2015

9:00 a.m.

Room 211

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment will recommend to the Board of Trustees a position of COMMENT for SCR191 SD1/SR126 SD1, which encourages the Department of Education to establish a voluntary farm-to-school program.

Farm-to-school programs take an integrated approach to simultaneously improve the health of students and their families, while also supporting the local food industry. The voluntary farm-to-school program promoted by this measure would give Department of Education Complex Areas the option to purchase locally grown food from food safety certified farms. The program also includes nutrition education and educational activities that emphasize food and farming. Such a voluntary farm-to-school program may be an important initial step towards achieving better health outcomes and greater food self-sufficiency in our islands.

In addition to supporting healthy choices and healthy children, this measure will support the state's food self-sufficiency goals, by increasing support for Hawai'i's local agricultural economy. In adopting the targets of the Aloha+ Challenge, the state has committed to doubling local food production by 2030. OHA notes that the principles underlying the Aloha+ Challenge support a renewed commitment to the sustainability practiced by our ancestors, and perpetuated today through the traditional concept of malama 'āina. **By sourcing school meals to local farms, this bill invests in local food production, which may in turn lead to more agricultural jobs, greater incentives for farmer training, and the preservation of agricultural land for agriculture.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015

RE: SCR 191 / SR 126 - VOLUNTARY FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

PERSON TESTIFYING: JOAN LEWIS, VICE PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Honorable Chair Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair Ron Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports SCR 191/ SR 126** relating to encouraging the Department of Education to establish a voluntary farm to school program.

We are an island state with a long history of connection to the land that predates western contact. Throughout Hawai'i's history, the land and that which that land produces has been essential in the sustainability of our people and our economy.

In recent history, our "disconnect" with the land and our almost sole reliance on food from other shores has put our citizens in a precarious state. While we are all closely monitoring the labor dispute related to shipping to Hawai'i and its potential impact on our food supplies, we are also aware of the growing number of food recalls that are also occurring.

Support of this resolution will provide an opportunity for Hawai'i's citizens, including its youngest, school aged citizens to learn how to mitigate some of these challenges while learning how to reconnect with the land.

In providing opportunities for students to ultimately participate in Farm to School initiatives that may help them learn to grow fruits and vegetables in small areas, we help them understand that small steps can provide big outcomes.

In helping our teachers better learn how to support and teach towards sustainability, we make it more likely for Hawai'i to become more self-sustaining.

There is no end to the value of supporting FFA and 4-H programs. Many of our most notable leaders share the foundation that these programs have provided.

HSTA supports the concept of living and promoting sustainability. We know that the best leaders are our students. HSTA **supports SCR 191 SR 126.**



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
APRIL 8, 2015 – 9:00 AM – Room 211

RE: SCR 191 SD1/SR 126 SD1 – Encouraging the Department of Education to Establish a Voluntary Farm to School Program – In Support

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

4 Ag Hawai'i

Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association

Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools

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

Malama Kaua'i

Maui School Garden Network

Ulupono Initiative

The Local Food Coalition supports SCR 191 SD1/SR 126 SD1. We support a farm to school program in Hawaii as it will allow students to gain access to healthy, local foods while supporting the agricultural economy. We defer to the Department of Education Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs office and the School Food Services Branch on the creation and implementation of the program.

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

One of the priorities of The Local Food Coalition is the procurement of locally grown food for school meals and snacks. We are pleased to support proposals designed to help grow more local food. Our group's members came together with one common goal: to promote the local production of food in a sustainable and economically sound manner to benefit Hawai'i's people through the revitalization and expansion of our state's agricultural sector.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

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wam3 - Nicolas

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 07, 2015 10:36 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: ukotner@mindspring.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SR126 on Apr 8, 2015 09:00AM

SR126

Submitted on: 4/7/2015

Testimony for WAM on Apr 8, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Usha Kotner	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This Resolution is a great step toward realizing for our state the profound benefits of farm to school in the areas of agriculture, education, health, and the economy. Food sustainability is a top priority for our state, and a farm to school program will create a steady demand for locally grown food. Because many school meals are federally reimbursed, this will create a steady flow of resources into our communities. In addition, the positive health impacts for our children of eating fresh food are well documented. By feeding our children fresh, local food, we instill a life-long habit of health.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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