

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



February 22, 2018

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2398 SD1 - RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

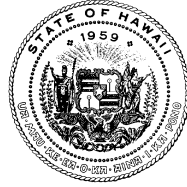
Hearing: Friday, February 23, 2018, 11:00 m
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill. The farmers' market dollar-for-dollar matching program helps Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants' increase their purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling the value of their benefits spent at farmers markets, provides more access to healthy fruits and vegetables, supports local farmers, and keeps food dollars in the local economy. DHS defers to the Department of Agriculture as to program development and implementation issues.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to require the Department of Agriculture to create a farmers' market dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

SNAP is 100 percent federally funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). While FNS supports healthy incentive projects, these projects run counter to SNAP "equal treatment" regulations, which specify that "no retail food store may single out SNAP participants using SNAP benefits for special treatment in any way." Farmers markets that plan to implement a bonus incentive project must inform FNS during their initial authorization or subsequent reauthorization to participate in SNAP.

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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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LATE

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2398, SD1
RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: February 23, 2018

Room Number: 211

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (DOH) defers to the Department of Agriculture
2 (DOA) regarding the implementation and fiscal impacts of this bill, and to the Governor's
3 Supplemental Budget Request for appropriations priorities.

4 **Department Testimony:** The DOH supports Senate Bill 2398, Senate Draft 1 (S.B. 2398, SD1)
5 to establish a nutrition incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition
6 Assistance Program (SNAP).

7 Major health authorities (including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Centers for
8 Disease Control, and the World Health Organization) recommend increasing fruit and vegetable
9 intake as a means to prevent chronic disease and improve overall health.^{1,2,3} However, access to
10 fresh produce for income-limited individuals can be difficult and is one of the reasons why they
11 often have poorer diets and higher rates of chronic disease than middle class and wealthy
12 individuals.^{4,5} This bill would double SNAP recipients purchasing power when they use their
13 benefits to purchase local fruits and vegetables.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *2015 – 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. 8th Edition. December 2015.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2011.

³ World Health Organization. *Healthy Diet Fact sheet N°394*. Web. Updated September 2015.

⁴ Hawaii Health Data Warehouse, Hawaii State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2016.

⁵ Simmet, Anja et al. *The Dietary Quality of Food Pantry Users: A Systematic Review of Existing Literature*. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, Volume 117, Issue 4, 563 – 576.

1 Nutrition incentive programs similar to the one proposed in this bill are prevalent around
2 the United States, and similar bills have been passed in six other states. Nutrition incentives are
3 often touted as a “win-win-win” for farmers, families, and local businesses. Data from these
4 interventions have shown improvements in dietary behaviors, reduction in household hunger and
5 food insecurity, and increased sales of local produce (by more than their dollar value alone).^{6,7,8}
6 In Hawaii, less than one in five adults reported eating five or more fruits and vegetables a day
7 (2015 Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System). The DOH supports the intent of S.B. 2398
8 SD1 as one component of a comprehensive approach to improve the availability and accessibility
9 of healthy foods to improve health outcomes for people in Hawaii, especially for people who
10 face greater health disparities.

11 Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

12 **Offered Amendments:** None

13

⁶ Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up in Farmers' Markets: The Consumer Experience*. Fair Food Network, 2015.

⁷ Mann, J., et al. *Economics of healthy food incentives at Michigan farmers markets: Study highlights*. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems, 2017.

⁸ Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up Food Bucks and Hunger*. Fair Food Network, 2015



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February 23, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2398, SD1
RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Room 211
11:00 AM

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

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 2398, 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 offers nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and families, increasing their food purchasing power and improving their nutrition. SNAP also provides economic benefits to farmers participating at farmers' markets, roadside stands and CSA programs.

Some of HFB's farmers' markets participate or have participated in the SNAP program. We believe that access to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income individuals and families provides benefit to both SNAP participants and farmers. Instead of selling farm products to wholesalers or other distributors at a relatively low price, farmers can sell directly to the consumer at a price that is more profitable.

HFB believes that farmers' markets, roadside stands, and CSAs provide an alternative distribution method that is economically advantageous to farmers, however, we are concerned that the addition of "other direct food retailers" may result in this program being used for imported produce. We suggest clarifying that the dollar-for-dollar match only be allowed for locally grown Hawaii produce.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter.



LATE

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Papa Ola Lokahi

is a non-profit Native Hawaiian organization founded in 1988 for the purpose of improving the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians and other native peoples of the Pacific and continental United States.

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Sen. Donovan DelaCruz, Chair

Sen. Gil Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

SB 2398 SD1

RELATING TO

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

February 23, Friday, 11:00 AM, Conference Room 211, State Capitol

Greetings of aloha to Chair DelaCruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee.

Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board, **SUPPORTS** the dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program as proposed in SB 2398 SD1.

The legislature may already know that the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act ([P.L. 111-148, Title 42 USC 122](#)), originally passed by Congress in 1988 and most recently in 2010 within the Affordable Care Act, authorizes Papa Ola Lōkahi, the five Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems, and the Native Hawaiian Health Scholarship Program to raise the health status of Native Hawaiians. We address health disparities in Hawai'i by being involved in policy, research, data & information, development and implementation of programs and initiatives, protection and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian healing practices, workforce development, and more.

In 2016, according to the American Community Survey, 32.1 of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander households received SNAP. In 2014, CDC data show that Native Hawaiians are 3 times more likely to be obese than others; in fact 30.8% of Native Hawaiians are obese.

It is in the best interest of all in Hawai'i to improve access to healthy fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients, as proposed. In the long run, this preventive measure will reduce the public funds that pay for health care for chronic disease related to obesity.

Prevention is the key. We applaud the wisdom and foresight of this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to **SUPPORT SB 2398 SD1**.

February 23, 2018

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

LATE

From: Mandy Finlay, Director of Public Policy
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **SB 2398 SD1 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211, February 23, 2018, 11:00 AM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to strongly support SB 2398, SD1, which creates a dollar-for-dollar matching program for the supplemental nutrition assistance program at farmer's markets.

This measure would help low-income families to make healthier choices with their meals. In Hawaii, more than one in four kindergartners are overweight or obese. As a state, we spend an estimated \$470 million annually on obesity-related medical costs. Hawaii's children also have one of the highest rates of dental caries (cavities) in the nation, double the national average. These figures underscore the need to improve access to healthy food and beverages to ensure that the children of Hawaii can make healthy choices to prevent obesity and dental decay.

Hawaii has the highest food costs in the nation and fresh, locally-grown produce is often more costly than processed foods. By creating double the value of SNAP benefits when purchasing fresh produce at the farmer's market, this measure would make healthy food a more affordable option and help to alleviate the negative health outcomes associated with poverty, leading to healthier keiki.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee vote to pass this bill.

LATE



February 23, 2018

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

RE: **SUPPORT SB2398 SD1** Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB2398 SD1, which is a way to provide increased access to healthy, local foods. We support this legislation because all members of our community should have the same opportunities to eat healthy, which will support their overall health and sense of well-being. Furthermore, from an economic position, this bill puts more money into our local farming community helping to create financial stability for farmers, which in turn strengthen entire community economies. The SD1 of this measure expands beyond farmer's markets to include other direct food retail establishments, which we believe increases access to healthy, locally sourced foods.

At Blue Zone Projects, we support healthy lifestyle habits through a variety of avenues including access to local and healthy sourced foods. This measure helps the people who receive SNAP benefits to purchase more healthy foods at farmers markets. It gives them a dollar per dollar match up to \$20, doubling their buying power when purchasing fresh, local fruits and vegetables. Similar programs have been funded on a smaller scale such as the one in Hawaii county with great success. Over the course of the four-month pilot on the Big Island, there was nearly a 20% increase in sales of the incentivized local, healthy fresh produce. There is a significant amount of support by all stakeholders, and they are staunch proponents of broadening this program statewide.

As Hawaii strives to find more food security, sustain its ever-growing population and explores pathways to strengthen its financial well-being, programs that benefit many aspects of the community need to be cultivated and broadened. We urge you to pass SB2398 SD1 in order to continue this important conversation.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cherie Andrade

Cherie Andrade
Community Project Manager



Blue Zones Project—Hawaii



LATE

SB-2398-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 12:16:29 PM
Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
lindsey whitcomb	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for your time, senators. I would like to voice my support for this measure, as the benefits are multi-faceted; fresh produce is vital to the nutritional health of both children & adults. Children are disproportionately higher (numerically) recipients of SNAP benefits & studies have shown that nutrient deficiencies have more marked effects in children. Fruits & vegetables begin to lose nutritional value the moment they are harvested; the sooner the food reaches the consumer, the higher nutritional impact it will be able to have. Additionally, support for local farmers is necessary in order to gain better food independence throughout our islands. Allowing SNAP benefits to be utilized at farmer's markets have beneficial effects to both parties & will increase demand for local agriculture, which will also in time help create a shift towards increasing our overall ag production throughout the island chain.

LATE

SB-2398-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2018 6:44:12 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cory Chun	Testifying for American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network	Support	No

Comments:

SB 2398 SD1

LATE

We urge you to support the SNAP double buck bill. This is a simple and notably effective way to encourage and support eating more fresh fruits and vegetables among low-income populations.

This population is at higher risk of obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases which not only disables and injures the potential of our work force during their working years, but also forces our society to spend exorbitant amounts of money on healthcare maintenance health care costs at the end of life. By encouraging people to eat healthy, we save our work force and minimize healthcare costs at the backend.

Please be sure to pass and support this bill.

Tina Tamai
Hawaii Good Food Task Force

LATE

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.

Sincerely,

Dennis Miller	Venkataraman Balaraman	Michele Nihipali	Tenaya Jackman
John Ishoda	Wes Freuler	Theresa Brown	Bryan Mih