



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 9, 2018

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2154 - RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES**

Hearing: Friday, February 9, 2018, 8:30 am
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill; however, we do have concerns. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net and an investment in our future. Additionally, even a small increase in (SNAP) participation can have a substantial economic impact since every \$1 in SNAP benefits generates up to \$1.80 in economic activity. The DHS supports increasing SNAP participation because of its nutrition benefits to participants and the economic benefits to local communities.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill authorizes healthcare providers, non-profits, businesses, and faith based organizations to assist in providing the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) applications to prospective applicants in order to increase SNAP participation in Hawaii.

SNAP is 100 percent federally funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). FNS supports States' efforts to increase SNAP participation; however while the intent of this bill is in line with FNS's efforts to expand access, it raises the following concerns:

- (1) What will be the criteria used to determine which prospective applicants are provided with a SNAP application? Could a situation of profiling be created which would be perceived as discriminatory?

- (2) Community agencies willing to participate in the SNAP expansion effort may withdraw their willingness to participate if they are burdened with keeping a record of the distribution of the SNAP applications that must be made available to the DHS upon request.
- (3) A health care provider submitting personal information such as the name of patients who were provided with a SNAP application may raise HIPPA concerns.

For these reasons, while supporting the intent of this bill, the DHS expresses concerns in its current form.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

HB-2154

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 5:55:14 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/9/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

**PRESENTATION OF THE
OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII**

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

THE SENATE

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION OF 2018

Friday, February 9, 2018

8:30 a.m.

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 329

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2154, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

To the Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair; the Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Health & Human Services:

Good morning. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii ("DPH"). Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill No.2154 relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The supplemental nutrition assistance program, formerly known as the food stamp program, is a crucial means of providing necessary assistance in the purchasing of food for some of Hawaii's most disadvantaged citizens. I

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in support of House Bill No.2154 and is in favor of its passage.

House Bill No. 2154 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it authorizes health care providers, non-profits, businesses, and faith-based organizations to assist in providing the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) applications to prospective applicants in order to increase SNAP participation in Hawaii.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that "[w]e support community health initiatives that provide opportunities for the overall health of communities through strategic projects and programs focusing on increased interaction and physical activities among all age groups, as well as on better nutrition." (Platform of the DPH, P. 7, Lines 378-380 (2016)).

As House Bill No. 2154 authorizes health care providers, non-profits, businesses, and faith-based organizations to assist in providing SNAP applications to prospective applicants to increase SNAP participation in Hawaii, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Tel.: (808) 258-8889