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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that because of Hawaii's  
2 high cost of living and food prices, many low-income individuals  
3 and families struggle to purchase food. The supplemental  
4 nutrition assistance program, formerly known as the food stamp  
5 program, is a crucial means of providing necessary assistance in  
6 the purchasing of food for some of Hawaii's most disadvantaged  
7 citizens. In September 2016, 173,669 people in Hawaii  
8 participated in the supplemental nutrition assistance program,  
9 which is 5.1 per cent less participation than in September 2015.  
10 While Hawaii secures over \$500,000,000 annually in supplemental  
11 nutrition assistance program moneys, a 2014 report by the United  
12 States Department of Agriculture ranked Hawaii thirty-fourth  
13 among states in the percentage of eligible individuals that  
14 participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

15           The legislature also finds that if additional eligible  
16 individuals participated in the supplemental nutrition  
17 assistance program, the State could receive increased federal



1 funding. Additionally, Moody's Analytics estimates that every  
2 dollar given in supplemental nutrition assistance program funds  
3 can generate one dollar and seventy cents in the local economy.

4 The legislature further finds that many individuals who are  
5 eligible to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance  
6 program do not participate because they are unaware of the  
7 supplemental nutrition assistance program's existence or of  
8 their eligibility. Authorizing health care providers, non-  
9 profit organizations, businesses, and faith-based organizations  
10 to distribute supplemental nutrition assistance program  
11 applications to those in need may increase participation in the  
12 supplemental nutrition assistance program. Furthermore,  
13 authorizing health care providers to report to the department of  
14 human services an aggregate collection of data about state  
15 supplemental nutrition assistance program participation would  
16 allow the department of human services to aid policy makers in  
17 establishing plans to maximize federal funding and increase  
18 access to nutritious foods. Each of these outcomes would result  
19 in the State having more supplemental nutrition assistance  
20 program participants, which in turn would result in heightened



1 food security for low-income individuals and families, and more  
2 money flowing into the State's economy.

3 The purpose of this Act is to authorize health care  
4 providers, non-profit organizations, businesses, and faith-based  
5 organizations to distribute supplemental nutrition assistance  
6 program applications; provided that any organization that  
7 distributes supplemental nutrition assistance program  
8 applications shall maintain a record of the application  
9 distribution that shall be made available to the department of  
10 human services.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
12 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately  
13 designated and to read as follows:

14 "§346- Supplemental nutrition assistance program  
15 participation. (a) Health care providers, non-profit  
16 organizations, businesses, and faith-based organizations may  
17 distribute supplemental nutrition assistance program  
18 applications to prospective applicants.

19 (b) Health care providers, non-profits organizations,  
20 businesses, and faith-based organizations that provide  
21 supplemental nutrition assistance program applications to



1 prospective applicants shall maintain records of the  
 2 distribution of the supplemental nutrition assistance program  
 3 applications and shall make the records available to the  
 4 department upon request."

5 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

6 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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# H.B. NO. 40

**Report Title:**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; DHS; Applications; Records;

**Description:**

Authorizes health care providers, non-profit organizations, businesses, and faith-based organizations to distribute supplemental nutrition assistance program applications to prospective applicants. Requires any organization distributing supplemental nutrition assistance program applications to maintain records of the distribution that shall be made available to the Department of Human Services upon request.

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