



## American Heart Association testimony in SUPPORT of SB 3051, "Relating to General Excise Tax Exemptions"

The American Heart Association supports SB 3051.

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.

SB 3051 would provide an exemption from the State GET to healthy food options eligible under SNAP. It would encourage those eligible for SNAP funding to eat healthy foods, which would result in improved public health.

The American Heart Association urges legislators to support SB 2398 and help reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables, and healthier beverages, 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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