



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at 8:30 a.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford
Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
And
Michael Bruno, Vice Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 2497 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 2497.

Section 1. We concur with the listed reasons in HB 2497 that describe how farm to school programs are beneficial to the education and health of students. A further advantage of farm to school programs is the assurance of a specific and sustained market for locally grown products that the school system represents. We also concur that food safety issues are important criteria that are necessary for products grown for farm to school programs, and that farmers likely require assistance to understand and comply with these standards. We further support the introduction of a grant pilot program.

Section 2. We support the details in this section and suggest that an additional criterion in part 3A should be that the agricultural operation from which food is purchased be shown to be of sufficient size and scale of operation to be a commercial operation that is able to provide reliable and sustained delivery of product to ensure the continuity in a farm to school program. We also suggest that an additional item in Section 2d be included that outlines a non-inclusive list of criteria that should be used in Section 3 to determine the value, outcomes and impacts of the project. That would allow the project manager to document and monitor the value and impact as the project proceeds, and to potentially identify issues that need to be addressed during the life of the project.

Sections 3-6. We support the program as identified in these sections.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 2497.