



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/17/2021

Time: 03:20 PM

Location: CR 229 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 0038 URGING THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES BRANCH TO ADOPT AN ADDENDUM TO ITS AGREEMENTS FOR THE 'AINA PONO HAWAII STATE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM REQUIRING THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND/OR SERVICES FROM FOOD HUBS.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) understands the importance of Act 55, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013 to increase purchasing and use of Hawaii grown food and food products to support the State's agricultural economy. The Department supports the intent of SCR 0038 as it relates to increasing purchases of local agricultural products that promotes local farmers and encourages the agricultural industry.

This resolution proposes to require the Department to procure "goods and/or services from food hubs." The Department has questions regarding how food hubs are being defined in this resolution and has concerns regarding the availability of food and produce in the quantities that are sufficient to ensure that the Department is meeting the needs of the federal requirements in the school lunch program.

The Department recommends that the language be changed from "requiring the procurement of goods and/or services from food hubs" to "encouraging the procurement of goods and/or services from food hubs to the extent practical and able under Hawaii Revised Statutes 103D". The Department must align with both Federal and State Procurement guidelines and for small purchase procurements, must align with the more restrictive threshold.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.



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March 17, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

TESTIMONY ON SCR 38/SR 27

URGING THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES BRANCH TO ADOPT AN ADDENDUM TO ITS AGREEMENTS FOR THE 'AINA PONO HAWAII STATE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM REQUIRING THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND/OR SERVICES FROM FOOD HUBS

Via Videoconference
Conference Room 229
3:20 PM

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, 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 respectfully offers the following comments on SCR 38/SR 27.

HFB is pleased that this resolution recognizes the value of our local farmers and ranchers and the work they do to increase consumption of fresh and nutritious local foods while decreasing Hawai'i's reliance on imported foods. We especially appreciate your efforts to increase local farmers' ability to have access to broader markets, including the State's Farm to School Program, which will also benefit Hawai'i's children.

HFB supports food hubs and the opportunities they provide for some of Hawai'i's producers. However, because not all local farmers participate in food hubs, this resolution may inappropriately constrain the DOE Farm to School Program to purchases only from a limited pool of farmers. This could also limit the variety of food products that would be available to the schools. Importantly, the resolution could restrict many local farmers' access to participation in the program. We question whether it is good policy to *require* the procurement of goods and/or services from a single source, or type of supplier.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and for your support of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers.

SCR-38

Submitted on: 3/16/2021 12:28:13 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/17/2021 3:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dexter Kishida | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Food hubs are an important piece of the food system puzzle. Regional aggregation that supports farmers and communities provides the perfect opportunity to connect with State Institutions providing locally grown and raised food to the DOE, Hospitals and prisons.

One suggested modification is to add the creation of a working group to connect our food hubs with state institutions. The Institutional Purchasing Hui could be requested to assist with the convening of this working group since its mission directly aligns with this work.

Thank you,

Dexter Kishida

SCR-38

Submitted on: 3/16/2021 1:48:42 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/17/2021 3:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hunter Heavilin | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

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

I strongly support SCR38 because this resolution will forward efforts to ensure that increased purchasing of local agricultural products by the State also supports the network of food hubs across the islands and the many small farms they support.

Food hubs play the critical role in our food system of connecting small farmers with a diversity of markets. In decades past, farmer cooperatives were a strong tool for smallholders to get to market. As cooperatives fell apart so did the small farm economy. Food hubs are a new approach to that collective work to increase market access for groups of farmers, even more crucial now because the marketplace that farmers must interface with has changed drastically. Local grocers have been replaced by big box operations with global supply chains and producers need social-organizational tools like food hubs to interface with the primary places where most consumers access their food. The mismatch between parcel sizes (and farm output) and the purchasing scale of many food buyers is bridged by food hubs.

Support of this resolution will expand the critical work and build a stronger local food economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

-Hunter Heavilin

SCR38

URGING THE HAWAI‘I STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES BRANCH TO ADOPT AN ADDENDUM TO ITS AGREEMENTS FOR THE ‘ĀINA PONO HAWAI‘I STATE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM REQUIRING THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND/OR SERVICES FROM FOOD HUBS.

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ka Ho‘ona‘auao
Senate Committee on Education

Malaki 17, 2021

3:20 p.m.

Lumi 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** the strategies proposed in SCR38, which would urge the Department of Education’s School Food Services Branch to adopt an addendum to its agreements for the ‘Āina Pono Hawai‘i State Farm to School Program (‘Āina Pono Program), to allow for the procurement of goods and/or services from food hubs. **OHA appreciates this resolution’s support of the ‘Āina Pono Program, which seeks to source and serve high quality, nutritious school meals by maximizing fresh and local foods as much as possible, encouraging scratch cooking, tapping into local culture and tradition, and supporting school gardens that connect students with the origins of their food.**

OHA has long advocated for meaningful policies that can reduce health and social inequities of Native Hawaiians, including the disproportionately higher incidents of chronic health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease as well as the higher rate of cancer within the Native Hawaiian community. Accordingly, OHA appreciates that the ‘Āina Pono Program seeks to incorporate a healthy diet as a standard experience for Hawai‘i’s school children, including the substantial number of Native Hawaiian students in our public school system, and instill in them good eating habits from a young age. OHA notes that health professionals have indicated that a healthy diet can prevent or treat chronic illnesses and that a successful and broadly-applied ‘Āina Pono Program would accordingly benefit the overall health of Hawai‘i’s keiki into their adult lives.¹

This resolution addresses barriers to the successful, broader implementation of the ‘Āina Pono Program. In its 2015 report, “Local Foods in Hawai‘i’s Schools,” the Kohala Center identified **supply issues** as a major barrier to implementing farm to school

¹ Centers for Disease Control National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Poor Nutrition, <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/nutrition.htm> (last accessed Feb. 25, 2021).

programs, noting local farmers' access to affordable agricultural inputs and food safety regulations as two of several factors impacting local food production.² As noted in the report, food hubs³ are a good solution for these particular challenges, by facilitating bulk purchasing, product aggregation, and cost-sharing to reduce the costs of agricultural inputs, and by providing food-safety-certified facilities and processing services to help local farms overcome the costs and barriers of food safety compliance requirements.⁴ **By identifying and uplifting the use of food hubs as a source of supply for the 'Āina Pono Program, this resolution will help to further its successful, broader implementation, and thereby promote the health and well-being of our keiki.**

Accordingly, OHA respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS SCR38/**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

² THE KOHALA CENTER, LOCAL FOODS IN HAWAII'S SCHOOLS 4 (2015), available at https://kohalacenter.org/docs/reports/2015_LocalFoodHawaiiSchools.pdf.

³ The working definition of a food hub is "a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products." Jim Barham, *Getting to Scale with Regional Food Hubs*, U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE BLOG, Feb. 21, 2017, available at <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2010/12/14/getting-scale-regional-food-hubs>.

⁴ THE KOHALA CENTER, *ID.* at 5.

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY
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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

M ATTHEW GONSER, AICP, CFM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2021, 3:20 P.M.

STATE OF HAWAII
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE RESOLUTION 38
URGING THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SCHOOL FOOD
SERVICES BRANCH TO ADD AN ADDENDUM OT ITS AGREEMENTS FOR THE
'AINA PONO HAWAII STATE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM REQUIRING THE
PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND/OR SERVICES FROM FOOD HUBS**

BY,

MATTHEW GONSER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu (City) Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR) **supports and offers comments on** Senate Resolution 38, which requires the 'Āina Pono Hawai'i State Farm to School Program to procure goods and services from food hubs.

SCR38 represents a crucial step forward in addressing our sustainable local food goals, providing institutional investment to food hubs—necessary for a sustainable local food system future—by the state's largest food purchasing institution, the Department of Education. Unlike other distributors, food hubs as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture facilitate the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and marketing of locally or regionally produced food products.¹ Given that the majority of O'ahu's farms—707 out of 927 or about 76 percent—are between one and nine acres, and the majority are family-owned,² this investment in food hubs will help remove some of the

1 Jim Barham. *Getting to Scale with Regional Food Hubs*, (2017), United States Department of Agriculture, <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2010/12/14/getting-scale-regional-food-hubs#:~:text=Our%20working%20definition%20of%20a,value%20chain%2C%20food%20hubs%20are>

2 United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2017). 2017

Chair Kidani and Vice Chair Mercado Kim
SCR38
March 17, 2021
Page 2

business burdens that can overwhelm small producers, allowing them to focus on farming. It will also help provide key technical assistance to the agriculture community through the food hub model, further bolstering the City and the State's local food goals.

CCSR also finds that SCR38 is essential to pandemic recovery efforts, complementing work being done at the City level to invest in the economy through local agriculture. Providing a steady stream of revenue to food hubs across O'ahu and the state will in turn provide a reliable and consistent source of income to farmers, contributing to the economic security of agricultural producers hard hit by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, food hubs usually provide a higher per pound payment to farmers, further helping to shore up income support for the agricultural sector. Food hubs also help backyard farmers or micro-producers derive additional sources of income from their products.

In addition, CCSR would like to offer the following comments for consideration: CCSR recommends additional language be added to the resolution regarding the establishment of a Food Hub Working Group within the Department of Education, the purpose of which would be to a) fully understand the services food hubs can provide, and b) determine what the Department of Education needs to successfully work together to provide fresh, locally grown food to our island keiki. We additionally suggest that the Food Hub Working Group include county representation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SCR38.

HIPHI Board

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Date: March 15, 2021
To: Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Education
From: Lydi Bernal, Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Coordinator
Re: SUPPORT for SCR38 (HIDOE 'Aina Pono/Food Hubs)
Hearing: March 17, 2021 at 3:20pm Via Videoconferences

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SCR38**, urging the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) School Food Services Branch to adopt an addendum to its agreements for the 'Aina Pono Hawai'i State Farm to School Program requiring the procurement of goods and/or services from food hubs.

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 Huiⁱⁱ, which **collectively represent over 60 organizations from across the islands.**

We thank the legislature for recognizing the crucial efforts made by food hubs to aggregate on behalf of Hawaii's small farmers. Fourteen food hubs that are part of the Food Hub Hui currently aggregate from over 1,000 small farmers across the islands. Many food hubs offer important services such as minimal processing and storage, and are distinguished from other distributors through their sole focus on local sourcing.

Food hubs must play a central and direct role in meeting Hawaii's goals for increased local food procurement by HIDOE, thereby strengthening community food systems through the power of farm to school.

As HIDOE explores a regionalized model for central kitchens, the state must take care to not obstruct or duplicate the efforts of food hubs. Procurement must also be further regionalized from the state/island-level, allowing a fair chance for food hubs to source directly to HIDOE, instead of through existing large-scale distributors.

Thank you for your strong support of farm to school and Hawaii's food hubs!

Me Ke Aloha,
Lydi Bernal
Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Coordinator

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the **Obesity Prevention Task Force** comprises of over 40 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawaii's school, work, community, and health care 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.

SCR-38

Submitted on: 3/15/2021 1:48:51 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/17/2021 3:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ming Wei Koh | Testifying for Center for Getting Things Started | Support | No |

Comments:

Center for Getting Things Started (C4GTS) thanks the legislature for recognizing the crucial efforts made by food hubs to aggregate on behalf of Hawaii’s small farmers, and strongly supports SCR38. During the past year, as a response to COVID-19, C4GTS has promoted the consumption of local foods by conducting local food promotion webinars, and worked with many small farmers and the Hawaii ‘Ulu Coop to supply the community with local produce to cook along with the chefs during the webinars.

More than 50% of the farms in our state are very small - under 2 acres. The 14 food hubs that are part of the Food Hub Hui currently aggregate from over 1,000 small farmers across the islands. Many food hubs offer important services such as minimal processing and cold storage, as well as a connection for the farmers to the community. Such efforts must play a central role in meeting Hawaii’s goals for increased local food procurement by HIDOE, thereby strengthening community food systems through the economic power of farm to school.

As HIDOE explores a regionalized model for central kitchens, the state must take care to not obstruct or duplicate the efforts of food hubs. Procurement must also be further regionalized, allowing a fair chance for food hubs to source directly to HIDOE, instead of through existing large-scale distributors. This is especially important for the sustainability of small farms.

Mahalo nui loa.

Koh Ming Wei, PhD.

Executive Director/Ecoliteracy Educator

SCR-38

Submitted on: 3/15/2021 4:26:40 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/17/2021 3:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Nancy Redfeather | Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua | Support | No |

Comments:

The Regional Food Hub is one of the answers to growing our agricultural economy. Aggregation of product is essential for our small family farmers that make up the majority of our State's farms. Institutional purchasing would greatly benefit from aggregation of product by region, creating new markets for our farmers and creating healthier meals for our keiki, our hospitals and our prisons. With this change to 'Aina Pono agreements the Department of Education can help support family farms and healthy meals for 100's of thousands every day.

SCR-38

Submitted on: 3/16/2021 2:18:56 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/17/2021 3:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Every school shall be required to develop a local farm to table model that teaches children sustainable choices.

LATE

SCR-38

Submitted on: 3/17/2021 2:09:25 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/17/2021 3:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Douglass S. Adams | Testifying for Department of Research and Development, County of Hawaii | Support | No |

Comments:

Chair Kidani, Vice-Chair Kim, and members of the Committee on Education,

This Department supports the intent of this resolution and its companion Senate Resolution (SR27) to urge the Department of Education to include food hubs in its institutional procurement process for DOE cafeterias. These food hubs have demonstrated over the past year, in crisis situations, their capacity to provide quality local foods for our keiki. DOE can continue to receive from these producers both food and lessons for their students through the department's institutional procurement program.

My apologies for the lateness of this testimony. This is important to local producers, our students, and our schools.

very respectfully

Douglass S. Adams, Director