

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

DOUGLAS S. CHIN  
Lt. Governor



SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

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

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

**MARCH 15, 2018  
10:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 329**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2398 SD2  
RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Chairperson Mizuno and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2398 SD2, 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.

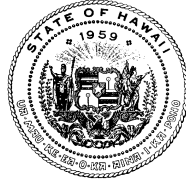
The Department lacks the staff to manage the program at the operational level and intends to administer the program partnering with public and private agencies that have experience and success with similar programs on behalf of SNAP recipients. The Department believes the increased sales of locally grown 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.

The local health food incentive program benefit of \$20 per visit would encourage the SNAP recipient to purchase locally grown produce and to try new fresh commodities



offered by the farmers and direct food retailers. The Department would like to note that it can administer the program without creating a special fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 2398 SD2  
RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN MIZUNO, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: March 15, 2018

Room Number: 329

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 2 (S.B. 2398 SD2)  
5 to establish a nutrition incentive program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition  
6 Assistance Program (SNAP). **Department Testimony:** The DOH supports Senate Bill 2398,  
7 Senate Draft 2 (S.B. 2398 SD2) to establish a nutrition incentive program for beneficiaries of the  
8 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

9 Major health authorities (including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Centers for  
10 Disease Control, and the World Health Organization) recommend increasing fruit and vegetable  
11 intake as a means to prevent chronic disease and improve overall health.<sup>1,2,3</sup> However, access to  
12 fresh produce for income-limited individuals can be difficult and is one of the reasons why they  
13 often have poorer diets and higher rates of chronic disease than middle class and wealthy

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

1 individuals.<sup>4,5</sup> This bill would double Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)  
2 recipients purchasing power when they use their benefits to purchase local fruits and vegetables.

3 Nutrition incentive programs similar to the one proposed in this bill are prevalent around  
4 the United States, and similar bills have been passed in six other states. Nutrition incentives are  
5 often touted as a “win-win-win” for farmers, families, and local businesses. Data from these  
6 interventions have shown improvements in dietary behaviors, reduction in household hunger and  
7 food insecurity, and increased sales of local produce (by more than their dollar value alone).<sup>6,7,8</sup>  
8 In Hawaii, less than one in five adults reported eating five or more fruits and vegetables a day  
9 (2015 Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System). The DOH supports S.B. 2398 SD2 as one  
10 component of a comprehensive approach to improve the availability and accessibility of healthy  
11 foods to improve health outcomes for people in Hawaii, especially for people who face greater  
12 health disparities.

13 Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

14 **Offered Amendments:** None

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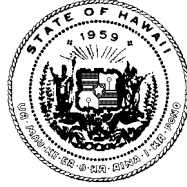
<sup>4</sup> Hawaii Health Data Warehouse, Hawaii State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

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

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

<sup>8</sup> Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up Food Bucks and Hunger*. Fair Food Network, 2015



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

March 14, 2018

TO: The Honorable John M Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2398 SD2 - RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Hearing: Thursday, March 15, 2018, 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, 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.

Harry Kim  
Mayor



Wil Okabe  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i  
Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553  
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 13, 2018

Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
Committee on Health and Human Services  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Mizuno and Committee Members:

**Re: SB 2398, SD 2 Relating to SNAP**  
**Hearing Date: 03-15-18 – 10:00 am; House Conference Room 329**

Thank you for this opportunity to support the concept behind SB 2398, SD 2.

The original SB 2398 proposed to build on a Big Island pilot program that was launched by food retailer KTA and our local Food Basket. 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 2 still limits purchases to fresh fruit and vegetables, but would allow a person to shop at a farmers' market or any other direct food retailer. Depending on the definition of "direct food retailer" (which does not seem to appear in the bill) this might dilute the "local" aspect of the program by allowing the purchase at institutions that acquire their produce from overseas suppliers. I am not sure that is a positive amendment, but at least the food stamp users would still be getting nutritional benefits. Or perhaps it is possible to open the program to all retailers but limit the use of the bonus stamps to local produce only, rather than all fresh produce regardless of source.

If you were to substitute language in the companion bill, HB 2670, HD 2, I would be concerned that not all SNAP beneficiaries necessarily have easy access to a farmers' market. Therefore, I defer to others whether HB 2670, HD 2, or SB 2398, SD 2, is a better approach. Perhaps the third option—all retailers and farmers' markets participate but only local produce qualifies—would be even better. In any 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



## **American Heart Association testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2398, SD2 “Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program”**

The American Heart Association strongly supports SB 2398, SD2.

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, SD2 would supplement federal funding with state funding to expand those programs and to insure their sustainability.**

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free of cardiovascular  
diseases and stroke.”*

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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, SD2 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.*







Date: March 14, 2018

To: The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

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

Re: STRONG SUPPORT for SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Conference Room 329

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **Strong Support** of SB 2398 SD2, 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 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 can help to improve healthier dietary behaviors.

SB2398 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 SD2 out of committee.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish', is centered below the text 'Mahalo,'.

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).



March 15, 2018

To: Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health & Human Services

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

Re: **SB 2398 SD2 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329, March 15, 2018, 10:00 AM**

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to strongly support SB 2398, SD2, 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.**

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

SB2398

HHS

Thursday, March 15, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Room 329

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN  
SERVICES

Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair

Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

March 13, 2018

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

**In Strong Support**

Dear Rep. Mizuno, Rep. Kobayashi 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. Directing federal or private grant money to farmers markets supports farmers, invigorates local economies and addresses food insecurity.

Below are three amendments we suggest.

Should there be federal or private grants to Hawaii for incentive programs, \$20 per month could be insufficient. We understand that the Department of Agriculture favors \$20 per visit.

→ We suggest change page 3 line 1 to require that the Department of Agriculture establish a **minimum** limit of \$20 per month per SNAP account. This way it can be increased to another limit they may wish to set. The \$20 per month limit seems to be used in many other states.

In other words, they may increase it without new legislation.

→ On page 3 line 14, the bill references DOA consulting with private organizations. That should be private or government organizations.

As for the term "direct food retailer" we believe it is vague. Suggested language to replace:

→ page 3 line 3 "other SNAP-participating food retailers at the discretion of the Department of Agriculture."

Clearly, if retailers are to be included, the program should be restricted to those retailers qualified and equipped to accept SNAP and that agree to final rules for the incentive program.

## Importance of the direct-to-consumer model

**Sales at farmer’s 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”).

## 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).

## 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 \$20 per visit.

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



**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 8:36:46 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Maria Teresa Belardo	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of SB 2398 SD2 bill. If passed, this program will not only help Hawaii families eat healthier but also support local agriculture and keep money in the local economy.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Mahalo,

Maria Belardo



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting SB 2398 SD2 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
House Committee on Health & Human Services  
Scheduled for hearing on Thursday, March 15, 2018, 10:00 AM, in Conference Room 329

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Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of **SB 2398 SD2**, 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. We respectfully request the Committee to consider amending the timeframe for that cap to \$20 per day or per visit, in order to allow SNAP beneficiaries greater access to this program.

In a nutshell, this program 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) estimates that every \$5 spent in SNAP benefits generates as much as \$9 in local economic activity. We recommend a truly robust appropriation for this program, to enable positive ripple effects for our local economy.

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.*



**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/12/2018 9:33:35 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

From: Pioneering Healthy Communities – Honolulu

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. Double Bucks programs have emerged at Farmers Markets in Hawaii, such as those associated with the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and Kalihi Kookua Valley Health Center. The programs has been very popular and very successful in motivating community members to purchase more fruits and vegetables but need ongoing resources. We also are aware of positive economic, education, and environmental benefits for individuals, and communities, from these Double Bucks Programs.

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

Stacy Evensen

Barbra Pleadwell

Daniela Kittinger

**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2018 7:17:06 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Carol R. Ignacio	Blue Zones Project	Support	No

Comments:

Blue Zones Project strongly supports SB2398. Thank you for the positive results thus far. On Hawaii Island the Double Bucks project is going so well and needs to be expanded. Thanks for your support going forward.

With gratitude,

Carol R Ignacio

Government and Community Affairs Manager

**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2018 5:42:40 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John Dobovan	Kulahaven Farms LLC	Support	No

Comments:



**Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Human Services  
Thursday, March 15, 2018; 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

**RE: SUPPORTING SENATE BILL NO. 2398, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, 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 2, 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 an unspecified amounts of 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, 2050.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 2398, Senate Draft 2**  
**Thursday, March 15, 2018; 10:00 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.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hbf.org](mailto:info@hbf.org); [www.hbf.org](http://www.hbf.org)

March 15, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2398, SD2**  
RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Room 329  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, 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, SD2**, 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.

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

March 14, 2018

To: The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
Health and Human Services Committee



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

**Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

Good Afternoon, Chair Mizuno and Vice Chair Kobayashi,

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.

In the current wording of the bill in section B, we suggest it be changed to: (b) *Under the local health food incentive program, beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program who use food stamps to make purchases at a farmers' market and other direct food retailers who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program shall receive a dollar-for-dollar match of a **minimum of \$20 per month to be used exclusively for purchases of Hawaii grown fresh fruits and vegetables at a farmers' market or other direct food retailer.***

We base our opinion on our success of the nutrition incentive programs we deliver that expand affordable access to Hawaii grown produce to beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as described below.

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 committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Kristin Frost Albrecht

**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2018 5:40:21 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

With food costs so much higher in Hawai'i than on the mainland, many Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients often spend their money on low-priced, unhealthy options.

Poor food choices are associated with obesity, heart diseases and other chronic diseases.

This bill would give families more dollars 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.

I support this measure.

Date: March 13, 2018

To: The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: **SUPPORT for SB2398 SD2**, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329

Respected Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services,

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT of SB2398 SD2** 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 support 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. Nutritionally 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 SD2** and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD  
Keaau, HI

**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/13/2018 8:19:39 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 10:00 am  
Conference Room 329

**House Committee on Health & Human Services**

To: Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson  
Vice President & Government Relations

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB 2398, SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

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My name is Michael Robinson and I am the Vice President of Government Relations and Community Affairs 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, SD2 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.

Hawaii Pacific Health is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the people of Hawaii. 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 the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2398, SD2.



**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 8:46:25 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Oshiro-Taogoshi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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).

As a former food stamp recipient (\$50 per month), single mother of three children, working full time I could not afford fresh veggies or fruits. This incentive program will provide a pathway to healthier food choices. 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. 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** pualei.kaohelaulii@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Pualei Kaohelaulii  
<pualei.kaohelaulii@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 7:40 PM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Pualei Kaohelaulii  
Kekaha, HI 96752

## kobayashi2 - Kevin

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**From:** tita@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Charity Kaiwi <tita@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 2:38 PM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Charity Kaiwi  
Makawao, HI 96768

## kobayashi2 - Kevin

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**From:** eocb44@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Erin Bantum <eocb44@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 1:37 PM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Erin Bantum  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

## kobayashi2 - Kevin

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**From:** jcbanna@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jinan Banna  
<jcbanna@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 12:25 PM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Jinan Banna  
Honolulu, HI 96822

**kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** snharris@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Stephen Harris  
<snharris@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 11:24 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Stephen Harris  
Honolulu, HI 96816

## kobayashi2 - Kevin

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**From:** kmedeiros@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kendra Medeiros  
<kmedeiros@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 9:50 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Kendra Medeiros  
Lanai City, HI 96763

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** gary@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Gary Powell  
<gary@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 9:22 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Gary Powell  
Aiea, HI 96701



## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** john.s.ishoda@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of John Ishoda  
<john.s.ishoda@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 9:15 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
John Ishoda  
Honolulu, HI 96817

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

---

**From:** dgkahalas@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tyler Ralston  
<dgkahalas@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 9:06 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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).

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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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Tyler Ralston  
Honolulu, HI 96816

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** tenayajackman@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tenaya Jackman  
<tenayajackman@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 8:58 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Tenaya Jackman  
Honolulu, HI 96815

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** Jenna22@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jenna Lee <Jenna22@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 8:49 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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).

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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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Jenna Lee  
Honolulu, HI 96822

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** nspock@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Ruhiiyih Spock  
<nspock@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 8:38 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 This is testimony to provide strong support of SB2398 SD2 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. It is something we need to encourage strongly, a return to traditional foods that are healthier than modern processed cheap foods. 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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Ruhiiyih Spock  
Makawao, HI 96768

## **kobayashi2 - Kevin**

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**From:** keawe9@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Keawe Kaholokula <keawe9@everyactioncustom.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 8:24 AM  
**To:** hhstestimony  
**Subject:** Strong Support of SB2398 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear House Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services

Hrg: March 15, 2018 at 10:00am at Capitol Room 329 I am writing in strong support of SB2398 SD2 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).

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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 SD2 and respectfully ask you to pass this measure out of committee.

Sincerely,  
Keawe Kaholokula  
Honolulu, HI 96826

**LATE**

March 15, 2018

To:

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

From:

Shelley Wong, Registered Dietitian (RD)

**RE: SUPPORT SB2398 SD2 - Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to support this measure. As a Registered Dietitian and first-year medical student at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, I am a strong advocate for promoting the health and nutrition of our local communities.

Purchasing healthy, fresh fruits and vegetables in Hawaii costs considerably more than less nutritious choices. Thus, low-income families and individuals may bypass adding fresh produce in their diets in order to stretch their food budget to fill their stomachs. As fruits and vegetables are critical for a healthy, fiber-filled, vitamin and mineral-rich diet, restricting these foods from the diet affects the health of individuals in both the short and long-term. This bill will increase the food access of fresh produce to low-income families and individuals, thus making the healthy diet choice easier, and possibly more cost-effective. Investing in the promotion of healthier lifestyles now will bring cost-savings for our state in the future by preventing the development of non-communicable chronic diseases associated with unhealthy diets.

Additionally, I support this bill as it will promote food security for our state by supporting local farmers and the local economy.

Mahalo for your consideration. I strongly urge you to pass this bill as a matching incentive program is beneficial for Hawaii's health and economic future.

Sincerely,

Shelley Wong, RD

**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/14/2018 9:24:42 AM

Testimony for HHS on 3/15/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair; the Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice-Chair and the Members of the House 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. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **SB2398 SD2** relating to the DOA; SNAP; Farmers Markets; Local Health Food Incentive Program; and an appropriation.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **SB2398 SD2** and support its passage.

**SB2398 SD2** 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 **SB2398 SD2** 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, Text/Tel.: (808) 258-8889







## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Committee on Health and Human Services

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Date: March 15, 2018

Where: State Capitol Room 329

### TESTIMONY

By Kamuela Cobb-Adams

**RE: SB 2398, SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalu Mizuno, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalu Kobayashi, a me nā Lālā o kēia Kōmike, aloha! My name is Kamuela Cobb-Adams and I serve as the O‘ahu Island Director of Regional Strategies for the Community Engagement and Resources Group of Kamehameha Schools.

We are writing to support SB2398 HD2, which requires the Department of Agriculture to create a farmers’ market matching program for beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

If enacted, this bill provides immediate financial support to low-income families that face difficult decisions on how to spend their limited dollars each day. The future impacts from better diet and nutrition are significant. The Hawai‘i Children’s Action Network estimates that \$470 million has been spent as a state on obesity-related medical costs, yet one in four kindergartners in Hawaii are overweight or obese. By gaining access to fresh, locally grown food, the health and wellness of our most vulnerable communities are addressed proactively, thereby reducing the long term healthcare costs to the state, increasing the overall health and wellness of Hawai‘i’s people and improving cognitive functions for children in classrooms.

This bill also provides farmers with an immediate opportunity to increase sales with customers that otherwise would not be able to purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables. As time passes, this immediate sales increase begins to translate into viability for a beloved but struggling profession with 60 years being the average age of Hawai‘i’s farmers. Given our statewide goals to increase local food production, implementing win-win programs as addressed in this bill would help the state by not only sustaining the current farmers but also attracting the next generation as well.

The Food Basket on Hawai‘i Island has successfully implemented a pilot of the same type of matching program defined in this bill. The dollar-for-dollar matching was deployed in a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program, a KTA Superstore POS (Point of Sale) program

and a farmers' markets program. In just four months, the programs resulted in \$40,000 in locally grown produce, \$20,000 of which was federal dollars staying in the state. The potential economic impacts are significant. On Hawai'i Island alone, the community coalition called Let's Make SNAP Happen estimated that as much as \$30 million in economic activity could be added to Hawaii Island's economy if SNAP participation increased to close to 100%.

Another exemplar on O'ahu is the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center's Makeke Farmers' Market in Waianae. Makeke was one of the first markets enabling SNAP recipients to use their EBT cards and had almost \$140,000 in SNAP sales last year, \$72,000 in fresh, local foods.

These short and long-term impacts to Hawai'i's families and farmers that would emerge from the passage of this bill are both meaningful and timely. O'ahu and Hawai'i Island pilots have shown that this type of programming works in our state.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an organization striving to advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

‘A‘ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia. No task is too large when we all work together! Mahalo nui



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

March 14, 2018

**Committee on Health and Human Services**

Representative John Mizuno, Chair

Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

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

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2398 SD2 - 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 SD2**, 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.

86-260 Farrington Highway, Waianae, Hawaii 96792-Telephone: (808) 697-3300 - Fax: (808) 697-3687  
Visit our website at: [www.wcchc.com](http://www.wcchc.com)