



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**

P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**

TESTIMONY BY LAUREL A. JOHNSTON  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2398, S.D. 1

**February 23, 2018**  
**11:00 a.m.**  
**Room 211**

**RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Senate Bill No. 2398, S.D. 1, establishes the Local Health Food Incentive Program (LHFIP) and special fund within the Department of Agriculture to provide a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$20 on purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets and other direct food retailers for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. This bill also appropriates \$300,000 in general funds for FY 19 to be deposited into the LHFIP Special Fund.

As a matter of general policy, the Department of Budget and Finance does not support the creation of any special fund which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. In regards to Senate Bill No. 2398, S.D. 1, it is difficult to determine if the proposed special fund would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

DOUGLAS S. CHIN  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

**FEBRUARY 23, 2018  
11:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2398 SD1  
RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2398 SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture to develop and administer a local health food incentive program promoting the purchase of fruits and vegetables for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Department supports this bill provided it does not impact the Department's priorities listed in the Executive Budget and offers comments.

The Department lacks the staff to manage the program at the operational level and intends to administer the program partnering with public and private agencies that have experience and success with similar programs on behalf of SNAP recipients. The Department believes the increased sales of locally grown fruits and vegetables will increase profits for Hawaii farmers statewide and will benefit SNAP recipients who use food stamps at a farmers' market and at other direct food retailers who participate in SNAP with incentives to purchase healthy foods.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Harry Kim  
Mayor



Wil Okabe  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i  
Office of the Mayor

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February 21, 2018

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 211  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 211  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

**Re: SB 2398, SD 1 Relating to Creating a SNAP Matching Program**  
**Hearing Date: 02/23/18 – 11:00 am; Conference Room 211**

Thank you for this opportunity to support SB 2398, SD1.

It is my understanding that SB 2398 proposed to build on a Big Island pilot program that was launched by our local Food Basket and food retailer KTA. By providing funds that can only be used to purchase locally-grown produce, food stamp recipients are incentivized to buy healthy fruits and vegetables; local farmers gain new customers and make more money; and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

SB 2398, SD 1 still limits purchases to fresh fruit and vegetables, but somewhat dilutes the "local" aspect of the program by allowing the purchase at institutions that may be acquiring their produce from overseas suppliers. I am not sure that is a positive amendment, but at least the food stamp users would still be seeing nutritional benefits.

I defer to others whether SB 2398 or SB 2398, SD 1 is a better approach, but in either case I think this is a program that should be encouraged, and I hope you will act favorably on this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Kim  
Mayor, County of Hawai'i





# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting SB 2398 SD1 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Scheduled for hearing at 11:00 am on Friday, February 23, 2018 in Conference Room 211

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Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of **SB 2398 SD1**, which would create a dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The challenges of living in poverty pose greater risks to people's health than any other single or set of risk factors. Living in poverty has a direct, negative impact on people's health. One reason is that facing constant financial difficulties leads to chronic stress.

By providing monthly benefits to eligible low-income people to purchase food, SNAP plays a critical role in reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, and improving family security, child and adult health, employment, and other outcomes.

Here in Hawai'i, with the highest food costs in the nation, our low-income and working-poor families especially need the support that SNAP provides. The program that this bill would create would double the value of SNAP benefits when people use them to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, up to \$20 per month.

In a nutshell, it would help low-income and working-class families bring home more healthy fruits and vegetables while also supporting local farmers and direct food retailers. In other states that have this type of program, evaluations have shown that families end up eating more and a larger variety of fruits and vegetables and as well as less junk food.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (which runs SNAP) also estimates that every \$5 spent in SNAP benefits generates as much as \$9 in local economic activity.

We appreciate your consideration of this testimony.

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*The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.*



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS  
Friday, February 23, 2018 — 11:00 a.m. — Room 211

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SB 2398 SD 1, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and better management of waste and fresh water. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono strongly supports SB 2398 SD 1**, which creates a dollar-for-dollar matching program for the supplemental nutrition assistance program at farmers' markets, because it aligns with our goal of creating more locally produced food.

Local food is often some of the healthiest and most nutritious foods that Hawai'i's residents can eat. Yet, local food is often slightly more expensive, making it more difficult for residents to obtain in lower socioeconomic areas of our state. Therefore, residents with lower incomes often consume cheaper and unhealthier food options, leaving them particularly vulnerable to health-related issues. This matching program by the State can leverage federal government support to help those lower socioeconomic residents be able to access locally produced foods that they are likely to not otherwise be able to partake.

At Ulupono, we believe in organizations, public and private, working together on common goals. Through coordination between the federal government's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the State's matching funds, and our local farmer's markets, the public sector is collectively coming together to address poverty, health, and local food production.

From the farmer's perspective, they will grow more local food as demand for their products increase. Through being able to sell their products at farmers markets to a new clientele, farmers are able to obtain more revenue, incentivizing them to grow more local food. Increased local food production will help the state to become more self-sufficient. Hawai'i currently imports the vast majority of its foods.

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



As Hawai'i's local food issues become more complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that by collaborating, we can help produce more local food and support an economically robust homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta  
General Partner



Date: February 21, 2018

To: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Trish La Chica, Policy and Advocacy Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: STRONG SUPPORT for SB2398 SD1, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Conference Room 211

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **Strong Support** of SB 2398 SD1, which improves access to affordable, healthy, and local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 40 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

**Creating a dollar-for-dollar matching local produce incentive program is a simple yet powerful policy solution.**

SB2398 SD1 is modeled after Double Up Food Bucks, a national program started by the Fair Food Network in 2009. Double Up Food Bucks provides a dollar-for-dollar match on the value of SNAP when spent on local fresh fruits and vegetables. Double Up is a win/win/win: low-income families bring home more healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and bring in more income, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. Double Up is a successful model being implemented in more than 20 states.

**Expanding this incentive program will benefit hundreds of families across the State.**

In Hawaii Island, a local pilot is already being implemented through the Food Basket's *DA BUX: Double Up Food Bucks* program. In partnership with KTA superstores, SNAP customers receive a 50% credit incentive at checkout. Since the pilot began 2017, there have already been close to 3000 individual DA BUX transactions and an average sales increase of nearly 20% on incentivized produce<sup>1</sup>. DA BUX is currently being offered one week per month in the Big Island and an expansion of a similar statewide pilot program can improve healthy produce access to SNAP families in other islands and improve local agriculture in those communities. In FY 2016, there were 176,729 individuals that participated in SNAP.

**An incentive program will improve the health and well-being of Hawai'i families.**

Incentivizing the use of SNAP dollars for fresh fruits and vegetables not only stretches food dollars for families, but it also brings home nutritious food that the entire family can enjoy. Crediting SNAP dollars



creates room in the families' budget for other household and healthcare expenses so that food dollars can be spent on locally grown food such as taro, papaya, Hamakua mushrooms, and other produce instead of cheaper, unhealthy alternatives. With more than 25% of children 10-17 years old and 58% of adults in Hawai'i overweight or obese, SB2398 SD1 can help to improve healthier dietary behaviors.

SB2398 SD1 is a powerful and innovative measure that brings together Hawaii families, farmers, and local markets. It is a triple win for health, agriculture, and the local economy. We are in strong support of this measure and respectfully ask you to pass SB2398 SD1 out of committee.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish'.

Trish La Chica, MPA  
Policy and Advocacy Director

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<sup>i</sup> Data collected from September to December 2017, with 2983 individual DA BUX transactions over 4 months (one week per month).



## **American Heart Association testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2398, SD1 “Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program”**

The American Heart Association strongly supports SB 2398, SD1.

For more than 50 years, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly Food Stamps) has been vital in addressing food insecurity and nutrition in the United States. It has an impact on health, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency. The program helps more than 45 million Americans struggling through underemployment and low or stagnant wages. The majority of benefits go to households with children, older adults or those with disabilities.

Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain problems for millions of American households. Research shows that SNAP benefits are often not adequate to last a family the entire month. A 2016 report by the Food Research and Action Center summarized the important role SNAP plays in addressing food insecurity. Importantly, the majority of SNAP recipients who are eligible for work do so while on the program, underscoring that many recipients are using the program to overcome underemployment or temporary job loss.

Although diet quality has been steadily improving in the U.S. during the past two decades, overall dietary quality is still poor. Most significantly, there is a widening gap associated with education and income. Despite the important role SNAP plays in addressing hunger, additional data indicate that SNAP recipients have worse diet quality than income-eligible non-participants.

The Food, Nutrition, and Conservation Act of 2008 authorized \$20 million for pilot projects to evaluate health and nutrition promotion in SNAP to determine if incentives provided to SNAP recipients and point-of-sale increased the purchase of fruits and vegetables. Under HIP, 7,500 households in Hamden County, Massachusetts were randomly selected to receive a financial incentive for purchasing fruits and vegetables, while the remaining 47,595 households continued to receive SNAP benefits as usual. Overall, HIP participants purchased and consumed more fruits and vegetables. Retailers found the program easy to administer and they increased shelf space or display for fruits and vegetables in store.

The Agriculture Act of 2014 authorized the USDA to provide Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives (FINI) grants to eligible organizations to design and implement projects to increase produce purchases among low-income consumers participating in SNAP by providing incentives at point of purchase. Several Hawaii communities are currently receiving FINI grants to implement “double-bucks” programs and allow for the use of EBT payments for SNAP purchases at certain farmers’ markets and commercial retailers. **SB 2398 would supplement federal funding with state funding to expand those programs and to insure their sustainability.**

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Please remember the American Heart Association in your will.





“Double-bucks” programs match SNAP dollars spent on fresh fruits and vegetables with a financial benefit to local growers and food retailers. Low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. The “double-bucks” model is active at farmers’ markets in 21 states. “Double-bucks” grocery programs are active in 13 states, including Hawaii where KTA store on the Big Island currently participate.

The American Heart Association urges legislators to support SB 2398, SD1 and help reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables to those who might be economically challenged to afford access to those foods vital to improved health and reduced obesity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald B. Weisman".

Donald B. Weisman  
Hawaii Government Relations/Communications Director

*“Building healthier lives,  
free of cardiovascular  
diseases and stroke.”*

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*Please remember the American Heart Association in your will.*





**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Friday, February 23, 2018; 11:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211**

**RE: SUPPORTING SENATE BILL NO. 2398, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 2398, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Establish a Local Health Food Incentive Program (Program) for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) within the Department of Agriculture;
- (2) Provide a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$20 per month for SNAP recipients who use food stamps to make purchases at a farmers' market or other SNAP direct food retailers, to be used solely for purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables at the farmers' market or other direct food retailer;
- (3) Establish a Program Special Fund into which legislative appropriations, public and private grants, awards, and gifts be deposited and used to administer the Program and provide matching funds;
- (4) Appropriate \$300,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2018-2019, to be deposited into the Program Special Fund for use in administering the Program and providing matching funds; and
- (5) Take effect on July 1, 2018.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 2398, Senate Draft 1**  
**Friday, February 23, 2018; 11:00 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of health.

As a member of the Obesity Prevention Task Force, the HPCA joins the Hawaii Public Health Institute and other advocates in support of efforts to promote healthy diets and the increased consumption of locally-grown vegetables and fruits in our schools and communities.

In advance, thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 10:41:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
PHC HNL	Testifying for Pioneering Healthier Communities of Honolulu	Support	No

Comments:

February 21, 2018

From: Pioneering Healthy Communities – Honolulu

Re: SB 2398 SD1

The Pioneering Healthier Communities Initiative brings together local, diverse leaders to discuss and support strategies, policies and programs that we can accomplish together to build healthier communities in our island home. The Honolulu Committee was established in 2009. The members of PHC of Honolulu are involved in helping children and families to become healthier through schools, afterschool programs, healthcare and community initiatives such as farmer’s markets.

Our State today is in the middle of an epidemic of obesity and chronic disease such as diabetes. The risk begins in early childhood; today about 1/3 of children are overweight or obese. In many of our rural and low-income communities, the problem is much more prevalent and more severe. This translates to thousands of children, adolescents and young adults with significant chronic disease risk in each of our communities.

If we are serious about supporting health, tackling healthcare costs and creating vibrant, more productive communities in Hawaii, ***we must prevent obesity and chronic disease before they start.*** This will take a sustained, comprehensive strategy involving every aspect of our society – including government, business, healthcare, employers, schools, childcare and more. It also includes making fresh foods, especially fruits and vegetables, more accessible to our community members.

Numerous report on programs across the U.S. that incentivize nutritious produce purchases among SNAP recipients, such as the “Double Bucks” programs, indicate that they are an effective way to encourage more fruit and vegetable purchasing, reduce hunger and supporting healthy diets. In light of these reports, in 2013 WCCHC sought and received its first grant enabling WCCHC Farmer’s market to provide matching “Double Bucks” type produce coupons to SNAP recipients and those participating in WCCHC chronic disease management programs. The program has been very popular

and very successful in motivating Waianae community members to purchase more fruits and vegetables.

We also are aware of positive economic, education, and environmental benefits of this type of program.

As such, we strongly urge you to pass this Bill. Thank you for this opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

May Okihiro

Michael Broderick

Daniel Leung

Tina Tamai

Diane Tabangay

Jennifer Dang

Paula Adams

Ray L'Heureux

Michael Libertini

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 8:34:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ku'ulei Williams	Testifying for Aloha Harvest	Support	No

Comments:

I believe this bill is important as it will reduce food insecurity for the population that we serve (low income and needy); it supports farmers locally and whether the individuals purchase produce via Farmers Market or Grocery Store, they are getting more healthy food, encouraging a healthier lifestyle. Aloha Harvest is present at 2 farmers markets, picking up the excess from vendors and donations from individuals and we see the need to get more fresh produce to help feed our needy population. Double bucks is a great way to provide more money to purchase healthy produce and also boost our local economy.

Aloha Harvest wholeheartedly supports this bill SB2398 SD1.



**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 9:47:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

**OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

**DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I**

THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

THE SENATE

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION OF 2018

Friday, February 23, 2018

11:00 AM

Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 211

RE: Testimony in Support of SB2398 SD1 RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

To the Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair; the Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

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. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on Senate Bill No. 2398 SD1, relating to the farmer's market dollar-for-dollar matching program for those in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") Program.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of Senate Bill No. 2398 SD1 and support its passage.

Senate Bill No. 2398 SD1, is in alignment with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it requires the Department of Agriculture to create a local health food dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and establishes and appropriates funds into and out of the local health food incentive program special fund.

Specifically, the DPH Platform states 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)).

Given that Senate Bill No. 2398 SD1 requires the Department of Agriculture to create a local health food dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and establishes and appropriates funds into and out of the local health food incentive program special fund, it is the position of the OCC Legislative 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



Feb. 21, 2018

To: Senate Ways and Means Committee

Fr: Kristin Frost Albrecht, Interim Executive Director  
The Food Basket, Hawaii Island's Food Bank

**Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2398 SD1, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

Good Afternoon, Chair Gabbard, Chair Green and Vice Chair Riviere and Vice Chair Chang,

My name is Kristin Frost Albrecht and I am the Interim Executive Director of The Food Basket Inc., Hawaii Island's Food Bank. Our mission is to "End hunger in Hawaii County". We strongly support this bill.

The Food Basket has been pioneering dollar for dollar matching programs for locally grown produce on the Big Island for since 2014. We deeply believe the passage of this bill will provide much needed food cost relief for low income families and access to locally grown fresh vegetables and fruit that they otherwise couldn't afford.

The Food Basket operates a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program called *Ho`olaha Ka Hua* "DA BOX" that provides a box of produce featuring 7-8 locally grown vegetables and fruit once a week, year round and island wide. We source produce from over 55 Big Island farmers and provide SNAP customers an incentive price that allows them to access locally grown produce that otherwise would be too expensive to purchase on a weekly basis. (SNAP stands for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program formerly known as food stamps.) With the nutrition incentive dollar for dollar matching program we've grown our program to nearly 200 customers a week, with over half of those being SNAP customers.

We have also just completed a pilot project with KTA Superstores with our Double Up Food Bucks "DA BUX" program that provides a 50% discount on Big Island grown produce on the third week of the month at Point of Sale (POS) at the grocery store check-out for SNAP customers. In our 4 month pilot we saw the SNAP sales of eligible DA BUX produce increase nearly 20% on average - and with little to no advertising.

Finally, we also operate DA BUX at 4 farmers markets on Hawaii Island - 2 in West Hawaii and 2 in East Hawaii again on the 3rd week of the month providing a \$1 for \$1 match on Hawaii Island grown produce to SNAP customers.

During our 4 month pilot period in East Hawaii, our programs brought in \$40,000 on sales of Big Island grown produce with \$20,000 of that being federal nutrition incentive dollars going back

into our local economy, benefitting our island farmers, low income residents and improving food security. Given both grocery store sales and farmers market sales were limited to one week and one day of the month respectively, expansion of this program statewide with multiple outlets and extended program implementation times, would be hugely beneficial for farmers and low income consumers.

### **Why we support this bill:**

- Double Up Food Bucks helps Hawaii's low-income families eat more fruits and vegetables while supporting Hawaiian farmers and growing local economies.
- It provides an immediate incentive for cash-strapped families to purchase quality fresh produce. For instance, if a family spends \$20 in their SNAP benefits at the farmers market, they get \$20 in Double Up Food Bucks to spend on locally grown fruits and vegetables. This means they bring home \$40 of healthy food for just \$20.
- Double Up Food Bucks is a win/win/win and provides great benefits to 3 sectors: Low-income families eat more healthy food, our farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in our local economy. Each has a positive ripple effect of benefits.

### **Communities & Farm Income:**

- Double Up helps our local family farmers and island communities.
- With this program, farmers gain new customers and make more money. This stimulates production and sends positive economic ripples throughout our local farms.
- Double Up Food Bucks DA BUX also provides an important market for beginning farmers, helping them grow their businesses.
- Fact: Last year, our Double Up Food Bucks DA BUX program benefitted over 55 farmers on the Big Island.

### **Economic Development:**

- Double Up Food Bucks is a powerful way to stimulate our local economy.
- Doubling federal nutrition benefits on locally grown produce keeps more food dollars circulating in our community, creating jobs and economic opportunity.

### **The Public Health Benefits:**

- Double Up Food Bucks is designed to meet families' immediate needs for healthy food while also supporting healthier communities by addressing the underlying causes of poor diet in both urban and rural communities.
- With Double Up, federal nutrition dollars work harder—simultaneously reducing hunger while supporting healthier diets for SNAP households, which can support long-term healthcare savings.

**Hunger:**

- Low-income families should not have to choose between being hungry and being healthy. With programs like Double Up Food Bucks, they don't have to make that choice.
- This is a practical, bipartisan approach to improving the health impact of the SNAP program in our state.

**What our customers say about Double Up Food Bucks DA BUX:**

*"The DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program has been the best food option for our family because it allows us to bring home and prepare twice as many healthy meals. I support state funding to expand the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program to connect with more families who want to prepare healthier meals.*

*Steve Motherwell (Big Island)*

*I LOVE DA BUX program as it helps us to purchase more fresh, healthy foods and experience new foods we wouldn't normally try.*

*Mahalo!*

*Laura (Big Island)*

We respectfully ask your committees to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kristin Frost Albrecht





February 21, 2018

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **Strong Support for SB2398 SD1**

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am

The Hawaii Public Health Association is a group of over 600 community members, public health professionals and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. HPHA also serves as a voice for public health professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

HPHA strongly supports SB2398 SD1, which improves access to affordable, healthy, and local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

A matching incentive program that is made available in farmers' markets and other direct food retail venues such as grocery stores will help to reduce food insecurity and improve dietary behaviors among many of Hawaii's low-income families. Providing a dollar-for-dollar match for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables will increase the purchasing power of SNAP participants as it frees up room in their budget for other equally essential expenditures such as housing and health care.

Healthy produce incentives will also improve healthy eating behaviors among Hawaii's low-income families. With food costs so much higher in Hawaii than on the mainland, many SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) participants often spend their SNAP dollars on low-priced unhealthy options. Poor dietary behaviors are associated obesity, heart diseases and other chronic diseases.

The implementation of a local incentive program will also support local farmers and boost the economy. Healthy produce incentives encourage more spending by local markets and can increase farmers' income and customer base.

A matching incentive program is good for public health and the economy. We strongly support SB2398 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on important health issues affecting people in Hawaii.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holly Kessler'.

Holly Kessler, Executive Director  
Hawaii Public Health Association

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 7:37:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike	Testifying for Community First	Support	No

Comments:

In East Hawaii on the Big Island the community has come together to increase SNAP enrollment and this bill will magnify the impact of that effort, supporting local farmers, giving SNAP recipients more healthy, fresh food, and stimulating the local economy. Community First strongly supports this bill.





**WAIANAЕ COAST  
COMPREHENSIVE  
HEALTH CENTER**  
www.wcchc.com

February 22, 2018

**Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**Submitted by:** Mr. Richard Bettini, President & CEO, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2398 SD1 - Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of **SB2398 SD1**, which requires the Department of Agriculture to create a farmers market dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) is Hawaii's largest and oldest federally qualified community health center and is the only safety-net provider serving the medically underserved along the Waianae Coast. The communities served are impoverished and 29% of families receive SNAP or other forms of public assistance, the highest rate in Hawaii. Our patients suffer from a variety of health disparities including diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease. Optimal nutrition and access to healthy foods is imperative, but often difficult, for our families. Fresh produce, especially local produce, is expensive, even with SNAP benefits.

To improve access to healthier foods, in 2008, WCCHC held the first Makeke Farmers Market in Waianae. *The primary purpose of the Mākeke Markets is to help cultivate a community that is healthy in mind, body and spirit by providing vibrant gathering places for the community, local food producers and Hawaiian cultural practitioners.* Since then, the Market has expanded to three locations along the Waianae Coast, serving about 2,000 people each week. The Makeke Markets were one of the first in the State to enable a SNAP recipient to use their EBT cards to purchase produce and other nutritious foods. Last year, the Market did almost \$140,000 in SNAP sales (the highest in the State) and doubled to almost \$72,000 of that amount of fresh locally sourced foods.

Numerous reports on programs across the U.S. that incentivize nutritious produce purchases among SNAP recipients, such as the "Double Bucks" programs, indicate that they are an effective way to encourage more fruit and vegetable purchasing, reduce hunger and supporting healthy diets. In light of these reports, in 2013, WCCHC sought and received its first grant enabling the WCCHC Farmer's markets to provide matching "Double Bucks" type produce coupons to SNAP recipients and those participating in WCCHC chronic disease management programs. The program has been very popular and very successful in motivating Waianae community members to purchase more fruits and vegetables.

The ongoing challenge has been acquiring the funding to sustain these effective incentive programs. Our Health Center has spent a great deal of time and effort to try to keep the program continuously funded, with mixed success.

As such, we strongly support **SB2398 SD1**, which will expand and sustain incentive-based produce purchasing programs for SNAP recipients, among our most vulnerable families in Hawaii.

Thank you for allowing us to provide this testimony.

Friday, February 23rd, 2018 at 11:00am  
Conference Room 211

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President & Government Relations

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB 2398 SD 1, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

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My name is Michael Robinson and I am Vice President and Government Relations at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system with over 70 locations statewide including medical centers, clinics, physicians and other caregivers serving Hawai'i and the Pacific Region with high quality, compassionate care. Its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox – specialize in innovative programs in women's health, pediatric care, cardiovascular services, cancer care, bone and joint services and more. Hawai'i Pacific Health is recognized nationally for its excellence in patient care and the use of electronic health records to improve quality and patient safety

I testify in support of SB 2398 SD 1 which creates a healthy produce incentive program in the Department of Agriculture for SNAP participants. The program would give those on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) a dollar-for-dollar match of up to \$20 for the purchase of local fresh fruits and vegetables which would benefit both SNAP participants and local farmers.

The Double Up Food Bucks program doubles the purchasing power of Hawaii's low-income families. With food costs estimated to be 61% higher in Hawaii than on the mainland, many SNAP participants spend their SNAP dollars at large national discount food chains on cheap processed food because many lower income families can't afford healthier options. Evaluation data from similar programs in other states have shown that such programs effectively support low-income families in affecting improvements in their dietary behaviors.

Nutrition incentives increase sales and farm income by increasing local farmers' customer base. Double Up Food Bucks is an effective way to keep federal funding circulating in our local economy. Using the USDA's economic multiplier coefficients, the

\$1.6 million in SNAP at Hawai'i farmers' markets (2016) generates nearly double the economic impact, by encouraging more spending by local businesses.

Hawai'i Pacific Health is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the people of Hawai'i. The Double Up Food Bucks Program will improve the nutritious food options available to low-income families. Healthy dietary behavior is a huge determinant of long term health outcomes. Through incentivizing the purchase of local fresh produce, this program will also decrease healthcare costs over these families lifetimes.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony in support of SB 2398 SD 1.

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 3:51:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 4:08:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lawrence Duenas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 12:03:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bev Brody	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 5:00:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Milholen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 6:18:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 5:16:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
C. Azelski	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

[SB2398](#) would create a dollar-for-dollar matching incentive program for SNAP beneficiaries to spend at farmers' markets and direct food retailers if they choose to spend them on healthy fruits and vegetables, reducing food insecurity and improving dietary behaviors among many of Hawaii's low-income families. Please support SB2398.

Date: February 21, 2018

To: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **SUPPORT for SB2398 SD1**, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Capitol Room 211

Respected Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT of SB2398 SD1** that improves access to affordable, healthful, local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

A matching incentive program made available in farmers' markets and other direct food retail venues such as grocery stores will help reduce food insecurity and improve dietary behaviors among many of Hawai'i's low-income families.

Providing a dollar-for-dollar match for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables will increase the purchasing power of SNAP participants as it frees up money in their budget for other equally essential expenditures such as housing and health care.

Fresh produce incentives will also improve healthful eating behaviors among Hawai'i's low-income families. With food costs so much higher in Hawai'i than on the mainland, many SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) participants often spend their SNAP dollars on low-priced, less healthful options. Poor dietary behaviors are associated with obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

The implementation of a local incentive program will also support local farmers and boost the economy. Healthful produce incentives encourage more spending by local markets and can increase farmers' income and customer base.

A matching incentive program is good for public health and good for the economy.

I strongly **support SB2398 SD1** and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD  
Keaau, HI

**Larry and Nanette Geller**  
Honolulu, HI 96817

SB2398  
WAM  
Friday, February 23, 2018  
11:00 a.m.  
Room 211

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

February 21, 2018

**Re: SB2398 Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

**In Strong Support**

Dear Sen. Dela Cruz, Sen. Keith-Agaran and members of the Committee:

Several other states have matching programs to encourage low income recipients of federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase healthy produce at farmers' markets. This bill is intended to create the framework for a statewide matching program in Hawaii.

Eating healthy reduces the incidence and social cost of obesity and diseases such as diabetes.

**Importance of the direct-to-consumer model**

**Sales at farmers' markets go 100% into the pockets of local farmers**—no profits are sent out-of-state by supermarket chains. An additional benefit of increased SNAP sales at farmers' markets is that federal money remains in Hawaii and circulates in the economy. SNAP and incentive programs increase the income for local food producers.

Locally-owned retailers, such as farmers markets, **return more than three times as much of their sales to the local economy** compared to chain competitors.



Each \$1 in SNAP is calculated to provide \$1.79 in local economic activity. Farmers pay for supplies and labor using the federal funds SNAP brings to the state. Matching programs help increase farm income and widen their customer base. Strengthening farm income contributes to goals related to farm sustainability in Hawaii.

SNAP users who shop in farmers' markets buy produce which is fresher and cheaper than even the same products from the same farm sold in supermarkets. They not only buy local produce but may buy other locally-produced food products sold at the markets. In supermarkets they will buy more processed food originating out-of-state and of questionable nutritional value.

Farmers markets provide the best access to fresh fruits and vegetables for at-risk populations (obesity, diabetes, etc.). Hawaii has a year-round growing season and a wide selection of fruits and vegetables that are picked fresh for the farmers' market. Because produce is fresher than in supermarkets it keeps longer and is likely more nutritious. Once shoppers become familiar with the range of produce available, they will not rely so much on highly processed, sugar- and salt-laden prepared food. The health benefits are clear. Prices are competitive with and often cheaper than in supermarkets. **Fresher, cheaper and healthier—how much better can it get?**

## Federal support

Last year the USDA awarded a \$3.9 million Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant—the largest in the country—to California, to expand their healthy eating program at farmers’ markets. The stated purpose of the USDA awards is to incentivize low-income shoppers to spend their SNAP benefits on locally-grown fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Another objective is to encourage SNAP recipients to become life-long produce consumers. Clearly, forming the habit of shopping for fresh produce and cooking it at home will have a positive impact on health.

This bill establishes a special fund that would receive similar grants (“any public or private grants, awards, or gifts for the purpose of the farmers’ market matching incentive program”).

## How incentive programs work

Incentive programs, in their simplest form, provide SNAP participants with matching funds to purchase SNAP-eligible food items.

Some programs provide a dollar-to-dollar match while others establish certain limits. There may be a cap to the match, for example, up to \$10 per day.

The possibility of private or federal grants is very real because the USDA is supporting these matching programs. The California FINI grant is but one example.

Let’s bring these grants to Hawaii. This bill should set the groundwork to do that.

--Larry and Nanette Geller  
Honolulu

## USDA Awards Nation’s Largest Grant to Expand California Healthy Eating Program to More Farmers’ Markets

August 9, 2017 by Ecology Center



[PRESS RELEASE] – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has awarded the California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) and its partners a \$3.9 million Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant – the largest in the country. FINI grants are designed to increase the

purchase of fruits and vegetables among low-income people participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (aka SNAP, formerly food stamps).



**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 11:11:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lydi Morgan Bernal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha,

I am testifying in support of **SB2398 SD1: Double Bucks**. To provide recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) access to fresh fruits and vegetables through the promotion of incentive programs such as Double Bucks. I support that this bill requires the Department of Agriculture to create a farmers' market dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The health of those who receive SNAP benefits are often over looked and their need for fresh produce needs to be addressed. Diabetes and obesity are public health issues in Hawaii and this bill would provide a way to prevent chronic disease and ensure a better quality of life for all.

Best,

Lauren Loor

**SB-2398-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 10:00:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dan Domizio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Boosting the opportunity for SNAP to make the healthiest dietary choices possible, is way overdue. The healthiest choices are often the more expensive ones and thus limit the SNAP to less than the healthies choices. With this incentive, Moms will spent less time in the candy coated cereal section of their grocery store, and more time at their local Farmer's Market.

I urge you to pass this incentive.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Dan Domizio, Pahoa



Dear Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Capitol Room 211

I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD1 which improves access to affordable, healthy, and local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

A matching incentive program that is made available in farmers' markets and other direct food retail venues such as grocery stores will help to reduce food insecurity and improve dietary behaviors among many of Hawaii's low-income families. Providing a dollar-for-dollar match for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables will increase the purchasing power of SNAP participants as it frees up room in their budget for other equally essential expenditures such as housing and health care.

Healthy produce incentives will also improve healthy eating behaviors among Hawaii's low-income families. With food costs so much higher in Hawaii than on the mainland, many SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) participants often spend their SNAP dollars on low-priced unhealthy options. Poor dietary behaviors are associated obesity, heart diseases and other chronic diseases.

The implementation of a local incentive program will also support local farmers and boost the economy. Healthy produce incentives encourage more spending by local markets and can increase farmers' income and customer base.

A matching incentive program is good for public health and the economy. I strongly support SB2398 SD1 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Tyler Ralston	Alohalyn Espejo	Emi Orikasa	Alyson Borrego
Michelle Gray	Barbara Nosaka	Seri Niimi-Burch	Skye Madigan
Mae Kyono	Annalise Busekrus	Patricia Blair	Kat McGlone
Christopher La Chica	Curtis Palmer	Elizabeth Tam	Valerie Yontz
Maren Anka	Lenora Loo	Jen Azuma Chrupalyk	Michael Kellar
Paul Ho	Lillian Coltib	Jean Butel	Debbie Apolo
Diane Omura	Alan Trinh	Helen Barrow	Tanya Gabriel
Julieta Rajlevsky	Kathleen Hagan	Patricia Fleck	Cristeta Ancog
Cyrus Howe	Lee Buenconsejo-Lum	Jeny Bissell	Maria Guardino
Pualei Kaohelaulii	Tina Clothier	Lorrie Santos	Erin Bantum
Candee Rillon	Shay Chan Hodges		

Dear Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Capitol Room 211

I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD1 which improves access to affordable, healthy, and local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

I am professor and director of Public Health at the University of Hawai'i, testifying as an individual. Research shows that individuals who consume 5 or more fruits and vegetables are better able to control their weight than individuals who do not have a diet high in produce. Obesity is a leading cause of chronic disease, and these diseases can lead to absenteeism from school and work as well as long-term disability and morbidity. Thus, obesity is very costly in the long run because of high costs of care needed by people who are obese. Programs like the one proposed will help low-income families increase the number of fruits and vegetables they eat and thus help control obesity. This program also has benefits for local farmers.

A matching incentive program that is made available in farmers' markets and other direct food retail venues such as grocery stores will help to reduce food insecurity and improve dietary behaviors among many of Hawaii's low-income families. Providing a dollar-for-dollar match for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables will increase the purchasing power of SNAP participants as it frees up room in their budget for other equally essential expenditures such as housing and health care.

Healthy produce incentives will also improve healthy eating behaviors among Hawaii's low-income families. With food costs so much higher in Hawaii than on the mainland, many SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) participants often spend their SNAP dollars on low-priced unhealthy options. Poor dietary behaviors are associated obesity, heart diseases and other chronic diseases.

The implementation of a local incentive program will also support local farmers and boost the economy. Healthy produce incentives encourage more spending by local markets and can increase farmers' income and customer base.

A matching incentive program is good for public health and the economy. I strongly support SB2398 SD1 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Braun  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Capitol Room 211

I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD1 which improves access to affordable, healthy, and local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

We (Sustainable Molokai) run a Mobile Market that sells locally grown produce to customers. We are working hard to get more SNAP participants involved. We strongly believe this "Double Bucks" incentive program would be a huge help, and would result in healthier individuals, healthier economy on Molokai, and a healthier community overall.

A matching incentive program that is made available in farmers' markets and other direct food retail venues such as grocery stores will help to reduce food insecurity and improve dietary behaviors among many of Hawaii's low-income families. Providing a dollar-for-dollar match for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables will increase the purchasing power of SNAP participants as it frees up room in their budget for other equally essential expenditures such as housing and health care.

Healthy produce incentives will also improve healthy eating behaviors among Hawaii's low-income families. With food costs so much higher in Hawaii than on the mainland, many SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) participants often spend their SNAP dollars on low-priced unhealthy options. Poor dietary behaviors are associated obesity, heart diseases and other chronic diseases.

The implementation of a local incentive program will also support local farmers and boost the economy. Healthy produce incentives encourage more spending by local markets and can increase farmers' income and customer base.

A matching incentive program is good for public health and the economy. I strongly support SB2398 SD1 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,

Harmonee Williams

Kaunakakai, HI 96748

Dear Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Capitol Room 211

I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD1 which improves access to affordable, healthy, and local fresh fruits and vegetables by creating a matching incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The implementation of a local incentive program will also support local farmers and boost the economy. Healthy produce incentives encourage more spending by local markets and can increase farmers' income and customer base.

A matching incentive program is good for public health and the economy. I strongly support SB2398 SD1 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Yukimura

Lihue, HI 96766

Dear Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hrg: February 23, 2018 at 11:00am at Capitol Room 211

Aloha Honorable Senators,

We have the Double Bucks program on Hawaii Island working with KTA Superstores. It is working for all - SNAP families , farmers and local businesses. Please pass SB2398 SDI. I strongly SUPPORT this Bill.

Thank you so very much.

Carol R. Ignacio

Sincerely,

Carol Ignacio

Paauilo, HI 96776