

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

April 5, 2021

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 512 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.**

Hearing: Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 1:30 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill. DHS defers to the Department of Agriculture as to program development and implementation, and budget needs.

The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment made technical amendments and the Senate Committee on Ways & Means removed the appropriation section and defected the date. The House Committee on Agriculture passed the measure unamended and the House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness defected the date.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the double up food bucks program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Effective 7/1/2060.
(HD1)

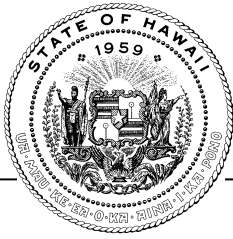
As of February 2021, 106,310 Hawaii households received SNAP benefits, a 33.6% increase since the pandemic started in March 2020. The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive

March 19, 2021

Page 2

Program dollar-for-dollar matching program helps SNAP participants increase their purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling the value of their benefits spent on Hawaii-grown fresh fruits and vegetables, supports local farmers, and keeps food dollars in the local economy.

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



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DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, April 7, 2021
1:30 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

in consideration of
SB 512, SD2, HD 1
**RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES.**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee:

The Office of Planning **supports** SB512, SD2, HD 1 that removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks program and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Office of Planning's newly-established Statewide Sustainability Program recently held a series of public meetings in the Fall of 2020 to update the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan, which was revised by Act 146, SLH 2019 to "serve as the state's climate and sustainability strategic action plan."

Through this timely statewide public outreach during the COVID-19 global pandemic and its corresponding economic impacts, Hawai'i residents raised the vital importance of and need for: community food security, access to locally-produced food, and the availability of USDA certified food processing facilities. The need to improve Hawai'i's local food production and rural community food security was prevalent in nearly every Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan public meeting.

This expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX Program) will help to increase SNAP beneficiaries' access to fresh and healthy dietary options and support the efforts of the agricultural industry. In addition to increasing fresh and healthy food options for hungry families, an expansion of the DA BUX Program will support economic revitalization efforts and household food security by incentivizing the purchase of locally produced foods.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 6:44:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
May Okihiro for Pioneering Healthier Communities of Honolulu	Pioneering Healthier Communities of Honolulu	Support	No

Comments:

RE: SB512 SD2 HD1

RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

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 and at risk for developing metabolic complications, such as diabetes. 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. Over the last year, healthcare providers have begun to see the dramatic rise in obesity as the pandemic has impact the lives of families, including their ability to access healthier foods and move and play as usual.

Making matters worse, many Hawaii residents, live at or near the poverty level and struggle to buy, prepare, and eat healthy foods. When the very high cost of living in Hawaii is considered, local residents have the 10th highest poverty rate in the Nation.

Programs that incentivize nutritious produce purchases among SNAP recipients, such as Hawaii’s “Da Bucks” programs, are an effective way to encourage more fruit and vegetable purchasing, reduce hunger and supporting healthy diets. The programs have been very popular and very successful in motivating community members to purchase

more fruits and vegetables but need ongoing resources. These programs also have positive economic, education, and environmental benefits for individuals, and communities.

As such, we strongly urge you to pass this Bill which will remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the “Da Bucks” program.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

May Okihiro

Daniel Leung

Tina Tamai

Diane Tabangay

Daniela Spoto

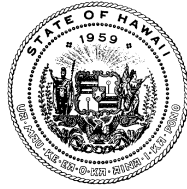
Paula Adams

Ray L'Heureux

Susie Chun Oakland

Stacy Evensen

John Mai



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
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doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 512, S.D. 2, H.D. 1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES**

REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: April 7, 2021

Room Number: Videoconference

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 priorities set forth
3 in the Executive Budget Request.

4 **Department Testimony:** The DOH supports Senate Bill 512, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1
5 (S.B. 512, S.D. 2, H.D. 1) to expand the double up food bucks program administered by the
6 DOA to make Hawaii-grown fruits and vegetables, and healthy proteins sold at farmers' markets
7 and grocery stores accessible to families or individuals who reside in this State and who receive
8 assistance through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This
9 measure would remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by
10 SNAP beneficiaries and adds healthy proteins to the program.

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

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

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

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

1 individuals.^{4,5} This bill expands the double up food bucks program and removes the \$10 per visit
2 per day cap enabling SNAP recipients to double their purchasing power when they use their
3 benefits to purchase local fruits and vegetables, and healthy proteins.

4 Nutrition incentive programs similar to the one proposed in this bill are prevalent around
5 the United States, with twenty-eight states currently implementing a double up food bucks
6 program. In Hawaii, less than one in five adults reported eating five or more fruits and
7 vegetables a day (2015 Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System). Hawaii has the highest
8 cost of living in the nation with food costs that are 82% higher than the national average.⁶
9 Nutrition incentives are often touted as a “win-win-win” for farmers, families, and local
10 businesses. Data from these interventions have shown improvements in dietary behaviors,
11 reduction in household hunger and food insecurity, and increased sales of local produce (by more
12 than their dollar value alone).^{7,8,9} As a result of previous efforts around double up food bucks
13 between 2018 and 2020, the number of all SNAP-participating households in Hawaii with access
14 to a double up food bucks retailer near their homes increased by 272%.¹⁰ By the end of 2020,
15 program expansion resulted in two-thirds (77%) of all SNAP-participating households having a
16 double up food bucks retailer within a reasonable shopping distance of their homes.¹¹ The DOH
17 supports S.B. 512, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 as one component of a comprehensive approach to improve the
18 availability and accessibility of healthy foods to improve health outcomes for people in Hawaii,
19 especially for those who face greater health disparities.

20 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

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

⁶ US Department of Agriculture: Official USDA Food Thrifty Plans.

⁷ Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up in Farmers’ Markets: The Consumer Experience*. Fair Food Network, 2015.

⁸ Mann, J., et al. *Economics of healthy food incentives at Michigan farmers markets: Study highlights*. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems, 2017.

⁹ Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up Food Bucks and Hunger*. Fair Food Network, 2015.

¹⁰ Buchthal, Vanessa. *Access to SNAP Double-Bucks Food Retailers triples for Hawaii’s SNAP-participating households between 2018 and 2020*. 2021

¹¹ Buchthal, Vanessa. *Access to SNAP Double-Bucks Food Retailers triples for Hawaii’s SNAP-participating households between 2018 and 2020*. 2021



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

LATE

April 7, 2021

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Lauren Moriguchi, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: S.B. No. 512 S.D. 2 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES
Hearing Date: Wednesday April 7, 2021
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: videoconference

Bill Description: Removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Effective 7/1/2060. (HD1)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent

Good morning. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of S.B. 512 S.D. 2 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Agriculture regarding program development and implementation.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children.

According to the Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, healthy eating in childhood is important for children's growth and development and prevents various health conditions. The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that children ages 2 years and older follow a healthy eating pattern that includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and a variety of protein foods. Unfortunately, reports indicate that most children do not follow the recommendations set forth in those guidelines.

When COVID-19 hit the islands, it was clear that food insecurity has affected many homes. Young children who experience food insecurity may be at higher risk for health ailments as well as developmental risks and behavioral problems, including aggression, anxiety, and depression. All these issues impact the growth and development of our youngest children, impacting their ability to learn.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nearly 170,000 Hawaii residents with monthly benefits to purchase food. Nationally, almost half of SNAP beneficiaries are children. The popular national model, Double Up Food Bucks, which matches the purchase of locally-grown produce for produce, not only allows families and children access to healthy, nutritious food, but also supports local farmers. Additionally, DHS has indicated that as of January 2021, Hawaii experienced a 30.6% increase in households receiving SNAP benefits since the pandemic started in March 2020.

Because the EOEL Public Pre-K Program prioritizes underserved and at-risk children, we work with educators and families in the Program and across the early childhood system by providing them with information on resources that can help support their children's health and well-being.

Recognizing the importance that nutrition plays in children's growth, development, and learning experiences, the EOEL supports the intent of this bill, which would expand healthier food options through the Double Up Food Bucks Program to eligible families and children, while supporting local farmers, and invests in the local economy.

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

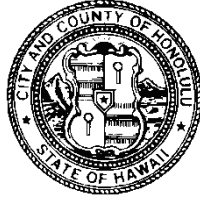
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR



SARAH ALLEN
DIRECTOR

JOY BARUA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Testimony of
JOY BARUA
Deputy Director
Department of Community Services

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, April 7, 2021 1:30 PM
Via Videoconference

Relating to SB 512 SD2 HD1– SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu Department of Community Services supports SB 512 SD2 HD1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program, and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Furthermore, makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to expand funding for the program.

According to the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services report, and as referenced in the State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture’s testimony dated February 5, 2021, there were 189,285 SNAP benefit recipients in December 2020, compared to 154,377 recipients in December 2019. This represents an increase of 19.54% attesting to the growing demand for food among our most vulnerable families in the State.

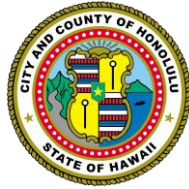
Therefore, removing the cap will not only increase the purchasing power of individuals and families to access fresh fruits and vegetables, but also support the local economy as more dollars are spent to address food security. Furthermore, the Bill will encourage increased leveraging of matching dollars and scaling of the Program for greater impact.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

M ATTHEW GONSER, AICP, CFM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7, 2021, 1:30 P.M.

STATE OF HAWAII
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 512, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

BY,

MATTHEW GONSER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu (City) Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR) **supports and offers comments on** Senate Bill 512, SD2, HD1 which expands the Double Up Food Bucks program administered by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture by removing the cap of \$10 per day in dollar-for-dollar match funding for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries through Double Up Food Bucks and expanding match funding eligibility to Hawai'i-grown healthy proteins.

In the O'ahu Resilience Strategy,¹ the community and City recognized the importance of an affordable future for our island with goals of reducing additional cost burdens and improving economic opportunity for residents. Additionally, with the passage of City Ordinance 20-47, CCSR is committed to encouraging community alignment to increase food security through its food security and sustainability program, especially to frontline communities that have historically lacked access to healthy and affordable local food supplies.

Prior to COVID-19, food insecurity was a persistent problem on O'ahu and throughout the State, and the pandemic has only exacerbated this issue. Per Aloha United Way's 2017 ALICE report, even when income, government assistance, and non-profit food assistance were combined, there was still a 29 percent gap in resources for all Hawai'i

1 City and County of Honolulu, *Ola: O'ahu Resilience Strategy*, <https://resilientoahu.org/resilience-strategy>.

households to meet the basic ALICE threshold for food, and eating less healthy food was among the main coping strategies for households struggling to remain food secure.² By making SNAP dollars go further on healthy, locally grown foods, SB512, SD2 HD1 can help not only fill that resource gap, but also help make healthy food more affordable and accessible to our low-income families.

Further, SB512, SD2, HD1 is essential to pandemic recovery efforts, complementing work being done at the City level to support the intersection of food assistance and local agriculture. The majority of O'ahu's farms—707 out of 927, or about 76 percent—are between one and nine acres, and the majority are family-owned.³ Investing state dollars in locally-grown produce through increasing the purchasing power of SNAP recipients will grow the economic viability and market penetration of these small local farmers, as well as other local agricultural institutions. In this way, SB512, SD2, HD1 supports local job retention and growth while strengthening the local food economy.

SB512, SD2, HD1 is therefore essential to supporting affordability through economic and food security measures while simultaneously circulating more dollars in the local economy. However, given the importance of the Double Up Food Bucks program, CCSR recommends including language that identifies a funding mechanism for this measure, by either reinserting language from the original version of this bill that appropriated an unspecified amount of funding to the program, or including language that allows the program to leverage additional, alternative sources of funding, such as (1) funds from federal, state, private, or other funding sources; and (2) investments from public or private investors. Without funding provisions, this bill will be unable to deliver on its promise to either our local agricultural producers or our low-income families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB512, SD2, HD1.

2 Aloha United Way, *ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Hawai'i*,
https://www.auw.org/sites/default/files/pictures/AlohaUnitedWayALICE%20Report_HIFINAL.pdf

3 United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2017). *2017 Census of Agriculture County Profile, Honolulu County, Hawaii*,
https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AqCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Hawaii/cp150_03.pdf.



American
Heart
Association.

**American Heart Association comments on SB 512, SD2, HD1
“Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives” with
suggested amendments**

Chairman of the Board

Glen Kaneshige

President

Michael Lui, MD

Board Members

Rick Bruno, MD, FACEP

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Michael Rembis, FACHE

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Serving Hawaii since 1948

Our Mission:

“To be a relentless force for a world
of longer,
healthier lives.”

For more information on the AHA’s
educational or research programs,
visit www.heart.org or contact your
nearest AHA office.

The American Heart Association supports the intent of SB 512, SD2, HD1 but suggests amendments. We ask that the original allocation of funding to maintain and potentially grow SNAP “Da Bux” programs be added back to the bill, and **that “healthy proteins” be more clearly defined.**

The Hawaii State Legislature in 2019 invested \$100,000 to supplement local grants to fund Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) incentive programs known in Hawaii as “Da Bux.” Da Bux supplements SNAP funding and incentivizes the purchase of locally grown fresh produce by SNAP recipients. The State’s investment was subsequently matched by an additional almost \$900,000 in local private grants and matched again through a federal GUSNIP matching grant bringing the total available for Da Bux programs to approximately \$2 million. By the end of 2020, program expansion resulted in more than two-thirds (77%) of all SNAP-participating households having a double-bucks retailer within a reasonable shopping distance of their homes. Then COVID-19 hit.

By Spring of 2020, the popular Da Bux funding was quickly being depleted as unemployment rates skyrocketed and more Hawaii residents became SNAP recipients. By summer, the American Heart Association and its health partners advocated to Governor Ige to supplement existing Da Bux funds with funding from federal CARES Act relief funding. In October, the Governor released an additional \$500,000 for the program which was again matched by local private grants. Even with that additional funding, Da Bux program funds are expected to be depleted by June 2021. Additional state funding, matchable by private grants and federal GUSNIP program matching funds (Congress recently allocated an additional \$75 million for matching funds) is needed to maintain, and potentially grow the program to make it available to a broader geographic area of Hawaii SNAP recipients. Currently, only Times and KTA supermarkets participate in the Da Bux program, along with some local farmers markets. Foodland Supermarkets has expressed interest in adding its 32 stores throughout the state to the program which would expand its availability to geographic areas currently not served, but additional program funds are needed for that to occur so as not to quickly deplete funds available for existing retail outlets.

The “Da Bux” program matches SNAP dollars spent on locally produced 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. Food markets participating in the program have seen increases in fresh produce sales. In addition, state supplemental funding would be potentially matched by federal funding adding yet another benefit to Hawaii’s investment in these important programs.

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 impacts health, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency, and 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, most 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 incentives provided through “Da Bux” programs are helping to change that.

The American Heart Association does recommend an amendment to Section 2 (b) in SB 512 that reads “to be used exclusively for the purchase of Hawaii—grown fresh fruits and vegetables, or healthy proteins that are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance as determined by the program,...” The Association feels that “healthy proteins” should be better defined to follow national dietary recommendations that limit consumption of proteins that can increase risk for heart disease and stroke.

American Heart Association guidance states:

“In general, red meats (beef, pork and lamb) have more [saturated \(bad\) fat](#) than chicken, fish and vegetable proteins such as beans. Saturated and trans fats can raise your blood cholesterol and make heart disease worse.

The unsaturated fats in fish, such as salmon, actually have health benefits. [Omega-3 fatty acids](#), found in fish and some plant sources, as part of a heart-healthy diet, can help reduce the risk of heart failure, coronary heart disease, cardiac arrest and the most common type of stroke (ischemic).

There are many types of beans – pinto, kidney, garbanzo, soybeans, etc. – and they’re all good for you.

Tips for People Who Like Meat

- *It's OK to eat meat as long as you limit the amount and choose healthier types.*
- *One portion of meat is two to three ounces or about the size of a deck of cards.*
- *Choose lean cuts of meat. Lean cuts usually contain the words "round," "loin" or "sirloin" on the package.*
- *Minimize processed red meats like bacon, ham, salami, sausages, hot dogs, beef jerky and deli slices."*

Therefore, **we suggest this policy language, based on federal guidelines, be used to define "healthy proteins" allowable under the Hawaii SNAP incentive program:**

"Healthy protein" means lean meats, lean poultry, eggs, seafood, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products, with no added sugar or sodium.¹ Lean meats and lean poultry is defined as any meat or poultry that contains less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fats, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 100 grams and per labeled serving size, based on the United States Department of Agriculture's definitions for food label use.²

1 U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020. Available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).

2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015. Available at <https://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>.

By incentivizing the purchase of proteins without defining which proteins are considered "healthy" there is a danger that SNAP recipients might overconsume unhealthy choices, thereby reducing the intended health effects of the original intent of the "Da Bux" program—to incentivize more consumption of healthy fresh produce. Better definition of which "healthy" proteins would be covered by "Da Bux" state funding would help to reduce that risk.

It's important to note that any state or private funding used to apply for federal matching funds would not be allowable for the purchase of proteins and would only be able to be used for the purchase of fresh produce, the original intent of the program. Federal funding would also be limited to the purchase of produce.

Finally, we understand that finding funding during this difficult budget crisis will be challenging. However, the recent passage of federal relief funding legislation is expected to help address the state's budget concerns. We hope, at minimum, that legislators will be able provide funding to maintain existing "Da Bux" programs through this budget cycle. The rough estimated total cost to maintain existing programs will be \$4,250,000 to support fruit and vegetables incentives discounts

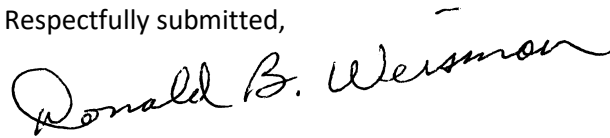
from July 2021-Aug 2023 (that figure could be met through combined state, private and federal funding). That would support approximately 12,500 Hawaii SNAP customers per month.

The estimated investment to add Foodland's 32 stores to the program will be \$7,240,000 to support fruit and vegetables incentives discounts from July 2021-Aug 2023. That would support a total of approximately 24,500 Hawaii SNAP customers per month.

The state Department of Human Services reported that the number of residents receiving SNAP benefits has risen from about 155,000 in 2019 to 179,000 in October 2020, a 15.4% increase.

The Association urges legislators to consider the American Heart Association's suggested amendments to SB 512, SD2 to 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". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Donald B. Weisman
Hawaii Government Relations/Communications Director



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facebook.com/AARPHawaii

**The State Legislature
The House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 7, 2020
1:30 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair

RE: S.B. 512 SD 2,HD 1 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a membership organization of people age fifty and over, with nearly 145,000 members in Hawai'i.

AARP Hawai'i supports S.B. 512, SD2, HD1 which expands the double up food bucks program administered by the Hawaii department of agriculture to make fresh fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets and grocery stores accessible to families or individuals who reside in this State and who receive assistance through the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program.

The COVID-19 pandemic amplified the food insecurity (a consistent lack of food due to inadequate financial resources) facing many kupuna who suddenly found themselves home-bound; unable to shop for groceries due to fear of exposure and facing empty grocery shelves from the panic buying, and loss of support from unemployed family members and access to congregate meal sites. However, we realize that many were struggling to purchase food even before the pandemic. Hawaii's high cost of living makes it difficult especially for people on fixed income in making ends meet.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is an important anti-hunger program and a vital lifeline for millions of Americans, including adults ages 50 and older at risk for food insecurity. In December 2020, there were over 189K SNAP recipients in Hawaii, a 20% increase from the year before. There are still more eligible individuals who could benefit from this program. Expanding this food assistance program through the double bucks program incentives double the purchasing power for healthy, Hawaii—grown produce, and while benefiting local farmers and Hawaii by keeping dollars in the local economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to support the intent of S.B. 512, SD2, HD 1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keali'i Lopez".

Keali'i Lopez, AARP Hawai'i



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

SB512 SD2 HD1

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 10:00 am

Via Videoconference

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB512 SD2** to allow for more dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries and to specify that healthy proteins are eligible for purchase. We support the healthy food incentive program and are proud to produce a healthy, highly nutritious protein. Beef is a healthy protein that provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children.

We appreciate the opportunity to support SB512 SD2.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



April 7, 2021

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: SB 512 SD2 HD1 – Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 512, SD2, HD1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the double up food bucks program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Effective 7/1/2060.

HMSA supports this program which expands access to healthy foods for low-income residents who are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits.

Thank you for allowing us to testify in support of SB 512 SD2 HD1.

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki
Director, Government Relations

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 1:30 PM
Via Video Conference

House Committee on Finance

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: **Testimony in Support of SB 512, SD2, HD1
Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

HPH writes in **support** of SB 512, SD2, HD1 which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries, also known as the double up food bucks program.

HPH recognizes the strong connection between access to healthy foods with health and wellness. Hawai'i Pacific Health was pleased to contribute a cash match to support the 2019-2021 GusNIP-funded Double Up Food Bucks incentive fund. We chose to support the program to both encourage strengthening local food systems and allowing snap recipients to access good nutrition.

Through the national double up food bucks program, Hawai'i has the opportunity to expand access to healthy foods for low-income residents who are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits. Fresh fruits and vegetables are an integral part of a healthy diet and central to the prevention of obesity and chronic disease. While every community should have access to fresh and healthy dietary options, the high cost of fresh produce often makes that difficult. This challenge is felt acutely by participants in the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program, a low-income population that struggles to afford healthy food. The double up food bucks program is a viable model that supports local farmers, helps low-income families that receive double the purchasing power for healthy, Hawaii-grown produce, and benefits Hawaii by keeping dollars in the local economy.

Expanding the double up food bucks program to make fresh fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets and grocery stores accessible to low-income residents who receive assistance through the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program is a holistic approach to supporting a healthier community as well as our local economy. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



April 5, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Support of SB 512, S.D.2, H.D.1 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Incentives (Removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program; specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program; effective 7/1/2060.)

Wednesday, April 7, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.; Conference Room 308 Via Videoconference

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of SB 512, S.D.2, H.D.1** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands in Hawaii. The bill demonstrates the need for, and benefit of collaboration amongst different sectors of the community - business, government, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together cooperatively to improve the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry.

SB 512, S.D.2, H.D.1. This purpose of this measure is to expand the Double Up Food Bucks Program administered by the DOA to remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries, thereby making fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets and grocery stores accessible to families or individuals who receive assistance through the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program.

LURF's Position. Expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks Program not only helps low-income Hawaii residents by promoting the consumption of healthy, locally grown food, but also assists farmers, ranchers and other stakeholders who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider incentives such as that proposed by this bill significant to the conduct of their operations to help sustain their businesses, as well as to increase local food self-sufficiency and significantly heighten local food production in this State.

As this Committee is aware, the unsustainable costs which have already been cast upon agricultural stakeholders over the past years by various safety and security standards, programs and regulations, as well as the enactment of onerous regulations relating to water systems, infrastructure, and growing and processing machinery and facilities, are now greatly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, proving to be overwhelming, if not devastating to the agricultural industry and the long-term objective of sustainable agriculture.

Agricultural stakeholders therefore believe SB 512, S.D.2, H.D.1 will assist in the effort to achieve long-term sustainability of Hawaii's food supply and economic growth.

By promoting consumption of healthy food, recognizing the significance of assisting the local agriculture industry, and implementing incentives which help to support the growth and maintenance of agriculture in the State, this bill significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii.

For the reasons stated above, LURF is in **support of SB 512, S.D.2, H.D.1**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.



April 7, 2021

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

**Senate Bill 512 SD2 HD1 – Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Incentives**

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Association of Health Plans (HAHP) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 512, SD2, HD1.

HAHP believes that the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables is an integral part of a healthy diet and central to the prevention of obesity and chronic disease. HAHP supports this program to expand access of healthy foods to low-income residents in our community.

Thank you for allowing us to testify expressing our support for SB 512, SD2, HD1.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee

cc: HAHP Board Members



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 512 SD2 HD1 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the intent of SB 512 SD2 HD1 relating to augmenting access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), by way of its Human Nutrition program, has responsibility for SNAP Education via the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), CTAHR Cooperative Extension Service. Therefore, CTAHR has a vested interest in this bill as it will affect our educational programs.

The State of Hawai'i, by initiating the Double Up Food Bucks program, made a significant impact on the health, nutrition, and poverty of citizens of Hawai'i. This current bill expands the value of the Double Up Food Bucks program by allowing recipients to use SNAP funds at a farmer's market, farm stand, mobile market, a community-supported agriculture project, grocery store or other direct retailer. Expanding access will only further assist those in need by making available more sources of nutritious food; while supporting Hawai'i agriculture. We recommend language be added to expand the use of SNAP resources at any of the food outlets mentioned above, when they are compliant with the food safety criteria of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Otherwise, the health objective of this bill could be compromised.

The bill's language says that the SNAP match can be used exclusively to buy Hawai'i-grown fresh fruits and vegetables. This puts an unrealistic onus on the recipient to search out specific sources of food. The primary purpose of the SNAP program is to effect the health and nutrition of those experiencing hard times. That should remain the main purpose of the SNAP and the Double Bucks program. We believe that assisting Hawai'i agriculture will be an obvious outcome when Hawai'i agriculture enhances its crop production.

UHM and CTAHR supports the intent of SB 512 SD2 HD1, but provides comments relative to food safety and the requirement to buy only Hawai'i-grown produce.

The University supports the intent of this bill as described above but is aware of the current financial climate of the State of Hawai'i and realizes that state funding is reduced. For the next fiscal biennium, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents approved a budget request for the University that was flat, and did not seek any increased funding to the University. UH defers to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture on their priorities.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Chair*
Charlie Gustafson, Tamura Super Market, *Vice Chair*
Eddie Asato, The Pint Size Corp., *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *Executive Director*
John Schlif, Rainbow Sales and Marketing, *Advisor*
Stan Brown, Acosta Sales & Marketing, *Advisor*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Beau Oshiro, C&S Wholesale Grocers, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

TO:
Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: April 7, 2021
TIME: 1:30pm
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: SB512 SD2 HD1 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

The Double Up Food Bucks program is important both as a means to support healthy eating, and as a way to support Hawaii's agricultural sector. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, food insecurity in our state is at unprecedented levels, at the same time the local agricultural sector has suffered disproportionate economic losses. Now is the ideal time to expand this program and removing the \$10 per visit cap is a simple way to make sure that Hawaii families and Hawaii farmers can maximize the benefits of the Double Up Food Bucks initiative.

Fruits, vegetables, and healthy proteins tend to be more expensive per calorie than less healthy foods, which makes eating healthy a challenge for those with limited food budgets. Doubling the purchasing power for SNAP users and removing the \$10 cap makes it easier to choose fruits, vegetables, and healthy proteins when shopping. Data has shown that families use the Double Up Food Bucks Program eat more fruits and vegetables, a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, and fewer unhealthy foods like chips and cookies. Getting more fruits

and vegetables for each SNAP dollar also means that low-income families will have more in their budget to spend on things like housing and healthcare.

By prioritizing locally grown agricultural products this program also helps Hawaii farmers and encourages retailers to stock Hawaii grown produce and protein. Removing the cap means greater benefits for local farmers and further incentives local retailers to stock more local fruits, vegetables, and meats. This helps promote a resilient circular food economy where local farmers are selling to local stores that sell to local customers.

Each dollar spent in this program goes into Hawaii's agricultural sector and circulates from there into the larger local economy. This is a win for SNAP users, a win for Hawaii farmers, a win for Hawaii retailers, and a win for Hawaii's economy.

We urge you to vote yes on this measure and remove the cap so that SNAP users and Hawaii farmers can get the maximum benefits from this program. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association
Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council
Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation
Hawai'i Farmers' Union United
Hawai'i Food Industry Association
Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association
Kohala Center
Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i
Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)
Ulupono Initiative
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources - University of Hawai'i at Manoa

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
April 7, 2021 – 1:30 P.M. - Videoconference

RE: SB 512 SD2 HD1 - Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives – In Support

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee:

The Local Food Coalition strongly supports SB 512 SD2 HD1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar for dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program, and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

This collaborative program helps low-income residents afford more locally-grown fruits and vegetables by providing a one-to-one match for every dollar of SNAP benefits spent at participating locations. Removing the cap and including healthy proteins will assist not only SNAP beneficiaries, which have increased in number, but also local farmers and ranchers who have suffered financially due to the pandemic. SB 512 SD2 HD1 helps sustain our agricultural workforce and operations.

This proven and successful incentive program has been implemented in more than 25 states and promotes healthy eating among Hawaii's low-income families.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprising of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

We respectfully request your support of SB 512 SD2 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

John Garibaldi
808-544-8319
jgaribaldi@wik.com



Kamehameha Schools®

House Committee on Finance

Date: April 7, 2021

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

TESTIMONY

By Pia Chock

Strategy Consultant, Community & 'Āina Resiliency Group

RE: **SB 512, SD2, HD1 - Relating to a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

E ka Luna Ho'omaluku, ka Hope Luna Ho'omaluku Cullen, a me nā Lālā o kēia Kōmike, aloha!

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS SB 512, SD2, HD1**, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program and specifies eligibility for healthy proteins under the program.

Considering the current state of Hawai'i's communities and economy, we believe the Double Bucks program is a timely, strategic investment that will assist our most vulnerable, while stimulating economic recovery and long-term community resilience. It is for this reason that, in 2020, along with Ulupono Initiative, Kamehameha Schools contributed to a matching funds campaign that supports the program.

We believe our educational mission is best achieved in a society that supports and enables the success of our learners. One significant component of such a society is a sustainable, local food system. The Double Up Food Bucks Program advances this goal by making locally-grown fruit and vegetables more available to low-income residents. In doing so, the program enables healthier eating choices; reduces rural food deserts; promotes local agricultural products, thereby keeping food dollars in the local economy; creates jobs and economic opportunity; increases the customer base, sales and profits, and marketing reach for farmers; and builds community food self-reliance. Removing the \$10 cap and expanding product eligibility to healthy proteins will extend the reach of these benefits.

Accordingly, we kindly request you **PASS SB 512, SD2, HD1**.

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. Mahalo nui!



949 Kamokila Boulevard, 3rd Floor, Suite 350, Kapolei, HI 96707
808.675.7300 | www.ohanahealthplan.com

April 7, 2021
1:30 p.m.
Via Videoconference
Conference Room 308

To: The Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke
The Honorable Vice Chair Ty J.K. Cullen
House Committee on Finance

From: 'Ohana Health Plan
Rachel Wilkinson, Government Affairs Sr. Manager

Re: SB 512 SD2 HD1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Incentives; **In Support**

'Ohana Health Plan offers our **support** of SB 512 SD2 HD1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

'Ohana Health Plan is a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, a leading multi-national healthcare enterprise committed to helping people live healthier lives. Since 2008, 'Ohana Health Plan has provided government-sponsored managed care services to families—from keiki to kupuna—and individuals with complex medical needs primarily through QUEST Integration (Medicaid), Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans across the state.

As a Medicaid health insurer, many 'Ohana Health Plan members qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Hawaii Medicaid program saw an increase in enrollment due to the economic downturn. In December 2020, Hawaii had the highest unemployment rate in the nation at 9.3 percent. There were also more than 189K low-income SNAP recipients in the state, which is a 20 percent increase from 2019.

The Double Up Food Bucks program offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawaii during the pandemic:

1. It makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families.

2. It supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
3. It stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

The removal of the \$10 cap will encourage increased spending of SNAP dollars on local foods. SNAP spending helps to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as these food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities and are federal dollars entering the state's economy. These dollars ripple throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Each SNAP dollar has an economic multiplier of 1.79, which means every SNAP dollar spent at food retailers contributes \$1.79 to Hawaii's economy.

Each free DA BUX incentive dollar issued has an economic multiplier of 2.3, which means every incentive dollar spent at food retailers contributes \$2.30 to Hawaii's economy.

While \$10 of State funding can purchase a SNAP household \$20 of local produce, Hawaii families can benefit from a higher cap as many struggle to feed multiple-generation households and to afford higher-priced cultural foods like 'ulu, taro leaves, and poi. Additionally, families are needing to purchase food in larger quantities per grocery visit as a result of the pandemic—they are minimizing their trips to the grocery store to minimize their exposure to COVID-19 and are needing to purchase enough food to last them until their next grocery visit.

We urge you to pass SB 512 SD2 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 4:51:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaikea K. Blakemore	Neighborhood Place of Puna	Support	No

Comments:

Support



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO

DATE: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 (1:30 p.m., Conference Rm. 308)

RE: **IN SUPPORT OF SB 512, SD2, HD1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been serving people in need in the State of Hawaii since 1947.

CCH supports SB 512, SD2, HD1, which would increase access to nutritious food for low income individuals by: 1) removing the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar for dollar match provided by the "Da Bux" Program, and 2) allowing healthy proteins to be eligible purchases.

CCH provides services for over 4,000 older adults each year. Its Benefits Enrollment Center and Case Management Programs assist low-income older adults to enroll in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Our Transportation Services also transports older adults from many senior affordable housing projects regularly to go to neighborhood grocery stores so that they may purchase food.

The \$10 per visit per day cap is limiting for older adults who have few transportation options and need to maximize their infrequent visits to the market to meet their nutritional needs. This is a particular concern during the current COVID-19 pandemic, when CDC and other governmental advice to seniors continues to be to remain cautious and avoid unnecessary contact with people outside their household.

Protein is an essential part of our diet. It helps build additional muscle needed for balance and stability. This is especially critical for older adults who tend to lose more muscle as they age. More buying power to get healthy protein into the diets of low-income individuals and families, particularly older adults, supports good health and will lead to reduced health care cost and better quality of life.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i asks for your support of SB 512, SD2, HD1. For more information or questions, please feel free to email Diane Terada, Division Administrator, at diane.terada@catholiccharitieshawaii.org or call her via phone at 527-4702.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.





HAWAI'I COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
And Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Micah Kāne, Chief Executive Officer & President
Hawai'i Community Foundation

Re: Testimony in Support of SB512 SD2 HD1
Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives
Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021
Time: 1:30 P.M.
Place: Via Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen and members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Micah Kāne, President & CEO of the Hawai'i Community Foundation. I am submitting this testimony in SUPPORT of SB512 SD2 HD1 that removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar—for—dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries through the Double Up Food Bucks Program and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. This bill would also make an appropriation to the State Department of Agriculture to expand funding of the program.

The Double Up Food Bucks Program allows the State of Hawai'i to receive federal matching dollars that directly benefit low-income households and local farmers by doubling the purchasing power of these households when they purchase locally grown food, and believe that the incentive to purchase Hawaii-grown fresh fruits and vegetables and healthy proteins are beneficial to the participants and the local agricultural industry.

As we at the Hawai'i Community Foundation work to bring the philanthropic community as a collaborative partner to the efforts of government, the private sector, healthcare and others who continue to serve those who need assistance during the pandemic, we are supportive of measures like this. These collective efforts are necessary to help accelerate the recovery of our entire statewide community.

We strongly support SB512 SD2 HD1 and look forward to further discussion on the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, April 7, 2021 — 1:30 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative strongly supports SB 512 SD 2 HD 1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives.

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

Ulupono strongly supports SB 512 SD 2 HD 1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. This bill also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program is statutorily housed within the Department of Agriculture, who has partnered with The Food Basket to administer the program. This program is designed to increase SNAP household purchases of locally grown fruits and vegetables at grocery stores, farmers markets, mobile markets, retail outlets, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) subscriptions statewide. DA BUX, as the program has been labeled, has been instrumental in supporting local families, farmers and ranchers, and the economy during natural disasters and times of emergency, as has been the case during this pandemic. With increased SNAP eligibility due to unemployment and economic struggles, DA BUX incentives increased exponentially throughout 2020, starting at \$9,943 in January to \$164,678 in December (\$27,491 was attributed to expansion of DA BUX to include ground beef and eggs with CARES/philanthropic funds). Attached to our testimony is a 3-page flyer that sheds some light into the benefits of the program.

We recognize that you face many difficult decisions this year to balance the budget in the midst of this economic crisis, but we hope that this support for local agriculture and those suffering from hunger in our community can be considered. We strongly support moving

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



the program policy amendments through during this session and would appreciate any consideration of funding should any opportunity arise.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

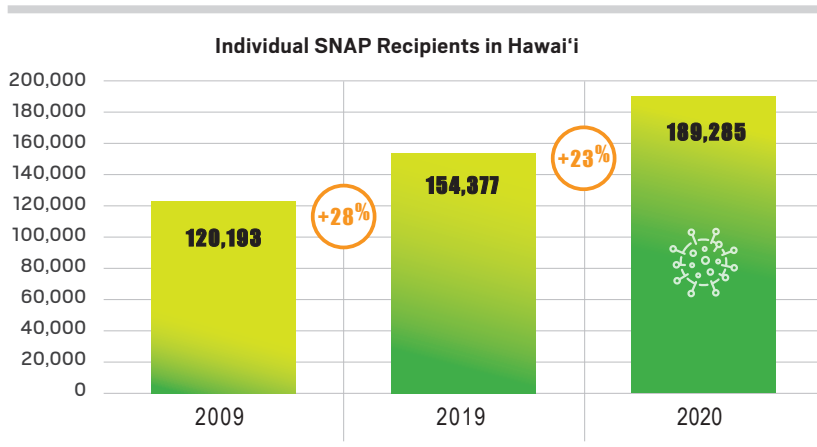
Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Attachment

SNAP DA BUX Expansion Proposal

Feeding communities by uplifting local farmers

HAWAI'I IMPORTS APPROXIMATELY 90% of its food and has food costs that are 82% higher than the national average. Dependence on food imports threatens the sustainability of food producers throughout the islands and places the entire population directly at risk of food shortages in the event of pandemics, natural disasters, and economic disruptions. Furthermore, with the highest cost of living in the nation, Hawai'i has the highest unemployment rate at 9.3%, and 11% of its population received *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program* (SNAP) before the pandemic.



THE PROBLEM

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting unprecedented unemployment, there has been an enormous increase in SNAP participation and significant losses sustained by local farmers. Due to loss of employment and income, the actual increase of individual SNAP recipients in the state was nearly 35,000, representing a 23% increase. Meanwhile, Hawai'i's local agricultural food producers are losing an estimated \$2 million in sales per week as a result of the shutdown of restaurants and hotels. This situation creates a significant need to help feed low income families AND support local agricultural food producers.



THE SOLUTION

Invest **\$2.5 million** of state funds to bring in additional federal funds in order to expand and extend the statewide DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program. In fall 2020, a combined commitment of \$500,000 from philanthropic partners was matched by the State of Hawai'i – thereby raising a total of \$1 million to grow the existing DA BUX program. **Based on the projected spend down rate, current funding of the DA BUX program will last through June 2021.**



By the Numbers

- 90%** Imported Food
- 82%** Higher Food Costs
- 1st** Highest Unemployment Rate in the Nation
- 11%** Received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Before COVID-19

PROJECT CONCEPT

The program offers SNAP participants a DA BUX Access Card or voucher at point of sale that doubles their purchasing power when they buy locally grown fruits and vegetables – \$10 of SNAP benefits would be worth \$20 of Hawai'i grown produce. Thus, each \$1 funded into the program provides \$2 worth of local food purchases.



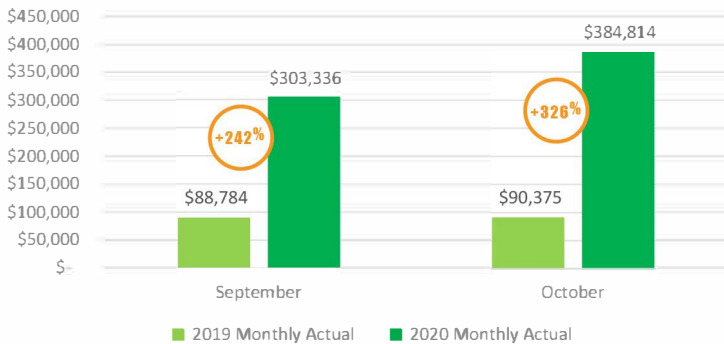
Potential Impact: \$23 million

A \$2.5 MILLION INVESTMENT OF STATE FUNDS toward DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks can potentially generate an economic impact of \$23 million and spur 3x additional funding that supports local farmers (\$7.5 million).

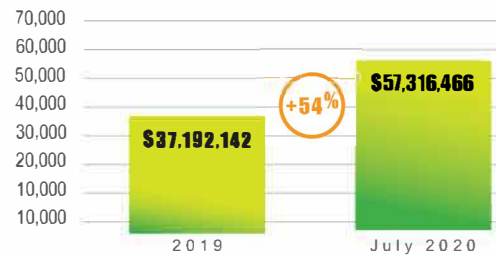
State funding	\$ 2,500,000
Federal GusNIP grant	\$ 2,500,000
Total funding for DA BUX	\$ 5,000,000
Federal SNAP purchase	\$ 5,000,000
Total funding for SNAP & DA BUX	\$ 10,000,000
Economic multiplier	2.3
Potential economic impact	\$ 23,000,000
State funding leverage ratio	3.0x

Based on September and October 2020 data, participating local grocers experienced a significant increase in sales of local fruits and vegetables paid with SNAP benefits and DA BUX incentives compared to 2019.

Monthly Grocer Sales of DA BUX Qualifying Local Fruits & Vegetables Purchased with SNAP Benefits²



Monthly SNAP Benefits Paid for Hawai'i SNAP Participants



SNAP participation and SNAP benefits in Hawai'i sharply increased due to COVID-19, which is consistent with national numbers.¹

9th

highest poverty rate (13.4% of the population living at or below the poverty line)

23%

increase in the number of individuals in Hawai'i receiving SNAP benefits

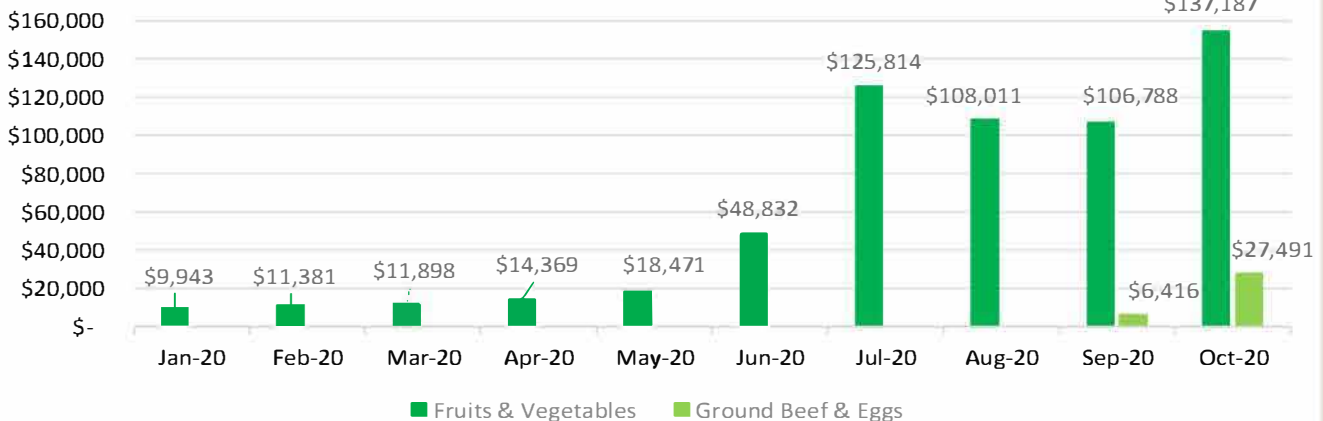
54%

increase in the monthly total amount of SNAP benefits paid in Hawai'i (\$57.3 million in benefits paid in July 2020)

14x

increase in the monthly total of DA BUX incentives redeemed (\$164,678 in incentives redeemed in October 2020)

Monthly Total DA BUX Incentives Redeemed in 2020




¹ Peter G. Peterson Foundation. <https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2020/09/how-has-the-coronavirus-pandemic-affected-federal-spending-on-snap>

² The list of qualifying items was expanded in 2020.

PROJECT BENEFITS

The statewide expansion of the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program is a triple-win.

Triple-Win Solution

		
Helps Low-Income Families	Helps Farmers	Helps Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Doubles purchasing power ✓ Improves access to affordable and healthy Hawai'i grown produce ✓ Potentially reduces diet-related health problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expands customer base ✓ Increases sales and farm profits ✓ Stimulates farm expansion in both acreage and crop diversity to meet increased demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keeps food dollars in the local economy ✓ Builds community food self-reliance & improves disaster resilience ✓ Creates economic opportunities and stimulates the local economy

Furthermore, state funds generate significant leverage:

- Spur 3x additional funding that supports local farmers
- \$2.5 million can be matched by \$2.5 million in federal dollars from a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) grant, and \$5.0 million from SNAP purchases, resulting in \$10 million going toward local food purchases



- Stimulate economic activity while advancing the State of Hawai'i's objective of doubling local food production by 2030

OBJECTIVES

1. To increase SNAP household purchases of Hawai'i-grown fruits and vegetables at grocery stores
2. To increase SNAP household purchases of Hawai'i-grown fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, mobile markets, and other produce retailers
3. To increase SNAP household purchases of community-supported agriculture (CSA) subscriptions exclusively sourced from Hawai'i farms

OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONS

The table below discusses the key partners and their roles/responsibilities.

Role	Organization(s)	Background	Responsibilities
Fiscal sponsor	The Food Basket (TFB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awarded a USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant in 2017 to launch DA BUX on Hawai'i Island - Distributed \$285,000 in benefits and served more than 5,000 households - In 2019, awarded a \$1.9 million grant from the USDA in partnership with HGFA to expand the program throughout the state over a two year period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administers the funds and provides program oversight and management - Reimburses retail outlets for DA BUX benefits redeemed
32 participating grocery stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KTA Super Stores; - Times Supermarkets; - Wai'anae Store/Supermarket; - Nakakuli Super 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KTA: First grocery store in the state to implement DA BUX - Times: First statewide grocery chain to implement DA BUX 	Process DA BUX transactions for local food purchases by SNAP recipients in their stores
Community implementation partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hawai'i Department of Health; - Hawai'i Department of Agriculture; - local health advocacy organizations - Hawai'i Community Foundation; - Hawai'i Appleseed 	A health and wellness advocacy and support team	Assists the program with the following: 1) Evaluation, 2) Advocacy and Outreach, 3) Nutrition and Gardening education, 4) Advertising/Promotion, 5) Health & Wellness education, and 6) Convening
Community-based organizations coordinating logistics statewide	Hawai'i Good Food Alliance (HGFA)	A grassroots-driven statewide coalition of organizations and leaders working to collectively re-build thriving community food systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assists with recruiting new retailers - Provides mentoring and onboarding technical assistance for participating retailers statewide



To: The House Committee on Finance
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 1:30pm

In strong support of SB512 SD2 HD1

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Finance committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. On behalf of our 6,000 members and supporters, 350Hawaii.org **strongly supports SB512 SD2 HD1.**

The Double Up Food Bucks Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh local produce. SB512 SD2 HD1 will help 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.

Expanding this successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families and our local economy, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping produce in.

Please pass SB512 SD2 HD1 so that we can reap all these benefits!

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this very important bill.

Sherry Pollack

Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



April 6, 2021

To: Chair Luke
Vice Chair Cullen
House Committee on Finance

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for SB512 SD2 HD1**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB512 SD2 HD1, relating to supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) incentives. Blue Zones Project was brought to Hawai'i by HMSA to help increase overall well-being of our communities and to make Hawai'i a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play. To accomplish that goal, we work to lower rates of obesity, tobacco use, and chronic disease.

Blue Zones Project supports SB512 SD2, which would increase equitable access to healthy foods by removing the \$10 per visit, per day cap and allowing SNAP funds to go towards purchasing local proteins.

In Hawai'i and across the country, access to fresh fruits and vegetables can be a major financial challenge, preventing many low-income families from incorporating these foods into their diets. We also know that diet-related diseases are disproportionately higher in low-income communities. Through both the USDA guidelines and multiple studies, fresh fruits and vegetables have extensive health benefits; fruits and vegetables supply dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals that function as antioxidants, phytoestrogens, and anti-inflammatory agents.^{1,2}

The Double Up Food Bucks incentive program is helping hundreds of families by reducing major barriers to fresh fruits and vegetables, while also supporting the economy.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of **SB512 SD2 HD1**.

Sincerely,

Colby Takeda, MPH, MBA
Senior Manager

¹ Slavin, J. L. & Lloyd, B. (2012). Health benefits of fruits and vegetables. *Advanced Nutrition*, 3(4).

² USDA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2010. 7th ed. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; 2010.



Hawaii
Children's Action Network Speaks!
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

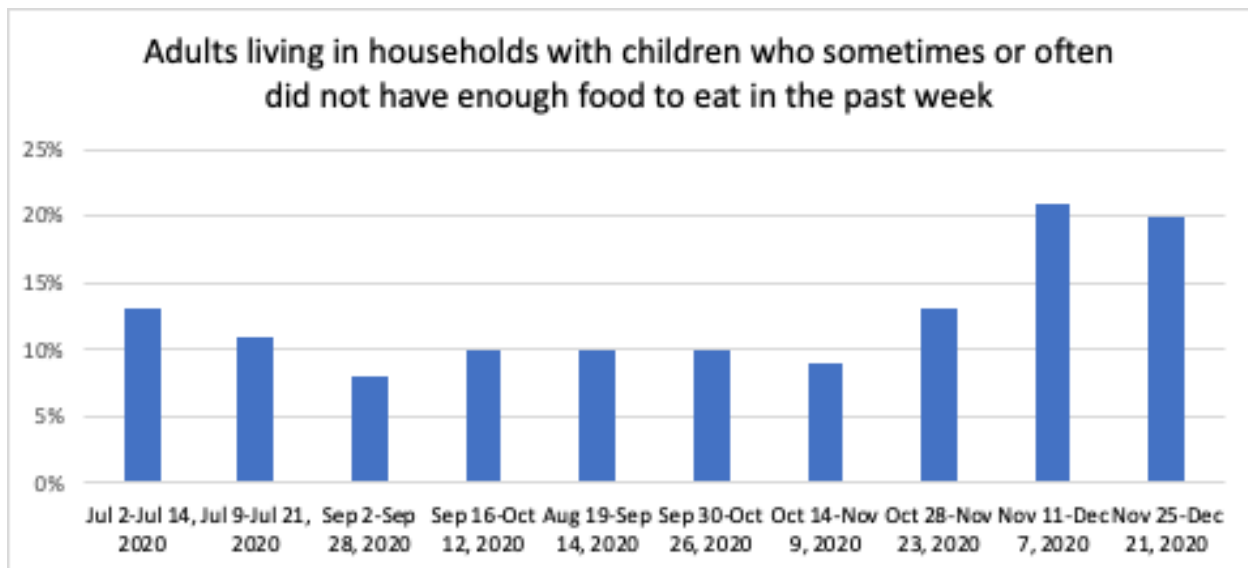
Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Representative Luke, Chair
Representative Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: **SB 512 SD2 HD1- Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**
1:30 PM, April 7, 2021

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support of Senate Bill 512 SD2 HD1**, relating to the supplemental nutrition assistance program. DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks has been a successful program to increase households purchasing of produce, supporting our local farmers, and stimulating the economy. During this time of economic upheaval, many families are experiencing food scarcity like never before. According to the Census Household Pulse Survey, Hawaii has seen increased food insecurity since the start of the pandemic. About 1 in 5 adults with children in their households reported not having enough to eat in the last weeks of the year.



The Double Up program helps families purchase fresh produce with twice the purchasing power. Families' food budgets go farther, and the economy sees the benefit. We have an opportunity to build on the success of the Double Up program and help families during this difficult time. We respectfully request the committee vote favorably on the bill and pass the measure out. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 512 SD2 HD1.

For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests that your committee vote to pass this bill.

Kathleen Algire

Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

850 Richards Street, Suite 201 • Honolulu, HI 96813 • 808-531-5502 www.Hawai'i-can.org • info@Hawai'i-can.org

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 7:07:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair, The Honorable Ty Cullen, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **SB512 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.**

Hearing: Thursday, April 7, 2021, 1:30 p.m., CR 308 and by videoconference

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i is a group focused on reversing the climate crisis and encouraging Hawai'i to lead the world towards a safe and sustainable climate and future. **The Climate Protectors Hawai'i strongly supports SB512 SD2 HD1!**

As a tropical island State, Hawai'i will be among the first places harmed by the global climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective coral reefs, food insecurity, and rising sea levels destroying our shorelines. Hawai'i can and should be a leader in showing the world how to achieve a safe and sustainable climate and future. The sooner we lead by example and inspire others to take action, the better off the future will be for our children. We must do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint and become carbon negative as soon as possible.

SB512 SD2 will help 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. Expanding this successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families and our local economy, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from importing produce.

Please pass SB512 SD2 HD1! Mahalao!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 1:30 P.M.
Written Testimony**

**RE: SB 512, SD 2, HD 1, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 512, SD 2, HD 1 which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. It also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Double Up Food Bucks program is important both as a means to support healthy eating and as a way to support Hawaii's agricultural sector. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, food insecurity in our state is at unprecedented levels. At the same time the local agricultural sector has suffered disproportionate economic losses. Now is an ideal time to expand the Double Up Food Bucks Program and remove the \$10 per visit cap to make sure that Hawaii families and Hawaii farmers can maximize the benefits of the initiative.

For instance, by prioritizing local produce this program helps Hawaii farmers and encourages retailers to stock Hawaii grown produce. Removing the cap means greater benefits for local farmers and further incentives local retailers to stock more local fruits and vegetables; thus, promoting a resilient circular food economy where local farmers are selling to local stores that sell to local customers.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 7, 2021; 1:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0512, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, 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. 0512, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would expand the successful Double Up Food Bucks Program (Program) by:

- (1) Eliminating the \$10 per visit per day cap on benefits received; and
- (2) Allowing healthy proteins to be purchased under the Program.

This bill would also take effect on July 1, 2020, to facilitate further discussion.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved 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 healthcare.

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. With so many people unemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis. All one needs to do is visit one of our member FQHC's food distribution events and see the line of cars stretch for miles and people wait for hours to receive some surplus food.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0512, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1
Wednesday, April 7, 2021; 1:30 p.m.
Page 2

The HPCA has gone on the record in support of this Program in previous years. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated the need for this Program. Additional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for a recipient might mean the difference between having to decide whether someone's last amount of cash will go for food or rent or medication or other necessities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



ALOHACARE

Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 1:30PM

To: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Senior Public Policy Analyst, External Affairs

RE: **SB512 SD2 HD1 SUPPORT** Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of SB512 SD2 HD1. This measure would expand the Double Up Food Bucks Program administered by the Department of Agriculture established in 2020, which enables SNAP recipients to double their purchasing power through a dollar for dollar match when they buy locally grown produce.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving 73,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. It is the only state health plan exclusively serving Medicaid patients. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating access to quality health care for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person care, including access to housing and food security, to build a stronger, healthier Hawaii.

The Double Up Bucks program has been especially critical during the pandemic. As of December 2020, there were 189,000 SNAP recipients, an increase of more than 20% from the previous year, and this number continues to rise. The program enables individuals and families to increase their ability to purchase healthy foods, generates income for local farmers, and benefits our local economy. By the end of 2020, program expansion resulted in more than 77% of all SNAP-participating households having a double bucks retailer within a reasonable shopping distance of their homes.

Statewide success has been a collaborative effort. All who contributed believe that healthy people are the fabric of strong, healthy communities. A variety of local funders contributed \$500,000, matching the state's \$500,000. That \$1M was matched by the federal government. In total, \$500,000 turned into \$2M for purchasing healthy, local foods, helping families, and positively impacting our local economy. Each \$1 SNAP generates \$1.79 of economic activity, which means \$2M generates \$3.58M of economic activity.

In the spirit of collaboration, we respectfully request for this committee to please consider reinserting the appropriation section in order to increase the fiscal amount that would be eligible for federal matching funds.

SB512 SD2 HD1 removes the \$10 cap per day and allows for the purchase of local, SNAP eligible healthy proteins. This measure increases a consumer's purchasing power, and it increases the money to local farmers, all of which positively impacts our local economy. Most importantly it increases access to healthy foods supporting Hawaii's families enabling them to more easily choose health for themselves and their families.

SNAP participation has increased drastically in the past year. In a time, when so many are faced with a multitude of health challenges, increasing access to healthy foods is critical. We hope that you support the health our state by passing SB512 SD2 HD1 to ensure this important program will continue to serve our community.

Mahalo for considering SB512 SD2 HD1.

1357 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1250, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Call: 973-0712 • Toll-free: 1-877-973-0712 • Fax: 808-973-0726 • www.AlohaCare.org



Date: April 6, 2021

To: House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for SB512, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Incentives

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners are working to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS strongly supports passage of SB512, which would continue and expand the Double Up Food Bucks (Da Bux) program, which makes it possible for low-income families to access healthy and nutritious food. Da Bux matches 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. Food markets participating in the program have seen increases in fresh produce sales. In addition, state supplemental funding would be potentially matched by federal funding adding yet another benefit to Hawai'i's investment in these important programs.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nearly 170,000 residents of Hawai'i monthly benefits to help purchase nutritious food. The Department of Human Services has indicated that the number of families in Hawai'i relying on SNAP benefits has increased by more than 30% since the start of the pandemic. Nationally, almost half of SNAP beneficiaries are children.

As our colleagues at the American Heart Association note, programs like Da Bux 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. Healthy and nutrition foods are particularly important for young children. The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend

that children ages 2 years and older follow a healthy eating pattern that includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and a variety of protein foods.

SB512 is a significant positive step in helping Hawai'i build back better from the pandemic and provides a proven support to the state's population of families and children. For these reasons, ECAS supports its passage.

We thank you for your consideration of this measure.



HIPHI Board

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*Misty Pacheco, DrPH
University of Hawai'i at Hilo,
Department of Kinesiology and
Exercise Sciences*

*Garret Sugai
Kaiser Permanente*

Date: April 6, 2021

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Re: Strong Support for SB 512, SD2, HD1, Relating to Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: April 7, 2021 at 1:30 PM via Videoconference

The Obesity Prevention Task Force, a program of Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ, is in **Strong Support of SB 512, SD2, HD1**, which expands the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program by allowing the program to include healthy local proteins and removing the daily \$10 cap.

While the current bill has no appropriation, if funds were allocated, **federal matching funds could be pursued** through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). Continued state investment is important for program sustainability, and a \$2.5M allocation would allow the program to expand to new retailers in the state, increasing accessibility to the program.

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for families, farmers, and the local economy.

The Hawai'i Healthy Food incentive program, also known as DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks (DA BUX), provides a dollar-for-dollar match on locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients. Through this program, low-income families are able to bring home healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and bring in more income, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

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.

While a \$10 match can purchase a SNAP household \$20 of local produce, Hawai'i families can benefit from a higher cap. Many struggle to feed multiple-generation households and to afford higher-priced cultural

foods like 'ulu, taro leaves, and poi. During the pandemic, families are purchasing food in larger quantities as they reduce their trips to the grocery store to minimize their exposure to COVID-19.

DA BUX provides a strong return on investment.

In 2019, the Hawai'i State Legislature provided \$100,000 in funding to expand the DA BUX program statewide. This small investment grew to a nearly \$2 million through matches from philanthropic organizations and federal government. This funding allowed the program to expand to over 60 new retail locations, greatly increasing SNAP participants' access to the program. After the expansion, more than two-thirds (77%) of all SNAP-participating households having a Double Up Food Bucks retailer within a reasonable shopping distance of their homes, a 272% increase from 2018 to 2020ⁱⁱ.

SNAP itself is a program that is proven to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as the food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities. These dollars ripple out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. SNAP dollars have a multiplier effect, meaning that just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activityⁱⁱⁱ. In 2020 alone, DA BUX food retailers issued over \$978,000 of incentive discounts, translating to \$1.9 million in local food purchases. Removing the \$10 daily cap will encourage increased spending of SNAP dollars on local food.

The demand for DA BUX has risen significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hawaii's tourism-dependent economy has been devastated by the pandemic, with the highest rate of unemployment in the nation at 9.3% in December 2020^{iv}. There has also been a dramatic uptick in SNAP recipients – over 189,000 SNAP recipients in the state, a 20% increase from the year before^v. In December 2020, SNAP sales of incentivized local produce at 30 participating DA BUX grocery stores increased 167% compared to 2019 average sales.

DA BUX's focus on locally grown produce helps to feed hungry families healthy foods while supporting the local agricultural industry. The pandemic has created a paradox where food producers saw a decrease in revenue as tourism industry-dependent hotels and restaurants closed, while food banks faced unprecedented demand from the thousands of unemployed workers. Studies have found that a lack of food security is associated with diet-related chronic disease such as diabetes and high blood pressure^{vi}. Supporting local agriculture also aligns with the renewed calls to increase local food production and decrease Hawaii's dependence on imported goods for a more sustainable and resilient food system.

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for health, agriculture, and the local economy, and is a lifeline for many during the pandemic. We are in strong support of this measure and respectfully ask you to **pass SB 512, SD2, HD1** out of committee.

Mahalo,



Jaylen Murakami
Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 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.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

ⁱⁱ Buchthal OV. (2021). "Access to SNAP Double-Bucks Food Retailers triples for Hawai'i's SNAP-participating households between 2018 and 2020," evaluation brief prepared for the Hawaii Department of Health SNAP-Ed Program, January 2021.

ⁱⁱⁱ Canning, P. and Stacy, B. *The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier*, ERR-265, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, July 2019.

^{iv} U.S. Department of Labor. (2021, January 26). State Employment and Unemployment – December 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/laus.pdf>

^v Hawaii State Department of Human Services. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Retrieved from <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/snap/>.

^{vi} Seligman, H. K., Laraia, B. A., & Kushel, M. B. (2010). Food insecurity is associated with chronic disease among low-income NHANES participants. *The Journal of nutrition*, 140(2), 304–310. doi:10.3945/jn.109.112573



April 7, 2021

To: House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee on Finance

Re: SB 512, SD2, HD1– RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Meeting: Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 1:30 p.m., Room 308 via videoconference

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i is in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB512, SD2, HD1 which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the double up food bucks program. This bill specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. It has an effective date of 7/1/2060.

The Democratic Party of Hawai`i (Party) has adopted at its 2018 State Convention, clear healthcare safeguards to help protect against hunger in our community. At the first page of the Party Platform, it specifically adopts the 17 United Nations Development Goals and provides:

“Based on the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, we also join in support of the following:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture;
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; . . .”



April 7, 2021

Page 2

We strongly urge you to PASS SB 512, SD2, HD1 as it complies specifically with fighting hunger, the second goal of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

SB 512, SD 2, HD1 removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the double up food bucks program. This bill also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program, and it is consistent with the first three of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as adopted in the Democratic Party Platform, *supra*.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify on this key issue.

Respectfully yours,

Melodie Aduja
Chair, Health Committee
Democratic Party of Hawai`i
Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting SB 512 – Relating to SNAP Incentives
House Committee on Finance
Scheduled for hearing Friday, April 7, 2021, 1:30PM

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 512**, which would remove the \$10/day purchasing cap under the Healthy Food Incentive Program.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is our country's most effective stimulus program, generating an estimated \$1.79 in economic activity for every \$1 spent.¹ Since the start of the pandemic, the number of Hawai'i SNAP recipients has increased from 154,000 in December 2019 to 189,000 in December 2020—a nearly 20 percent increase, resulting in a total of over \$700 million spent at Hawai'i food markets last year.

The Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program keeps even more of those dollars circulating in the local economy for a longer amount of time, increasing the multiplier effect to over 2 percent (see attachment).² Without it, many SNAP shoppers would still not be able to afford locally grown fruits and vegetables. This results in most of these economic stimulus funds leaving the islands—right into the pockets of major mainland food companies, rather than getting channeled into our local food and agriculture businesses. This program is an impact investment for the State, channeling much-needed capital into local businesses and farms.

The economic impact of SNAP incentives is hard to overstate. On top of the economic benefits detailed above, there are additional federal funds available for the program, which can only be unlocked through a match. While we understand that the appropriation was removed due to budget constraints, we're still hopeful of obtaining the match from Hawai'i's philanthropic community, and appreciate the state's former economic support.

¹ Hanson, Kenneth. (2010) *The Food Assistance National Input-Output Multiplier (FANIOM) Model and Stimulus Effects of SNAP*. United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Report Number 103. Available online at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=44749>.

² Thilmany, Dawn, et al. (2021) *The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives*. Colorado State University. Available online at https://fairfoodnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Economic_Contributions_Incentives_2_2_21.pdf

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.

Removing the \$10 daily cap will better align with the flexibilities of the federal funds available as match through the USDA's Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program. This program is truly a win for everyone—families, farmers and local businesses. There is no downside. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

EXPANDING HEALTHY FOOD INCENTIVES ACROSS HAWAII

THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For more than a decade, healthy food incentive programs have increased the purchasing power of low-income families to buy fruits and vegetables at grocery stores and farmers' markets, thereby helping to reduce hunger, improve nutrition and support U.S. agriculture and retail.

IMAGINE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HEALTHY FOOD INCENTIVES, IF THEY WERE AVAILABLE ACROSS HAWAII¹



FAMILIES
\$6M - \$10M

Extra in their pockets to spend on fruits and vegetables each year



STATEWIDE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION
\$14M - \$22M

ECONOMIC MULTIPLIER

2.3

Contribution to Hawaii's economy for every \$1 spent on incentives



LABOR INCOME

\$3M - \$4M

The research highlighted in this brief is based upon analysis conducted by a team of economists at Colorado State University, led by Dr. Dawn Thilmany, in partnership with SPUR, Fair Food Network, and a coalition of ten additional implementing partners across nine states in the US, including Hawaii Food Basket. For the full details of methodology and findings see: fairfoodnetwork.org/incentivesimpact

¹ The ranges presented here reflect low-bound and high-bound scenarios based on assumptions of annual SNAP participation; the percent of grocery stores, corners stores, and farm-direct retail outlets that would offer incentives; and whether a program encourages purchases of locally-grown produce.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Eli Zigas, SPUR, ezigas@spur.org
Holly Parker, Fair Food Network, hparker@FairFoodNetwork.org



Colorado State University





House Committee on Finance

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB 512 SD2 HD1

Wednesday, April 7th, 2021 1:30 p.m.

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports SB 512 SD2 to remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX). HAPA appreciates that SB 512 SD2 specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Da Bux program partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders[1]. Through DA BUX, SNAP benefit dollars are doubled when they're spent on qualifying local food items at more than 70 participating retail locations statewide. Those items tend to be healthier produce and fresh foods and being locally sourced directly supports Hawai'i's food economy.

Even before the pandemic DA BUX program was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways including[2]:

- Putting more food on the tables of local families in need.
- Providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- Strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- Improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.

The DA BUX program works and should be continued and expanded upon where possible. The program is a tangible solution to supporting local food production and helping families have access to quality fresh food.

Please support SB 512 SD2 and measures such as these that support farmers and families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Anne Frederick
Executive Director

[1] DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks <https://dabux.org>

[2] Civil Beat: Cooke, Jesse (2021) *How Local Food Program is Helping Hawai'i's Farmers and Families*
<https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/01/how-one-local-food-program-is-helping-hawaiis-farmers-and-families>



April 6, 2021

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Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Hawaii Foodbank *strongly supports* SB 512 SD2 HD1, which appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program also known as Double Up Food Bucks program. This bill removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries and expands the program to allow beneficiaries to purchase healthy proteins such as local beef, eggs and fish. Our mission as a food bank is to ensure that no one in Hawaii goes hungry, and this bill helps achieve that — providing local fruits and vegetables to those who otherwise could not afford it.

In April 2020, Hawaii Foodbank launched the Direct Purchase Produce Program in partnership with the Hawaii Farm Bureau with two goals in mind. The first goal is to help support local farmers and ranchers; the second is to provide local and healthy fruits, vegetables and protein to the community. We have since supported Hawaii Farmers by purchasing nearly 1.5 million pounds of locally grown produce. This partnership helped us respond to the needs of community in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and has shown us first-hand how programs similar to ours — such as the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program — are crucial, especially during particularly trying times. Many families who were already struggling are now also faced with a loss of income and faced with having to choose between paying their rent or buying healthy food. These families will often choose housing over having something healthy to eat. This bill will give the families the dignity of healthy choice and allow the families more access to fresh, local, healthy foods.

The COVID-19 pandemic has confirmed the need for bills that not only benefit our community by helping our most vulnerable populations but also support our farmers — who are crucial suppliers to our islands' food supply chain.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

With much respect and aloha,

Marielle Terbio
Hawaii Foodbank
Director of Community Engagement & Advocacy

Laura Kay Rand
Hawaii Foodbank
Vice President & Chief Impact Officer





April 6, 2021

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Re: SB512 Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program; Double Up Food Bucks Program

In Support

Dear Rep. Luke, Rep. Cullen and members of the Committee:

At present, GreenWheel Food Hub operates the EBT/SNAP table at the Honolulu Farmers Market at Blaisdell Concert Hall. This is the **only farmers market on Oahu accepting food stamps (SNAP)**. GreenWheel is aware of beneficiary's needs and shopping practices.

This incentive program encourages SNAP beneficiaries to buy local produce rather than less healthy highly processed food in supermarkets.

Removing the \$10 cap: Removing this low cap will encourage healthy eating habits.

Additionally, bringing more income to farmers and into the local economy is an important value in these times of pandemic crisis.

GreenWheel Food Hub works to support better health outcomes among Hawaii's citizens, and supports the passage of this bill.

Larry Geller
Project Director
GreenWheel Food Hub



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

April 6, 2021

To: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Chelsea Takahashi, DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks Statewide Program
Manager
The Food Basket - Hawaii Island's Food Bank

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Support of SB 512 SD2 HD1, Relating to Supplemental
Nutritional Assistance Program Incentives**

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VICE CHAIR

Aloha Chair Luke and Vice Chair Cullen,

I have had the pleasure of managing the “DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks” program since its inception in August 2017. We started small on the Big Island with four farmers markets and two KTA Super Stores locations. As of today, there are 80 DA BUX retail locations statewide. As we grew, we collaborated with veteran “double bucks” programs across the state to unify them under the DA BUX brand, including programs run by Kokua Kalihi Valley, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health, and Sustainable Molokai. Together with a handful of other community-based organization, we formed the 501(c)(3) non-profit Hawaii Good Food Alliance to strengthen the leadership guiding DA BUX implementation and to pursue other statewide initiatives that re-build community food systems.

DENNIS LIN
TREASURER

JULIA ZEE
SECRETARY

STEPHEN UEDA

TINA TAMAI

Given the broad-based support for DA BUX, I firmly believe the program is providing a critical benefit for families and farmers suffering financial hardship due to COVID-19 pandemic. While data on unique participants cannot be captured by most of our DA BUX retailers' point-of-sale software, we do know 77% of SNAP households in the state—41,939 households—live within normal shopping distance from a DA BUX retail location, according to a recent study conducted by Dr. Vanessa Buchthal of UH Manoa's Office of Public Health Studies.

JASMINE
KIERNAN

MARK
KRZYZANOWSKI

Widespread DA BUX accessibility is encouraging SNAP recipients to shop at these participating retailers and purchase more local fruits and vegetables. In an analysis of thirty of our participating grocery stores, these stores experienced a 167% increase in revenue from SNAP purchases of local produce. And within the subset of seven grocery stores that

WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG

Administration and East Hawaii Warehouse
40 Holomua Street, Hilo, HI 96720
808-933-6030 Phone | 808-934-0701 Fax

West Hawaii Warehouse
73-4161 ULU Wini Place, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
808-322-1418 Phone | 808-322-7373 Fax

were able to track unique SNAP customers, these stores experienced a 165% increase in unique SNAP customers purchasing local produce (these percentage increases were calculated using December 2020 data compared to the monthly average for 2019).

The removal of the \$10 daily incentive cap on “Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program” State funds that can be issued to a DA BUX participant and the inclusion of healthy proteins as eligible items will expand SNAP beneficiaries’ purchase power to afford local foods, including higher-priced cultural foods like ‘ulu, taro leaves, and poi.

In December 2020, when DA BUX was awarded CARES Act funds to temporarily increase the incentive cap to \$50 per day and include local ground beef, eggs, and seafood as eligible items, the average incentive issued per SNAP customer per day was **\$21.44** (this calculation was based on available data reported by six participating retailers). Clearly, SNAP households can benefit from a higher cap above the current \$10 limit.

I fully support the passage of SB 512 SD2 HD1. I believe it will incentivize the spending of federal SNAP dollars on locally-sourced foods and stimulate growth in our state’s food and agriculture industry. I respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Chelsea Takahashi
DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks Statewide Manager
The Food Basket – Hawai’i Island’s Food Bank

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Administration and East Hawaii Warehouse
40 Holomua Street, Hilo, HI 96720
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Hawai'i Island Resident

Date: April 6, 2021

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Ty J.K. Cullen,
Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Finance

From: Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic
Development (HACBED)

Re: Support for SB 512 SD2 HD1

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) supports SB 512 SD2 HD1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the match received by Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program (the Program), specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the Program, and makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to expand funding for the Program.

HACBED Staff

Brent N. Kakesako

Executive Director

Keoki Noji

Chief Operating Officer

Merri Keli'ikuli

*Office Manager & Program
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Program Specialist

Angelica Penaran

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Pua Lani Yang

AmeriCorps VISTA

HACBED was established in 1992 as a nonprofit statewide intermediary to address social, economic, and environmental justice concerns through community-based economic development and asset building strategies. It advances its mission with core competencies in the areas of community and organizational capacity building, community and economic development planning, and asset policy development and advocacy. Over time, what has rung true across the different communities HACBED has been blessed to support is the importance of choice and control in the lives of families across the state to achieve their vision for genuine wealth – and within the context of food, this has been no different. The Program has been shown to:

- ***Reduce food insecurity.*** The Program doubles the purchasing power of Hawai'i's low-income families, freeing up room in their budget for other expenditures like housing and healthcare.
- ***Improve dietary behaviors among low-income families.*** Evaluation data from programs in other states have shown that families eat more fruits and vegetables, eat a larger variety of fruits and vegetables, and eat fewer chips, candy, and cookies.
- ***Support farmers.*** Nutrition incentives increase sales and farm income and increase farmers' customer base.
- ***Boost the local economy.*** The Program is an effective way to keep federal funding circulating in the 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 consumer spending at local businesses.

SB 512 SD2 HD1 would provide a way to support our most vulnerable families with healthy options while supporting our local economy.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Brent N. Kakesako

Executive Director

Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development



TO: Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

DATE/LOCATION: April 7, 2021; 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 308/Video Conference

**RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 512 SD2 HD 1– RELATING TO
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

We ask you to support SB 512 SD2 HD1 which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. We thank the legislature for passing Act 153 establishing the Double Up Food Bucks, known as “DA BUX”, Program in 2019. We support this bill which aims to address the socio-economic and health disparities that many of our lower income families experience. Health equity and access is one of many disparities that was highlighted as children and families navigated the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to our communities.

Health disparities continue to be exacerbated by the economic challenges brought on by COVID-19 and supporting healthy options will go a long way to strengthen not only the health of our community but the overall well-being of children and families for years to come. Health and socio-economic disparities plagued our communities and our families before COVID hit and have only increased. Families are experiencing food insecurity at alarming rates with families who have never needed the assistance seeking it for the first time. DHS has seen an increase in SNAP recipients of almost 20% since December of 2019, primarily as a result of growing pandemic stressors. The DA BUX program has already had over 100,000 redemptions and we can only expect the demand to increase.

As we seek to uplift individuals and families living in instability, we strongly support this bill which encourages healthy options for families and children. This program is a vital resource for families who are typically under-resourced and often forced to compromise when it comes to making healthy decisions for themselves and their families. This bill provides access to healthy food choices and supports healthy outcomes for children and families. Investments in prevention programs like this one can save on healthcare costs and other expenses in the long run.

As we look towards economic recovery and the potential for the expansion of economic drivers beyond tourism, this program will continue to stimulate our economy by keeping food dollars in

Hawaii and support local agriculture. By encouraging the purchasing of locally grown produce, the program directly supports farmers and local businesses. While we understand that budget restraints are tight this year this program supports 1) families in need 2) long-term health outcomes 3) local agriculture and farmer and 4) local economy and economic recovery.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 512 SD2 HD1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



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

April 7, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 512, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES

Conference Room 308
1:30 PM

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

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 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 512, SD2, HD1, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. It also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible for purchase under the 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, CSA programs, grocery stores, and other food retailers.

Some of HFB's farmers' markets participate or have participated in the SNAP program. We believe that access to locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein to low-income individuals and families provides benefit to both SNAP participants and Hawaii farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 1:04:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristen Alice	HOPE Services Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

Hope Services Hawai'i strongly supports this bill.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 1:12:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joseph Kohn MD	We Are One, Inc. - www.WeAreOne.cc - WAO	Support	No

Comments:

STRONGLY **SUPPORT** SB 512 SD2 HD1

Hawai'i's children go to sleep hungry.

www.WeAreOne.cc



Committee on Finance
Room 308
Apr 7, 2021 1:30 PM

RE: Support for SB 512, SD2, HD1

Farm Link Hawai'i is pleased to provide this letter in support of SB 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on Double Up Food Bucks and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

Farm Link Hawai'i makes it easy for O'ahu consumers and commercial buyers to discover and purchase fresh, local food for delivery or pickup. We aggregate from over 150 local farmers, ranchers, and food makers across the state, buyers place their orders on our online marketplace, and we take care of delivery. Since its founding in 2015, Farm Link has helped 240 local farmers, ranchers, and food makers sell \$2.5 million of local food to 2,700 household consumers and 210 commercial buyers.

Since adding support for SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks (DA BUX) in October 2020, Farm Link Hawai'i has sold \$32,600 of local food to SNAP recipients and issued over \$6,000 in DA BUX discounts to 75 O'ahu households. We were fortunate enough to participate in the program while there was a \$50 daily discount cap and local ground beef, eggs, and seafood were eligible products. We saw first-hand the community need for financial assistance and the desire of SNAP recipients to purchase healthy local food, including healthy proteins.

Removing the daily limit and expanding to program to healthy proteins will benefit residents and local farmers. We are proud to support the win-win being proposed in SB 512. If you have questions about my support, please contact Rob Barreca at (808) 224-1905 or rob@farmlinkhawaii.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Barreca".

Rob Barreca
Founder & CEO
Farm Link Hawai'i

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 1:43:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Will Caron	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I strongly support SB512 SD2 and ask that you pass it out of committee. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is one of the most effective antihunger government programs in existence. More than 40,000 households in Hawai'i struggle to put food on the table, and social safety net programs like SNAP help ensure that they can stay afloat.

SNAP makes a huge difference in lifting people out of poverty as well. In 2017, 74,000 people—including 33,000 children—avoided poverty thanks to SNAP. In addition, 23% of recipient households received enough SNAP benefits to avoid deep poverty.

SNAP creates profound and lasting benefits to communities by helping families to access nutritious foods. Yet, thousands of struggling families who are eligible for the program do not take advantage of these benefits. In fact, 16 percent of eligible people—and 24 percent of working poor people—are not enrolled, causing our residents to miss out on over \$50 million per year in benefits.

The SNAP Double Up program takes the benefits inherent in SNAP, adds in support for local food production and farmers, with a focus on healthy and nutritious produce and proteins, and brings those benefits to communities around the state. This boosts SNAP participation, helps our local economy, advances our food production goals and reduces healthcare costs! It really is a triple win, and I hope the state will continue to fund and expand the program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 2:38:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sydney Millerd	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Sydney Millerd and I am writing to express support for SB512. As a student of the University of Hawaii - West Oahu's Sustainable Community Food Systems program, I understand how low-income families often struggle to purchase enough healthy, nutritious foods, and how the lack of consuming enough healthy, nutritious foods can lead to food insecurity and diet-related illness. This bill would help to address these concerns. Additionally, as the COVID-19 pandemic has caused even more of Hawaii's families to face financial hardship, now is the time to implement a measure like this.

As a 22-year old soon-to-be college graduate, I look to our legislative leaders to make the right choices now to create a brighter future for Hawaii for my fellow youth and me to live in. This brighter future for Hawaii should include aid that is easily useable for Hawaii's struggling families to purchase healthy, nutritious foods.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 3:16:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nezia Azmi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hits all the strong points: more healthy unprocessed foods for HI families, encourages folks to buy locally grown food, stimulates local economy. Mahalo.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 3:25:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristin Mills	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a taxpayer, parent, and public health educator for the Hawaii State Health Department. I live in Pukalani on the island of Maui.

I am in strong support of SB512, the Double Up Food Bucks bill.

Now more than ever we need expanded access to healthy food. By removing the \$10 daily cap and allowing healthy local proteins to be eligible under the Double Up Food Bucks program, people can have greater access to healthy food during these trying times. People have been challenged with losing employment. We need to make sure all people have access to plenty of healthy food, including fruits and vegetables and protein.

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for Hawaii - it makes healthy food more accessible for families in need, supports agriculture and farmers, and keeps money within our local economy.

I encourage you to vote in strong support of SB512.

Mahalo, Kristin Mills

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 8:08:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Ramirez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this bill that makes it easier for low income families to buy healthy food for their families.

It's good for the local economy to support local farmers and increases our food stability and independence.

Mahalo!

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2021 8:32:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Kawamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is John Kawamoto, and I support SB 512 SD 2 HD 1, which removes the cap on the dollar-for-dollar match that beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) receive when they purchase fruits, vegetables, and other food that is produced locally. This bill has multiple benefits.

Climate change is accelerating, and human-induced global warming has already led global temperatures to rise an average of one degree Centigrade over preindustrial levels. Further temperature increases would lead to widespread drought, crop failures, floods, wildfires, energy blackouts, infrastructure breakdowns, supply chain breakdowns, and infectious disease outbreaks that would be devastating and irreversible. Hawaii must do much more to reduce its consumption of fossil fuels in order to do its share to control climate change.

Hawaii is currently importing roughly 90% of the foods consumed in the state. All of these imported foods have an element of fossil fuel embedded within them because transportation to Hawaii -- whether by air or by sea -- burns fossil fuel. The State has a goal of doubling local food production by 2030, and this bill helps move Hawaii toward that goal. In addition, this bill encourages SNAP participants to improve their nutrition and helps to move Hawaii toward food security.

This bill should be one of multiple bills passed by the Legislature to enable Hawaii to do its part to control climate change.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 1:55:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janet Pappas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear FIN Chair Luke, FIN Vice Chair Cullen and FIN Committee members,

Thank you very much for hearing this bill.

I strongly support SB512 SD2 HD1 to help increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by those eligible through the Double Up Food Bucks program. This bill will:

- help local farmers sell more produce and reduce the need for shipping costs
- help kama'aina who are struggling to put healthy food on their tables for themselves and their families

The consumption of nutritious food leads to healthier people with lower medical costs. I can't think of a more important bill at this time to thousands of Hawaii residents.

Please pass this important bill (SB512 SD2 HD1) at this critical time.

Thank you for listening and for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jan Pappas - Aiea, Hawaii

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 8:51:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Nelson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB 512 and its role in increasing food access and ending food insecurity in Maui County. As a farmer, I have direct experience of the benefits of DA BUX program. Any work to expand this incredible program will directly support community health, nutrition and local food producers. Do right by your farmers and constituents. Vote to support SB 512! Thank you.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 10:03:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Casey Plank	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha.

As a recipient of SNAP/EBT for the first time this past year I am very grateful for this particular program benefit. The 'da bux' system is among the smartest incentive based program I have seen. I worked government programs for many years and this is exactly the holistic policy and programming that is needed to improve many of our community, social, and environmental challenges.

I very much support the continuation of the program and the expansion of purchasing limits. I want to make sure it does not get 'watered down' however. Produce and products must be grown/made In Hawaii.. I do support expansion of local proteins. Including meats, eggs, and local made tofu and alternative proteins.

I would also like to propose this program consider being expanded beyond EBT SNAP recipients. If any resident could pay a monthly participation member fee (I.e. \$20) and receive the 50% off of local produce up to a certain amount each month I believe everyone would eat more local grown, shop with that in mind, have healthier diets, and our farms would be gaining that much more in support and the program would have alternative revenue sources.

I have much respect and gratitude for those who created the program and for the elected officials that have supported it.

I am in SUPPORT of SB512.

Mahalo.

Casey Plank

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 10:33:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Winternitz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this important bill that is a win for health, farmers, and our local economy!

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 10:39:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Kim	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Healthy produce and proteins are vital to the health and well-being for those individuals utilizing SNAP benefits. It doesn't make sense to put a cap on how many healthful and beneficial fruits and vegetables someone should be able to buy. Removing the cap allows families to make better and more nutritional choices when they shop for their families. Please support this bill for the health and welfare of Hawaii's SNAP beneficiaries. We should be doing all we can to support healthy food choices that are within the budget for these families. Fresh produce provides many vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants beneficial for good health. Purchasing more fruits and veggies and quality proteins will also help beneficiaries keep the number of calories down to help fight obesity. Please support this bill!

Thank you

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 10:44:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Natasha Woodward	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support local farmers and healthy eating by voting yes on this bill. It will help the community in so many different ways.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 10:47:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michelle K.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawai'i during the pandemic:

- Makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families.
- Supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
- Stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

This program is a win, win, win solution for our state to help poor families and farmers. Please pass this bill into law immediately. Thank you!

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 11:17:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rebecca M Goldschmidt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As an active citizen who has benefitted from SNAP throughout the pandemic, I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 512 to bring better access to local, healthy foods to reduce food insecurity and improve health; support local farmers and our agricultural economy; and move towards a more sustainable Hawaii. Mahalo! Rebecca

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 11:25:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Molly Mamaril	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha House Committee on Finance,

I am writing in strong support of SB512 which would help solve food access, as well as agricultural and economic development issues that have become more apparent during the pandemic, affecting thousands of residents whose basic needs (food access and nutrition) are not being met. I support SB512 because

- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks offers a solution to three pressing issues including:
 - Makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families.
 - Supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
 - Stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.
- The removal of the \$10 cap will encourage increased spending of SNAP dollars on local foods. SNAP spending helps to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as these food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities and are federal dollars entering the state’s economy. These dollars ripple throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. [Each SNAP dollar has an economic multiplier of 1.79](#), which means every SNAP dollar spent at food retailers contributes \$1.79 to Hawaii’s economy.
- [Each free DA BUX incentive dollar issued has an economic multiplier of 2.3](#), which means every incentive dollar spent at food retailers contributes \$2.30 to Hawaii’s economy.
- While \$10 of State funding can purchase a SNAP household \$20 of local produce, our Hawaii families can benefit from a higher cap as many struggle to feed multiple-generation households and to afford higher-priced cultural foods like ‘ulu, taro leaves, and poi. Additionally, families are needing to purchase food in larger quantities per grocery visit as a result of the pandemic—they are minimizing their trips to the grocery store to minimize their exposure to COVID-19 and are needing to purchase enough food to last them until their next grocery visit.
- The \$10 daily cap removal will better align with the flexibilities of the larger federal GusNIP grant providing funding to DA BUX and additional federal contributions that are anticipated.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Molly Mamaril

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 11:47:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Allison Saunders	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB512 will improve food security for Hawaii residents and promote local sustainable agriculture. Ensuring SNAP recipients have access to healthy food and local farmers feel supported is vital to Hawaii's economic diversification and health.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 12:08:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Noa Lincoln	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this. As a Food Systems researcher, I can testify to the huge impact this program has had on our local farmers and on our local families, and strengthening this program helps to better build a foundation for changes to our local food system.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 12:35:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair, Vice and members,

I support SB512 SD2 HD1 because the Double Up Food Bucks Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh local produce. SB512 SD2 HD1 will help 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.

Expanding this successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families and our local economy, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping produce in.

Please pass SB512 SD2 HD1 out of committee so that we can reap all these benefits!

Mahalo for your consideration

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona HI 96740

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 12:43:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathryn Braun	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a professor of public health and social work, testifying as an individual. I urge you to support SB 512, because it will create more flexibility in state funding provided to the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program by: 1) removing the \$10 daily cap on incentives that can be issued to SNAP recipients for the purchase of local foods; and 2) allowing healthy local proteins to be eligible purchases.

Double Up Food Bucks, also known locally as “DA BUX,” provides a dollar-for-dollar match on fresh, locally-grown produce for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps) participants. This program is a “triple win” for Hawai‘i: making healthy food more accessible for families in need, supporting agriculture and farmers, and keeping money within the local economy.

This program offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawai‘i during the pandemic:

- Makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families
- Supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
- Stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

In December 2020, there were over 189,000 SNAP recipients in the state, a 20% increase from the year before. SNAP can help to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as their food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities. These dollars ripple throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activity.

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 1:05:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
noel kent	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB512 is a win-win measure for our state. It will improve the physical and mental health of our poorest citizens, provide outlets for our local food producers and contribute to the educational success of poor children. This is the kind of bill we must have as we go about rebuilding our society after the pandemic.

Noel Kent UH Manoa Professor Emeritus

April 6, 2021

Representative Silvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Legislature, Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: **SUPPORT** SB 512

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Catherine Pirkle. I am an Associate Professor in Public Health. My professional work, in terms of research, teaching, and service, is very often on the topics of chronic disease, food security and nutrition. For example, I worked closely with the SMS this summer to provide the first Hawai'i-specific community-wide estimate of food insecurity in the state as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (One in Five Hawaii residents indicate they do not have enough money for food; <https://www.smshawaii.com/posts/2020/08/21/sms-community-pulse-one-in-five-hawaii-residents-indicate-that-they-do-not-have-enough-money-for-food>). For several years now, I have worked closely with the Hawai'i Department of Health to evaluate over two dozen programs seeking to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce chronic disease. As such, I have strong interest in SB 512 and significant knowledge on the problem this bill is seeking to address. **This is why I strongly support this bill.**

Food insecurity was a substantial concern for the residents of Hawai'i, even before the Covid-19 pandemic, with certain groups such as Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos, as well as residents of neighbor islands, more profoundly affected than other groups in the state. By all estimates, the issue has become far more acute since the pandemic, with Hawai'i continuing to lead the nation in unemployment. As such, many families struggle daily to secure enough money to meet basic needs, such as food and housing. Anything we can do to reduce this burden is vitally important to helping the state recover.

SB512 is an important initiative to help reduce food insecurity in the state and one that is especially important in that it seeks to make healthy food purchases more affordable. Most research in North America shows that the rational choice for a food insecure household is to buy foods that are non-perishable and calorie-dense when faced with limited incomes. Basically, you can make your dollar stretch further when buying junk food as compared to healthier foods. SB512 is one tool that helps families more easily afford healthy foods and it seeks to reduce the perverse incentive to buy less healthy options.

SB512 will create more flexibility in state funding provided to the existing DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program by removing the \$10 daily cap on incentives that can be used by SNAP recipients on purchases of local foods and by allowing purchase of healthy local proteins. The benefits of SB512 are multifold: 1) Makes healthy foods more affordable, 2) Support local

farmers, and 3) Stimulates local economic activity. Overall, this proposed legislation offers many wins to the residents of our state and is occurring at a critical time when families need more support than ever. Once again, I strongly support this legislation.

I am more than happy to discuss further, and address any questions or comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me (catherinepirkle@gmail.com, or 808-726-6202) if I can provide any additional information on these topics.

Sincerely,

Catherine Pirkle

LATE

SB-512-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2021 5:02:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bonnie Parker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a SNAP recipient, a beneficiary of the DA BUX program, and a single mother of 3 young children. Please support SB512 SD2 HD1 to expand the DA BUX program. With the DA BUX program, I am empowered with the choice to support our local food system.

Mahalo,

Bonnie Parker