

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

February 11, 2021

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

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 512 SD1 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM INCENTIVES.**

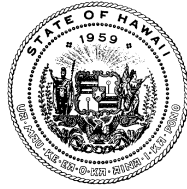
Hearing: Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

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 issues. The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment made technical amendments.

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. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program dollar-for-dollar matching program helps Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program 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.



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

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

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

Hearing Date: February 16, 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 1 (S.B. 512, S.D. 1)
5 to expand the double up food bucks program administered by the DOA to make Hawaii-grown
6 fruits and vegetables, and healthy proteins sold at farmers' markets and grocery stores accessible
7 to families or individuals who reside in this State and who receive assistance through the federal
8 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This measure would remove the \$10 per
9 visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries and adds healthy
10 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

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 often have poorer diets and higher rates of chronic disease than middle class and wealthy
2 individuals.^{4,5} This bill expands the double up food bucks program and removes the \$10 per visit
3 per day cap enabling SNAP recipients to double their purchasing power when they use their
4 benefits to purchase local fruits and vegetables, and healthy proteins.

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

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.

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

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

FEBRUARY 16, 2021
10:00 A.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

SENATE BILL NO. 512 SD1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 512 SD1. This bill 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 (DA BUX) and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Department of Agriculture supports the bill to expand the double up food bucks program and will administer the program as provided in the bill to make locally-grown fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets, grocery stores and community-supported agriculture projects accessible to families or individuals who reside in this State and who receive assistance through the federal SNAP funding.

The DA BUX Program authorized by Act 153/SLH 2019 was appropriated \$50,000 which when leveraged through The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program and CARES Act award matched by Philanthropy resulted in \$2.4 million in funds for redemptions for the DA BUX program by SNAP beneficiaries.

Since the launch in June 2020 of the statewide program, there have been 119,051 redemptions by unique household by County through December 15, 2020. Total redemptions for DA BUX through January 2021 are estimated at \$1.4 million and the funds are expected to



be exhausted by June 2021. This expectation is based on The Department of Human Services reporting a total of 189,285 SNAP recipients in December 2020, which is an increase of 19.54% compared to 154,377 recipients in December 2019 and an additional 12,769 recipients reported from July to December 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

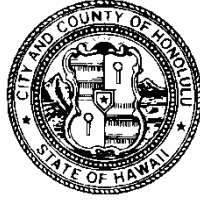
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 200 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR



SARAH ALLEN
DIRECTOR DESIGNATE

JOY BARUA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Testimony of
JOY BARUA
Deputy Director
Department of Community Services

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:00 AM
Via Videoconference

Relating to SB 512 SD1– SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES

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

The City and County of Honolulu Department of Community Services supports SB 512 SD1, 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 (SD1).

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 ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

777 WARD AVE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814
PHONE: (808) 768-5764 • EMAIL: oer@honolulu.gov



RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

AMY ASSELBAYE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Testimony of
AMY ASSELBAYE
Executive Director
Office of Economic Revitalization

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
Friday, February 5, 2021
1:00 PM
Via Videoconference

In SUPPORT of
SB 512– SUPPLEMENTAL NURITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu Office of Economic Revitalization **supports** Senate Bill 512, 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. The bill also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program and makes an appropriation to the State Department of Agriculture to expand funding for the program.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated a pressing need for increased feeding assistance for hungry families. By December 2020, Hawaii saw a 20% increase in SNAP recipients to over 189,000 recipients in the state. That means for every 10 people on our islands, one and a half don't have enough money to put good food on the table. By expanding the Double Up Food Bucks program, SB 512 will help to make fresh local foods more affordable to hungry families, who during this pandemic need the support to stay healthy.

In addition to providing food access for hungry families, an expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks program will support the economic revitalization efforts that our office has addressed throughout the pandemic. Incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food for hungry families is an investment in food security on our island, which supports local farmers and the agriculture sector overall. By encouraging local food purchases,

Chair Gabbard
SB 512
February 5, 2021
Page 2

this program helps to keep food dollars within the local economy, providing essential economic stimulation during the current economic downturn. SNAP recipients' purchases of local food ripple throughout the economy, generating \$1.54 in economic activity for every dollar as it runs through the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, food distributors, and their employees. The Office of Economic Revitalization believes the Double Up Food Bucks program is a critical matched funding tool to reinforce the ways we take care of each other on these islands and can help to rebuild a more resilient and diverse economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 16, 2021

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

Re: SB 512 SD1 – Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 512, SD1, 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. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

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 SD1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew W. Sasaki". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Matthew W. Sasaki
Director, Government Relations



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 Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Tuesday 16, 2021
TIME: 10am
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: SB512 SD1 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 and vegetables 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 and vegetables when shopping. Data has shown that families use the Double Up Food Bucks Program eat more fruits and vegetables, and 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 local produce this program also helps Hawaii farmers and encourages retailers to stock Hawaii grown produce. Removing the cap means greater benefits for local farmers and further incentivizes local retailers to stock more local fruits and vegetables. This helps promote a resilient circular food economy where local farmers are selling to local stores that sell to local customers. 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.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 10:00 A.M.
Written Testimony**

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

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

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 512, SD 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 and makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to expand funding for 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 the 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.

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. 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.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



February 12, 2021

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

Senate Bill 512 SD1 – Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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

The Hawaii Association of Health Plans (HAHP) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 512, SD1, 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. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

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 support for SB 512 SD1.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee

cc: HAHP Board Members



Board Members

President

Jason Okuhama
Managing Partner,
Commercial & Business Lending

Secretary

Marcus Kawatachi
Deputy Director,
Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission

Trina Orimoto

Clinical & Research Psychologist

Miwa Tamanaha

Co-Director,
Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo

Derrick Kiyabu

Hawai'i Island Resident

Date: February 11, 2021

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

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

Re: Support for SB 512 SD1

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

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) supports SB 512 SD1, 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
Support*

Sean Tangco

Program Specialist

Angelica Penaran

AmeriCorps VISTA

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 SD1 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

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 6:44:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Megan Fox	Testifying for Malama Kauaëi	Support	No

Comments:

This program has significantly contributed to healthy food access and local agriculture in time when both areas need support - a true win, win.



February 11, 2021

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

Support of SB 512, S.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; makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture [DOA] to expand funding for the program.)

Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.; Conference Room 211 & 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.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.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.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.1**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

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



1809 Bachelot Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

State of Hawaii Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Hawaii State Legislature
Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 10:00 am

SB 512 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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

Lanakila Meals on Wheels is strongly in support of SB 512 which expands the double up food bucks program. Lanakila Meals on Wheels is Hawaii's largest and only island-wide home delivered meal provider for kupuna and individuals with disabilities. In 2020, we launched a produce subscription service to make it convenient and affordable for our home-bound, meal recipients to receive fresh, local produce when they receive their meal delivery. The goal of the produce subscription service was to ensure our meal recipients—many of which rely on Lanakila Meals on Wheels as a primary source of food—have access to healthy fruits and vegetables and support Hawaii's farmers.

Approximately 70% of the kupuna and individuals with disabilities subscribed to our produce service utilize Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to pay for their produce. With the double up food bucks program the produce subscription very affordable—just \$4 per produce bag. Buying local tends to be more expensive than imported food. Our recipients have expressed how they would not be able to afford the fresh produce if not for SNAP and double up food bucks. The double up food bucks program is making it possible for kupuna and individuals with disabilities to enjoy the best our local farmers have to offer.

Please support Hawaii's kupuna and individuals with disabilities by passing SB 512 and ensuring they will be able to continue to enjoy local favorites like lychee, papaya, and apple bananas which bring them both health and happiness.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori Lau", written over a circular stamp or mark.

Lori Lau
Director, Lanakila Meals on Wheels



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facebook.com/AARPHawaii

**The State Legislature
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, February 16, 2021
10:00 a.m.**

TO: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

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

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz 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, SD1 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, SD1.

Sincerely,

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

Keali'i Lopez, AARP Hawai'i



**American Heart Association testimony in SUPPORT of SB 512, SD1
“Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives” with
suggested amendment**

Chairman of the Board
Glen Kaneshige

President
Michael Lui, MD

Board Members
Rick Bruno, MD, FACEP
Jackie De Luz
Brandt Farias
Jason Fujita
Mimi Harris
Zia Khan, MD
Brandon Kurisu
Arnold Martines
Michael Rembis, FACHE
Andrew S. Rosen
Timothy Slottow
Jennifer Walker

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 strongly supports 512, SD1 but suggests amendments.

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. 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 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 has an impact on health, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency. The program helps more than 45 million Americans struggling

through underemployment and low or stagnant wages. The majority of benefits go to households with children, older adults or those with disabilities.

Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain problems for millions of American households. Research shows that SNAP benefits are often not adequate to last a family the entire month. A 2016 report by the Food Research and Action Center summarized the important role SNAP plays in addressing food insecurity. Importantly, the majority of SNAP recipients who are eligible for work do so while on the program, underscoring that many recipients are using the program to overcome underemployment or temporary job loss.

Although diet quality has been steadily improving in the U.S. during the past two decades, overall dietary quality is still poor. Most significantly, there is a widening gap associated with education and income. Despite the important role SNAP plays in addressing hunger, additional data indicate that SNAP recipients have worse diet quality than income-eligible non-participants. The 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 dietary recommendations that limit consumption of proteins that can increase risk for heart disease and stroke. The Association suggests:

*“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.”*

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.

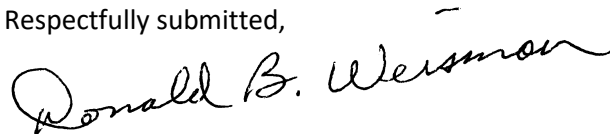
Finally, we understand that finding funding during this difficult budget crisis will be challenging. We hope, at minimum, that legislators will be able provide funding to maintain existing “Da Bux” programs through this budget cycle. The rough estimated total cost to maintain existing programs will be \$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 American Heart Association urges legislators to support SB 512 with the suggested amendment 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,



Donald B. Weisman

Hawaii Government Relations/Communications Director

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 6:51:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
"Phil" Augustus Acosta	Testifying for Aloha Harvest	Support	No

Comments:

We are in strong support of SB 512 and encourage the Legislature to continually support & expand this program, allowing better access to nutritious fruits and vegetables for our families in need.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

February 16, 2021 10:00 AM

In SUPPORT of SB512 SD1:

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee,

On behalf of our 27,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly supports SB512 SD1**, which expands the dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to use their benefits to purchase Hawaii-grown produce and proteins and appropriates funding.

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i supports efforts to keep food sustainability strong and thriving, as well as making locally-grown produce accessible for all of Hawai'i's residents. Act 153, SLH 2019, established the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, to be implemented by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. The "double bucks" for Hawai'i-grown produce incentivizes SNAP participants to purchase nutritious fruits and vegetables- which in turn helps local farmers and our agricultural economy, improves SNAP participants' health, and supports greater local food production into the future.

Expansion of SNAP double bucks program via SB512 further improves the accessibility for low-income beneficiaries to purchase healthy fruits, vegetables, and proteins. This bill encourages sustainable agricultural practices and supports Hawai'i's farmers, fishermen, and ranchers. Passage of this bill is especially necessary during the COVID-19 health and economic crisis and appropriating additional funds to this program is money well spent.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB 512**.



Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Date: February 16, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

TESTIMONY

By Pia Chock

Strategy Consultant, Community & 'Āina Resiliency Group

RE: SB 512, SD1 - Relating to a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

E ka Luna Ho'omalulu Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalulu Keith-Agaran, a me nā Lālā o kēia Kōmike, aloha!

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS SB 512, SD1**, 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, specifies eligibility for healthy proteins under the program, and makes an appropriation.

While we recognize the State is facing budget shortfalls, we believe that expanding the Double Bucks program is a timely, strategic investment that will assist our most vulnerable communities, 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. For this reason, we have heavily invested in agriculture on our lands across Hawai'i to contribute to the State's Aloha+ Challenge goal of doubling local food production by 2030.

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, increasing eligible purchases, and expanding funding for the program will extend the reach of these benefits.

Accordingly, we kindly request you **PASS SB 512, SD1**.

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!



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Kaiser Permanente*

*Catherine Taschner, JD
McCorriston Miller Mukai
MacKinnon LLP*

Date: February 14, 2021

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

Re: Strong Support for SB 512, SD1, Relating to Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: February 16, 2021 at 10:00 AM via Videoconference

The Obesity Prevention Task Force, a program of Hawai'i Public Health Institute¹, is in **Strong Support of SB 512, SD1**, which provides continued funding for the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, expands the program to include healthy local proteins and removes the daily \$10 cap.

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 Double Up Food Bucks, 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.

Double Up Food Bucks provides a strong return on investment.

In 2019, the Hawai'i State Legislature provided \$100,000 in funding to expand the Double Up Food Bucks 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.

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 activityⁱⁱ.

The demand for Double Up Food Bucks 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 2020ⁱⁱⁱ. There has also been a dramatic uptick in SNAP recipients – over 189K SNAP recipients in the state, a 20% increase from the year before^{iv}.

Double Up Food Bucks' 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^v. 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, SD1** 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 Hawaii's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawaii residents. The Hawaii Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawaii.

Hawaii 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 Canning, Patrick and Brian Stacy. *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.

ⁱⁱⁱ 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>

^{iv} Hawaii State Department of Human Services. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Retrieved from <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/besd/snap/>.

^v 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



To: The Senate Committee on Ways and Means
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 10am

In strong support of SB512 SD1

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee members of Ways and Means,

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 SD1.**

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 SD1 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 SD1 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



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Tuesday, February 16, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.

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

Dear Chair Dela Cruz 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 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. While this measure does

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

include general fund appropriations, there are also program amendments that are purely policy related, without any money attached. As this measure moves along, and funding is not an option, we hope that this committee, and all future committees, will consider passing the bill with the policy benefits of removing the dollar cap per visit and including healthy proteins as listed in the current version.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

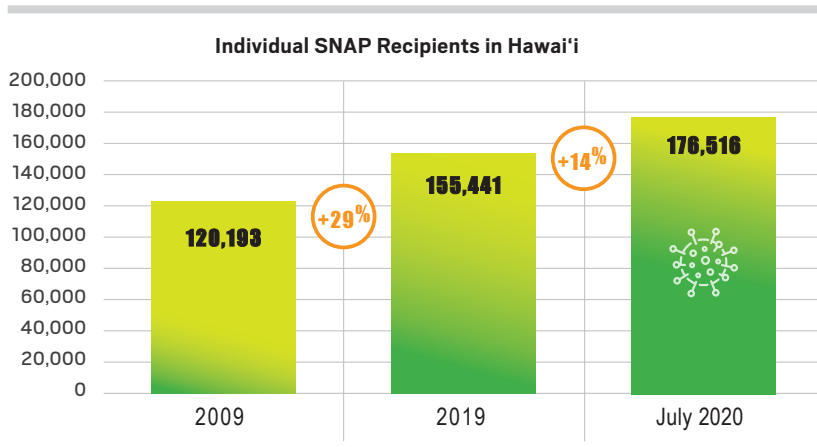
Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

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 14.3%, 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 Hawai'i Data Collaborative estimates nearly 30,000 additional individuals will be eligible for SNAP benefits post-pandemic; this represents a 19.3% 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 farmers.



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.



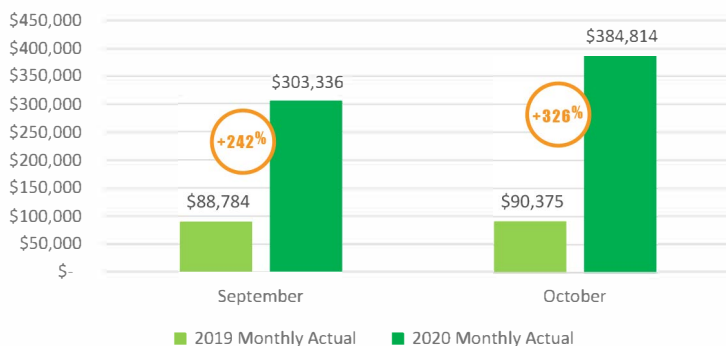
Potential Impact: \$15.4 million

WITH THE STATE OF HAWAII'S INVESTMENT OF \$2.5 MILLION into DA BUX, the investment can potentially generate an economic impact of \$15.4 million and spur 3x additional funding that supports local farmers (\$7.5 million).

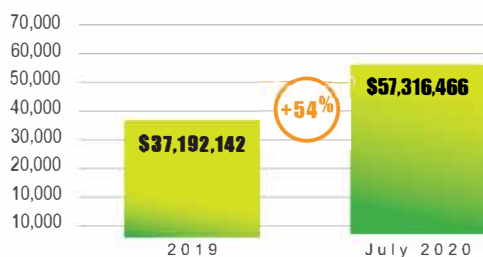
State funding	\$ 2,500,000
Federal GusNIP grant	\$ 2,500,000
Total funding for DA BUX	\$ 5,000,000
Federal SNAP purchase	\$ 5,000,000
Total funding for SNAP & DA BUX	\$ 10,000,000
Economic multiplier	1.54
Potential economic impact	\$ 15,400,000
State's funding leverage ratio	3.0x

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

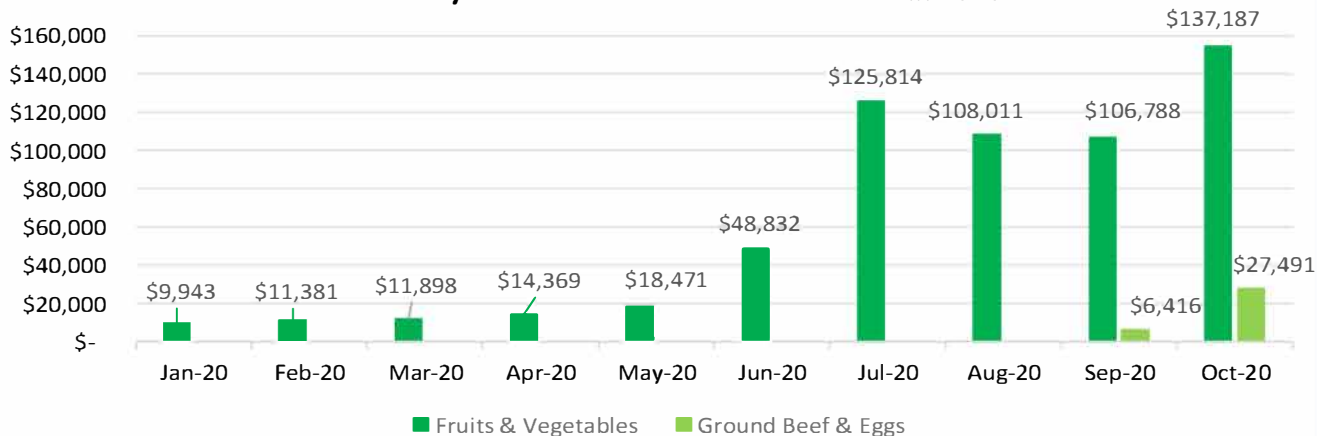
13th highest poverty rate (13.7% of the population living at or below the poverty line)

14% 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 (\$154,000 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



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

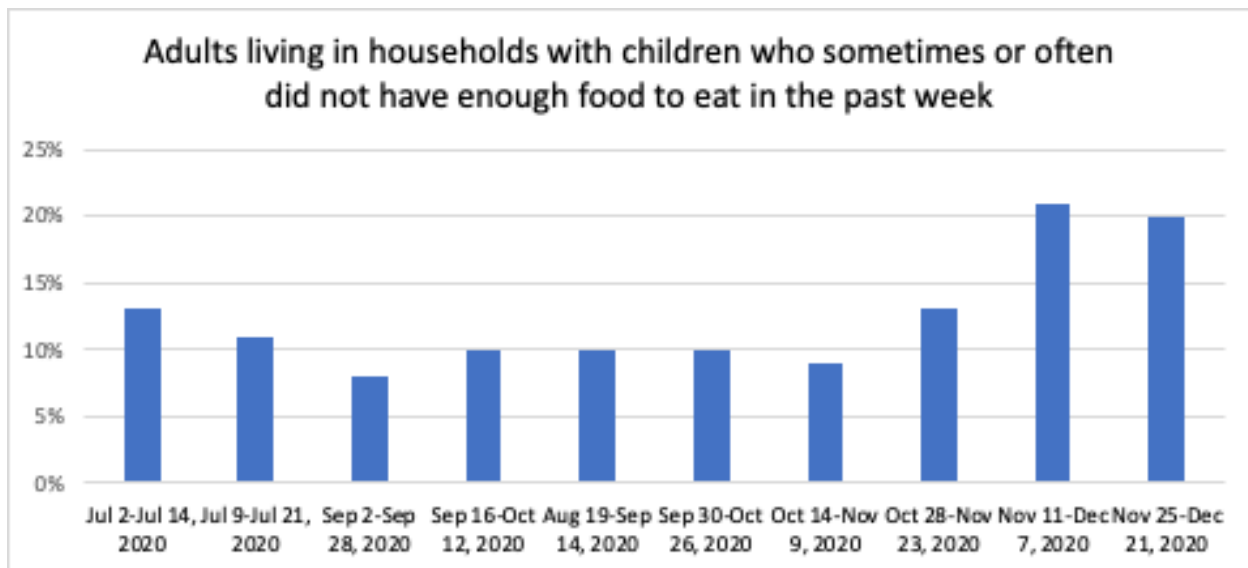
Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **SB 512 SD1- Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**
10:00 AM, February 16, 2021

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support of Senate Bill 512 SD1**, 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 SD1.

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



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

February 15, 2021

To: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz Chair
The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

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

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DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST
ALBRECHT

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DIRECTORS

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JULIA ZEE
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STEPHEN UEDA

TINA TAMAI

JASMINE
KIERNAN

MARK
KRZYZANOWSKI

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 512 SD1, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Keith-Agaran,

My name is Kristin Frost Albrecht, and I am the Executive Director of The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank. Our mission is to "End hunger in Hawaii County". We strongly support this bill.

The Food Basket has been pioneering dollar-for-dollar matching programs for locally grown produce since 2014 and has been the implementer of both a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) \$1M Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant received in 2017 and a \$1.9 M Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive (GusNIP) grant received in 2019 for the "DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks" program. We deeply believe the passage of this bill will continue to provide much needed food cost relief for low-income families and access to locally grown fresh vegetables and fruit that they otherwise could not afford - particularly given the devastating economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While state budget cuts are a crucial part of our road to economic recovery, I want to stress that investing in programs such as DA BUX aligns with this goal and provides a significant return on investment for the state economy. DA BUX is working to both bring in and keep federal dollars circulating in the state, and directly funnels these federal dollars into Hawai'i's food and agricultural industry.

How does it work? DA BUX incentivizes participants in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to purchase local fruits and vegetables with their SNAP food benefits by offering a 50% discount at participating food retailers across the state. The discount is reimbursed to the retailer by the DA BUX program. In 2020 alone, DA BUX food retailers issued over \$978,000 of incentive discounts, which translates to \$1.9 million of local produce purchases.

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

In December 2020, sales of incentivized local produce at participating grocery stores increased 167% compared to December 2019 sales. Increased SNAP purchasing of local produce means more federal SNAP dollars stay circulating in our local economy. Each SNAP dollar has an economic multiplier of 1.79, which means every SNAP dollar spent at food retailers contributes \$1.79 dollars to Hawaii's economy.¹ Each incentive dollar that is reimbursed to DA BUX food retailers for the discounts issued on local produce has a multiplier effect of 2.3.²

Since August 2017, DA BUX has secured over \$1.9 million in federal funds for incentives as well as for program marketing and administration. The program's primary federal funding source is the GusNIP grant. DA BUX can only apply for GusNIP grant dollars up to the amount it can secure in matching cash and in-kind contributions from non-federal sources. The State allocated a match of \$100,000 towards our FY 2019 GusNIP application through the establishment of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program (Act 153).

The Food Basket is applying for a FY 2021 GusNIP award in an effort to garner additional funding to continue DA BUX through 2023. While matching contributions must be secured prior to the GusNIP application deadline of March 16, 2021, any cash contributions secured after the deadline will be used to increase the DA BUX program budget for incentive discount reimbursements and to displace in-kind (non-cash) matching contributions. In-kind matching contributions can easily be saved for future GusNIP grant requests. DA BUX ensures each State dollar contribution to the program brings in an additional federal dollar into the state economy.

The Food Basket supports the passage of SB 521 SD1 to bring additional federal dollars into the state and to stimulate spending in the local food and agricultural industry. In addition, we strongly support the removal of the daily \$10 cap on incentive discounts that can be issued on SNAP purchases of local fruits and vegetables, which was implemented with the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program.

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Kristin Frost Albrecht
Executive Director, The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

¹ Patrick Canning and Brian Stacy, "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier," July 2019, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err-265.pdf?v=5856.3>.

² Dawn Thilmany et al, "The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives," January, 2021, 49, <https://www.spur.org/publications/spur-report/2021-02-04/economic-contributions-expanding-healthy-food-incentives>.

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Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Manager

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

February 16, 2021
10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference

Re: SB 512, SD1 Relating to Insurance

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 512 SD1, 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.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i SUPPORTS SB 512, SD1.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i is Hawai'i's largest integrated health system that provides care and coverage for approximately 260,000 members. Each day, more than 4,400 dedicated employees and more than 600 Hawai'i Permanente Medical Group physicians and providers come to work at Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i to care for our members at our 20 medical facilities, including Moanalua Medical Center, providing high-quality care for our members and delivering on our commitment to improve the health of the 1.4 million people living in the communities we serve.

Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain problems for many of our residents. Research shows that SNAP benefits are often not adequate to last a family the entire month. 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.

Addressing food insecurity is a critical focus area for Kaiser Permanente. In 2020 Kaiser Permanente invested \$300,000 in grants to community-based organizations to support programs which increase food security for pregnant and postpartum mothers in low-income, underserved communities; and for Native Hawaiian communities on Maui and Molokai. Kaiser Permanente also provided a grant to the Department of Education's Hawaii Child Nutrition Program to increase participation in USDA food programs. In addition, Kaiser Permanente has hosted 16 community food distributions that provided over 280,000 pounds of food to more than 7,000 local families,

and also conducted text message campaigns to targeted populations to raise awareness of eligibility and enrollment in SNAP.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i supports the SB 512, SD1 because it will increase the buying power for low-income families to fresh fruits and vegetables. This helps reduce food insecurity while concurrently supporting our local farmers, food distributors and retailers.

We ask the committee to PASS SB 512, SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



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

February 16, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 512, SD1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES

Conference Room 211
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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, SD1, 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 purchases under the program and appropriates funds to the department of agriculture for 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.



ALOHA CARE

Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021

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

From: Paula Arcena, Vice President, External Affairs
Peggy Mierzwa, Senior Policy Analyst, External Affairs

RE: **SB512 SD1 SUPPORT** Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of SB512 SD1. 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.

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.

SB512 SD1 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 SD1 to ensure this important program will continue to serve our community.

Mahalo for considering SB512 SD1.

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



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

February 16, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

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

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

Re: SB 512 SD1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Incentives; **In Support**

'Ohana Health Plan offers our **support** of SB 512 SD1, 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. Makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to expand funding for 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. As of December 2020, there were more than 189K 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.

In addition, SNAP can help to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as their food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities. These dollars ripple out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activity.

We urge you to pass SB 512 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



February 14, 2021

To: Chair Dela Cruz
Vice Keith-Agaran
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for SB512 SD1**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB512 SD1, 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 SD1, 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 SD1**.

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.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, February 16, 2021; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Via Videoconference**

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

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 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;
- (2) Allowing healthy proteins to be purchased under the Program; and
- (3) Appropriating an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal years 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 for Program administration.

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 1
Tuesday, February 16, 2021; 10:00 a.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.

Date: February 15, 2021

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

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 expands families' access to 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.

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.

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.



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

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

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

Re: Testimony in Support of SB512 SD1
Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives
Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Micah Kāne, President & CEO of the Hawai'i Community Foundation. I am submitting this testimony in SUPPORT of SB512 SD1 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 SD1 and look forward to further discussion on the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
February 16, 2021 – 10:00 A.M. - Videoconference

RE: SB 512 SD1 - Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives – In Support

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

The Local Food Coalition strongly supports SB 512 SD1, 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. The bill also makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for 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 SD1 helps sustain our agricultural workforce and operations.

This proven and successful incentive program has been implemented in more than 25 states and will promote 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 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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

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



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

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

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO

DATE: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 (10:00 a.m., Conference Rm. 211)

RE: **IN SUPPORT OF SB 512, SD1, 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, SD1, 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 weekly or every other week, to go to a neighborhood grocery store 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 is to remain at home as much as possible 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, SD1. 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.





TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

DATE/LOCATION: February 16, 2021; 10:00 a.m., Conference Room 211/Video Conference

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 512 SD1– RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM INCENTIVES

We ask you to support SB 512 SD1 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 SD1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 10:00 AM
Via Video Conference

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

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

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB 512, SD1
Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

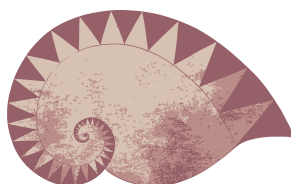
My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide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

HPH writes in support of SB 512, SD1 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. We have supported Double Up food bucks program to both support the strengthening local food systems and allow snap recipients to access good nutrition. Through the national double up food bucks program, Hawaii 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.



Pono Hawai'i Initiative

LATE

Patrick Shea - Treasurer • Lena Mochimaru - Secretary
Nelson Ho • Summer Starr

Monday, February 15, 2021

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives
Testifying in Support

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) **supports SB512 SD1 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Incentives**. This measure removes the \$10 per visit a day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the double up food bucks program and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

With so many in our community struggling right now, this measure is more an important that ever. This would help increase the healthy fresh options available to our Hawaii residents. Removing the \$10 cap will help our low-income residents and farmers get the most out of the SNAP benefits.

For these reasons we urge you to vote in favor of SB512 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity,

Gary Hooser
Executive Director
Pono Hawai'i Initiative



Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Tuesday, February 16th, 2021 10:00 a.m.

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

HAPA strongly supports SB 512 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 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]:

- It's putting more food on the tables of local families in need.
- It's providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- It's strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- It's 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 and measures such as these that support farmers and families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Cruz'.

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>



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

LATE

SB512 SD1

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives
Friday, February 5,, 2021, 1:00 pm
Via Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB512 SD1** 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 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.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



LATE

February 16, 2021

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Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Hawaii Foodbank *strongly supports* SB 512, 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 spent more than 1 million dollars on more than 1 million pounds of 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.

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



LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2021 9:47:38 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorraine Leslie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 512

The American Diabetes Association (Association) supports legislative bills intended to promote type 2 diabetes prevention and persuade strategies to improve health outcomes. We encourage you and your committee to support such measures. Today, 21 people in Hawaii will be diagnosed with diabetes, 8,000 yearly! This disease is one of the most serious, common, and costly diseases in the United States; costing us over \$322 billion annually.

The Association supports SB 512

On behalf of the American Diabetes Association and those we serve, we ask for your support of this bill.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 6:40:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee on Ways and Means,

Please support SB512.

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 produce. Expanding this program 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.

We need laws to promote local healthy eating especially among low income families with children. Fresh fruits and vegetables are often more expensive than the bargain fast food deals at McDonalds. I don't want children from low income families only eating greasy burgers and french fries just because the food is cheap. As a society, we need to do better to reduce obesity and diabetes especially among children. We literally can't afford to take care of too many unhealthy people.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 3:07:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I strongly support SB512 SD1 and ask that you pass it out of the Ways and Means Committee. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is one of the most effective anti-hunger 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, boosting SNAP participation, helping our local economy and advancing food production goals and reducing 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-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 6:41:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support SB512

Testimony in Support of SB512 SD1

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony for SB512 because it's a positive health initiative that helps folks get more fresh, local produce into their households.

For the past 6 years I have been supporting our Hawaii Island Farmers Markets in a professional capacity. I have helped promote the Double Up Food Bucks at farmers markets and have seen the positive impact this has made for families on Hawaii Island.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Donna Mitts
Pa'auilo, HI 96776

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 9:06:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support this measure which is a proven and successful program to provide locally grown fresh produce for thousands of people across Hawaii during the pandemic. If it continues, it will keep food dollars in the local economy and stimulate economic activity.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 9:10:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Kingdon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is my understanding from the Hawaii Public Health Institute that this bill would expand subsidized access to healthy foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables to those with demonstrable financial need. Historically, people of lower socio-economic status have more difficulty than those of higher SES in accessing these healthier foods. Some 'fast food' and other similar corporations even capitalize on this, siting their establishments close to subsidizing housing, for example. If SB512 provides any support or incentive for healthier choices, this would be a real improvement for Hawaii - especially for keiki.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Kingdon, MPH

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 9:31:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Ann K Poire	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the passage of SB 512. Last November I enrolled in SNAP through HINET. In that short time I have been able to purchase local, nutritious foods that I could not afford previously. The Double Up Food Bucks program - or "Da Bux" - allowed me to purchase fresh local produce, beef, eggs and seafood. This is a wonderful program. Please keep it going!

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 3:14:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
marcy cayton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is a very important measure for all our Ohana, please pass.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 8:12:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer McGurn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. It is a win win for everyone involved. We need to focus on getting more locally grown, healthy produce to our low income families. There are only a couple of options for people here on Maui and we desperately need to expand the program. Please support this bill!

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 9:10:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am a professor of public health and social work, and I urge you to support this bill to Double Up Food Bucks.

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.
- Support 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 out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activity.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 10:48:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kayla Carlisle	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Working in food security, I have seen firsthand the ways in which DaBux has given so many Hawai'i families and kÅ«puna access to fresh, healthy food that they could not have been able to afford otherwise. This program benefits local residents and our local economy with proven results. Funding Da Bux is an investment in COVID-19 relief as well as an investment in a sustainable food system for Hawai'i.

- 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.
 - Support 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 189K 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 out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just [\\$1 of SNAP will generate \\$1.79 in economic activity](#).

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 10:54:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The economic downturn precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly heightened food insecurity for Hawaii residents. Increasing the size and scope of the "double up food bucks" program will provide additional relief to SNAP recipients and increase sales for local farmers and merchants.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 11:35:03 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
G Asi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SNAP Incentives such as Double Up Food Bucks, eliminating the \$10 per day cap, and expanding protein sources offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawai'i during the pandemic. It makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families, supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food and stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy. I support this initiative and kindly ask for your consideration by supporting this too.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 11:42:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chad Taniguchi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Everyone needs access to fresh fruits and vegetables:)

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 11:46:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB512 is a win-win piece of legislation which provides food for our hungry families (at a time of historic economic distress in Hawai'i) and creates new markets for our local farmers (who are vital in our move toward greater food self-sufficiency). Please send it forward. Noel Kent UH Manoa

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 1:44:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephanie Mock	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB512 and hope you support this legislation as well. This bill is a win/win idea and helps to address three key areas that we can improve upon here in Hawai'i. This includes:

- Making healthy foods more affordable and supporting local families to be able to access the abundant agricultural products that are able to be grown in Hawai'i
- Supports local HI farmers by providing a consumer incentive to purchase locally (providing more stability and security for Hawai'i's farmers while also "supporting local")
- Strengthens and increases economic activity by keeping food dollars within our local economy instead of being spent on mainland products where revenue is not recycled back into our economy

With food insecurity being extremely high, I don't see why we wouldn't support this effort to help feed local families with local, fresh food grown right here by our local farmers/community members. Please consider supporting this legislation if you care about addressing food insecurity, supporting local agriculture/businesses, and strengthening our local economy.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 3:22:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cristeta Ancog	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a pediatrician, who worked 25 years on the Waianae coast, I **strongly** support SB 512 SD1, 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 (SD1).

The Covid-19 pandemic has amplified food insecurity in our state. Removing the \$10 cap increases the amount of local fresh fruit and vegetables that will be available to our needy families. In addition to providing healthy food, this bill will support our local farmers and keeps food dollars in our economy.

This bill is a win-win-win for our families, farmers and economy. I urge your support.

Sincerely,

Cristeta Ancog M.D.

Pediatrician

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 3:34:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Da Bux is worth funding for and deserves continue support. Please pass this bill into law asap so more healthy foods are affordable for hungry families. Thank you for your consideration!

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 12:56:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelsey Amos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SNAP double bux has been successful and should be expanded

Date: February 13, 2021

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

Re: **Strong Support for SB512 SD1**, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: February 16, 2021 at 10:00 AM Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Aloha Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

As a healthcare professional and member of the East Hawai'i community, I am writing in **strong support of SB512 SD1**, 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; 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.

Double Up Food Bucks provides a much needed, triple impact during the pandemic: (1) makes healthy foods more affordable and helps feed hungry families; (2) supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food; and (3) stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

Between December 2019 and 2020 the number of SNAP recipients in Hawai'i increased by 20%, to over 189,000 of our relatives, friends and neighbors.

SNAP helps recipients stretch limited food dollars rather than having to choose between buying food or other necessities.

And, SNAP helps stimulate the economy during this difficult time. Each SNAP dollar generates \$1.54 in economic activity supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees.

I **strongly support SB512 SD1** and respectfully ask you to pass this bill out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD
Kea'au, HI

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 6:14:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fatima Abed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this bill 100 percent! This will help the community by supporting local farmers and encouraging more families to eat healthier meals. Please pass this!

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 11:28:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good idea.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 11:29:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sunny Savage	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

in strong support

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 12:01:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Judith Perino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly urge passage of this bill.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 1:40:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Greg Puppione	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Whatever we can do to support and strengthen our food system, we should. This is a great way to do it and a wonderful way to provide more nutritious food to our community members who need it most.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 2:06:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Monica Stone	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB512. Mahalo for receiving my testimony.

February 14th, 2021

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Ways and Means Committee
Hawai'i State Legislature, Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

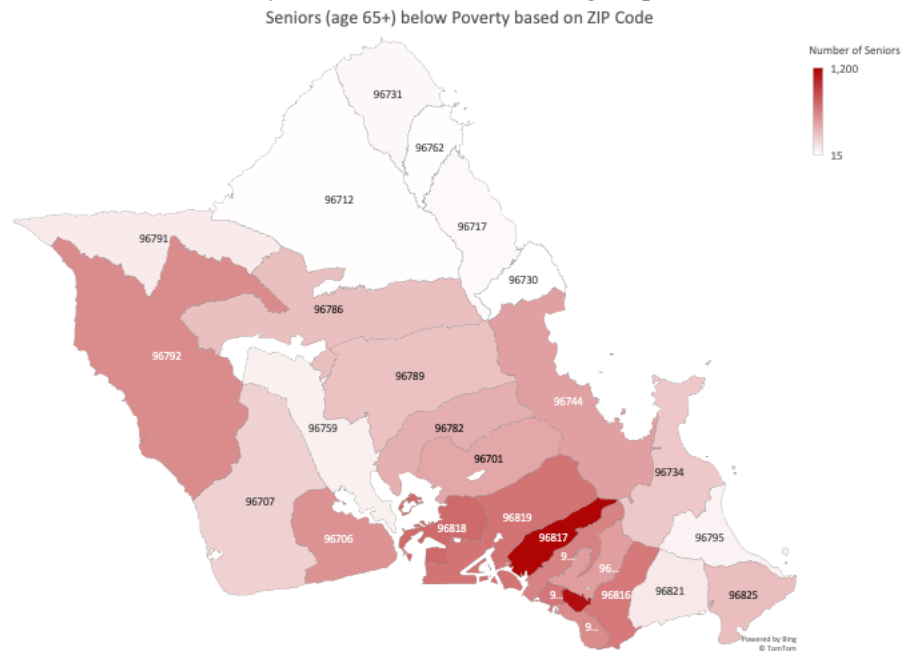
Re: COMMENTS for SB 512

*Relating to Double Up Food Bucks program
(Hearing on February 16th, 2021 at 10 a.m.)*

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Jin Young (Jenny) Lee. I am a Ph.D. student in Public Health at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa with a focus on food security for older adults. I am also the lead data analyst for the Kūpuna Food Security Coalition (KFSC) on O'ahu, which is a collaborative that brings together nearly 40 non-profit, government, private sector, and community organizations (including the City and County of Honolulu, AARP, the Weinberg Foundation, and Hawai'i Public Health Institute) to address the issue of food insecurity for seniors in need.

I would like to provide comments and context with respect to SB 512. First, I would like to THANK YOU for continuing to serve as champions in addressing the need for food security among the vulnerable populations of Hawai'i. As you know, as of 2019, over 19,000 seniors (age 65 and older) live below the poverty line in Hawai'i. These seniors are 11 times more likely to struggle with hunger than those with income at least 200% of the poverty line. This number, as you can imagine, has increased significantly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially with the cessation of most congregate meal programs and the reduced availability of volunteer drivers for home delivery of meals. This need is particularly concentrated in the metro area of Honolulu, as you can see in the following map:



As a researcher whose focus is food security among older adults, there is a wealth of published literature from all around the world regarding how imperative it is for older adults to have nutritious food in order to sustain their physical and mental health. As the data analyst for the KFSC, I have analyzed and confirmed the need that exists among our kūpuna and how critical it is to provide them with greater access to fresh produce, both financially and physically. Additionally, through the coalition work, I have witnessed many seniors, local farmers and vendors who are thrilled to have the Double Up Food Bucks program in place in that it supports all three groups. Personally, I feel so sad to see my parents, who are in their 70s', frequently choose to buy unhealthy, processed ingredients for their meals rather than fresh produce due to the cost of fresh produce. As such, I strongly support this bill, SB 512.

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.

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 out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activity.

While I completely understand that the economic impacts of the pandemic aren't just felt by the vulnerable populations of Hawai'i, but by the State itself as it tries to achieve a balanced budget, the Double Up Food Bucks program is exactly the kind of program that needs to be maintained in these challenging times. Not only does it make healthy foods more affordable for hungry families, it supports local farmers and stimulates the Hawai'i economy by keeping food dollars local. Thank you, in advance, for your support of this critical piece of legislation.

Most sincerely,

Jin Young (Jenny) Lee
(847) 641-0919
jyl808@hawaii.edu

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 4:34:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support!

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 9:54:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
janice palma-glennie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support SB512 that provides SNAP Incentives by removing the \$10 cap on the double up food bucks program and makes healthy proteins eligible purchases. This bill is critically important and supports economic, health, and small farmer priority objectives.

mahalo,

janice palma-glennie

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 10:13:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 10:58:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan Ramos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

To put it simply, DA BUX clearly works. Supporting the growth of this program is the right choice nutritionally, morally, and yes, even economically. I won't pretend to know the specifics of how this fits within the State's current budget outlook, but I know the local spending the program promotes and social benefits it delivers are worth raising the \$10 per visit per day cap, if not removing it all together. Thank you for considering this bill.

Sincerely,

Dylan Ramos

96816

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 8:45:00 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Jahn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing to express my support for SB512 as I feel it will help many families in Hawai'i. By removing the \$10 cap and allowing healthy proteins, families experiencing financial problems due to COVID-19, or other issues, do not have to sacrifice the health of themselves or their families. Mahalo for taking the time to read this testimony.

Me ke aloha,

Brian Jahn

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 11:18:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maki Morinoue	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

I support Bill SB512

As a volunteer and community organiser I help hui together local residents, gardeners and farmers to donate fresh food and protein to people in need. If you are at poverty level, you need good food to help feel hope and continue to make good choices. Our bodies need protein and they should be able to reach for healthier choices.

Mahalo

Maki

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 11:34:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael deYcaza	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good idea.

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 11:54:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meredith Buck	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB512. Though I myself do not rely on SNAP, many of my close friends and community members do. Sometimes, getting enough of the right healthy foods is a challenge, especially when it comes to healthy proteins. I'd love to see the \$10 cap on double-ups removed, as well as for healthy proteins to be eligible purchases. Mahalo nui.

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 1:03:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan P. Armstrong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou, Senator Dela Cruz and the Committee on Ways and Means:

SUBJECT: Senate Bill (SB) 512

I am in favor of this measure, SB 512, which would expand eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to healthy proteins.

Thank you for your consideration; again, please vote in favor.

Sincerely yours,
Dylan P. Armstrong, Manoa, Oahu
individual capacity

LATE

eFebruary 16, 2021

To: The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
The Honorable Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Zyra Morales

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Time: 10:00 A.M

Location: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Timeslot: WAM

SUBJECT: IN STRONG FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 512 RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

My name is Zyra Morales and I am currently a student in the School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am in **strong favor** of Senate Bill 512, which relates to supplemental nutrition assistance program incentives.

I **strongly support** this bill because:

1. In regards to the double up bucks' program, it will help to keep our federal funding here on the islands going considering this time of the pandemic.
2. The use of SNAP benefits will help those to purchase fresh produce at their local farmer's market.
3. Help to keep small business alive such as our local farmers market that provide fresh produce.
4. It promotes good health to families and children who are looking to consume healthier and nutrition options.

I hope that you consider to continue to support our local farmers market business' as much as I do as well as helping to keep our local economy intact and providing health benefits to families.

Mahalo,

Zyra Morales

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 3:49:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Lacques	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in strong SUPPORT of SB 512. It is encouraging to read all the support for this common sense bill which is significantly necessary during the COVID-19 health and economic crisis.

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 4:26:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support SB 512. Thank you.

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 5:29:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David M Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this SB512.

LATE

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 6:09:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fern Anuenue Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo Senators for hearing this bill! My 'ohana and I strongly support SB512. Mahalo!

SB-512-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 10:18:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/16/2021 10:00:00 AM



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

Comments:

Please support this bill, it will support the small farmers, as well as our economy and assist with health priorities. Mahalo.

Elizabeth Hansen, Hakalau HI 96710