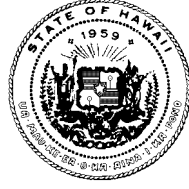


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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

March 9, 2021

TO: The Honorable Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

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

Hearing: Friday, March 12, 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, and the Senate Committee on Ways & Means, removed the appropriation section and defected the date.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the double up food bucks program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Effective 7/1/2050.

As of January 2021, 103,974 Hawaii households received SNAP benefits, a 30.6% increase since the pandemic started in March 2020. The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program dollar-for-dollar matching program helps SNAP participants increase their purchase of

March 12, 2021

Page 2

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.

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 PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

**MARCH 12, 2021
10:00 A.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 512 SD2
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 512 SD2. 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 or healthy proteins 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 197,958 SNAP recipients in February 2021, which is an increase of 30% compared to 152,252 recipients in February 2020 and an additional 18,753 recipients reported during the last six months, from September 2020 to February 2021.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
Friday, March 12, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

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

SB 512 SD2 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

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

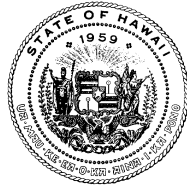
The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), by way of its Human Nutrition program, has responsibility for SNAP Education via the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), CTAHR Cooperative Extension Service. Therefore, CTAHR has a vested interest in this bill as it will affect our educational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

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

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

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

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



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

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

REPRESENTATIVE MARK J. HASHEM, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Hearing Date: March 12, 2021

Room Number: Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (DOH) defers to the Department of Agriculture
2 (DOA) regarding the implementation and fiscal impacts of this bill, and to the priorities set forth
3 in the Executive Budget Request.

4 **Department Testimony:** The DOH supports Senate Bill 512, Senate Draft 2 (S.B. 512, S.D. 2)
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
15 often have poorer diets and higher rates of chronic disease than middle class and wealthy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

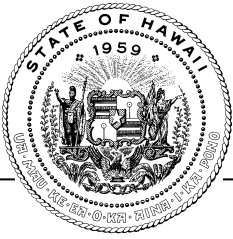
⁷ Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up in Farmers’ Markets: The Consumer Experience*. Fair Food Network, 2015.

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

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

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

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



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DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Friday, March 12, 2021
10:00 AM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

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

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

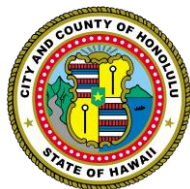
This expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX Program) will help to increase SNAP beneficiaries' access to fresh and healthy dietary options and support the efforts of the agricultural industry. In addition to increasing fresh and healthy food options for hungry families, an expansion of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

The Office of Planning *thanks* the Legislature for recently passing [Act 45, SLH 2020](#) to formally establish the State's Sustainability Program and expand the Office of Planning's role to include statewide climate adaptation, sustainability, and sea level rise adaptation planning and coordination.

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

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 257 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817
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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

MATTHEW GONSER, AICP, CFM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2021, 10:00 A.M.

STATE OF HAWAII
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

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

BY,

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

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

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

In the O'ahu Resilience Strategy,¹ the City recognized the importance of an affordable future for our island through Pillar I. Remaining Rooted, which includes the goals of reducing additional cost burdens and improving economic opportunity for residents. With the passage of City Ordinance 20-47, CCSR is committed to encouraging community alignment to increase food security through its food security and sustainability program, especially to frontline communities that have historically lacked access to healthy and affordable local food supplies. CCSR therefore views SB512, SD2 as essential to supporting affordability through economic and food security measures while simultaneously circulating more dollars in the local economy.

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

CCSR notes that prior to COVID-19, food insecurity was a persistent problem on O‘ahu and throughout the State, and that the pandemic has only exacerbated this issue. Per Aloha United Way’s 2017 ALICE report, even when income, government assistance, and non-profit food assistance were combined, there was still a 29 percent gap in resources for all Hawai‘i households to meet the basic ALICE threshold for food; and eating less healthy food was among the main coping strategies for households struggling to remain food secure.² By making SNAP dollars go further on healthy, locally grown foods, SB512, SD2 can help not only fill that resource gap, but also help make healthy food more affordable and accessible to our low-income families.

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

However, given the importance of the Double Up Food Bucks program, CCSR recommends reinserting language from the original version of this bill that appropriated an unspecified amount of funding to the program. Without funding provisions, this bill will be unable to deliver on its promise to either our local agricultural producers or our low-income families.

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

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

3 United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2017). *2017 Census of Agriculture County Profile, Honolulu County, Hawaii*,
https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Hawaii/cp15003.pdf.

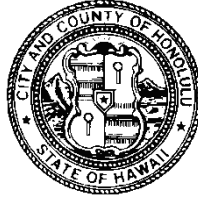
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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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
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Friday, March 12, 2021 10:00 AM
Via Videoconference

Relating to SB 512 SD2– SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES

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

The City and County of Honolulu Department of Community Services supports SB 512 SD2, 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 (SD2).

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.



March 12, 2021

The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

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

Dear Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on SB 512, SD2, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries under the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, also known as the double up food bucks program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Effective 7/1/2050.

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

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

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki
Director, Government Relations

Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Manager

Before:
House Committee on Agriculture
The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

March 12, 2021
10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference

Re: SB 512 SD2 Relating to Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Incentives

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 512 SD2, 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 SD2.

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 SD2 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 SD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/9/2021 5:40:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Megan Fox	Malama Kauaï	Support	No

Comments:

This program has been crucial to addressing food producers' needs and those who are experiencing food insecurity in our community. This opportunity to double the impact of state funds using Federal dollars is uncommon, and an incredible investment in our food system and families in need.



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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 Agriculture
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 12, 2021
TIME: 10am
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: SB512 SD2 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.



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

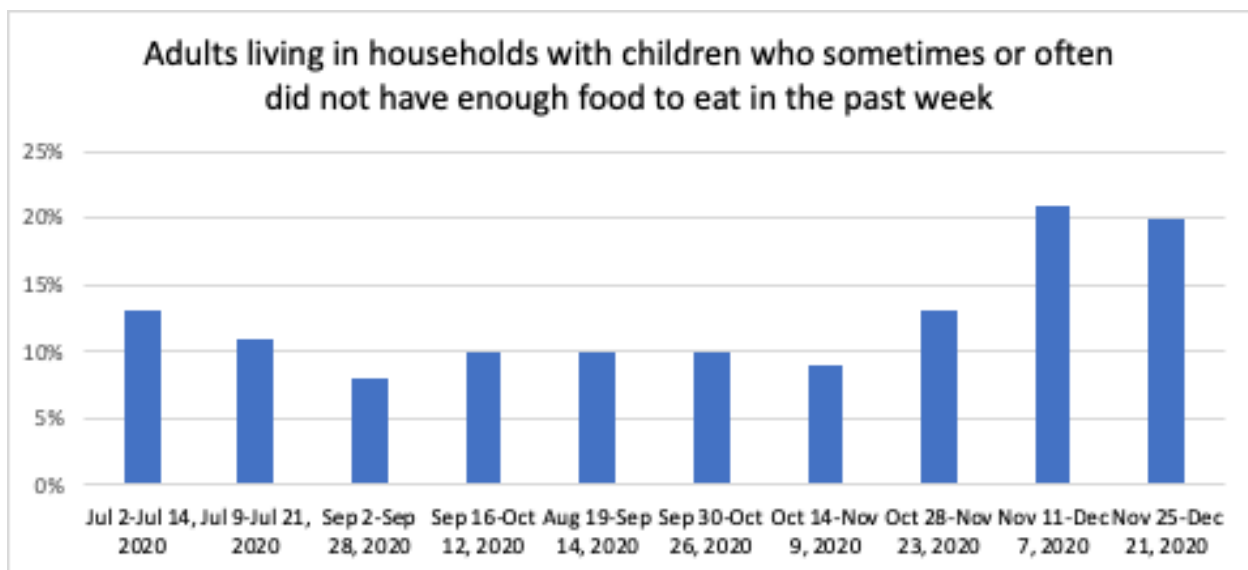
Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Representative Hashem, Chair
Representative Perruso, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

Re: **SB 512 SD2- Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**
10:00 AM, March 12, 2021

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and committee members,

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



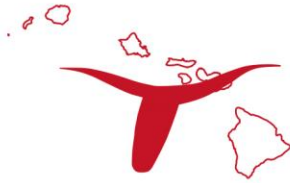
The Double Up program helps families purchase fresh produce with twice the purchasing power. Families' food budgets go farther, and the economy sees the benefit. We have an opportunity to build on the success of the Double Up program and help families during this difficult time. We respectfully request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

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



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair

Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

SB512 SD2

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Friday, March 12, 2021, 10:00 am

Via Videoconference

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

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

We appreciate the opportunity to support SB512 SD2.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture
Friday, March 12, 2021 at 10:00 A.M.
Written Testimony**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



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

March 12, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Via Videoconference & Conference Room 325

To: The Honorable Chair Mark J. Hashem
The Honorable Vice Chair Amy A. Perruso
House Committee on Agriculture

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

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

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

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

As a Medicaid health insurer, many 'Ohana Health Plan members qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Hawaii Medicaid program saw an increase in enrollment due to the economic downturn. 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 SD2. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this 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

March 12, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

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

Conference Room 325
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Perusso, 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.

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.



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: March 10, 2021

To: Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair, Representative Amy A. Perruso,
Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Agriculture

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

Re: Support for SB 512 SD 2

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Perruso, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) supports SB 512 SD 2, 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 SD 2 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



March 12, 2021

The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

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

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

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

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 of SB 512, SD2.

Sincerely,

HAHP Public Policy Committee

cc: HAHP Board Members

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:12:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Dobovan	Kulahaven Farms LLC	Support	No

Comments:

As a both a farmer and a volunteer with the Maui Food Hub I get to see the benefits of this measure to both growers and consumers alike. I can assure you that our farmers need all of the support they can get, even in the best of times. And there are so many struggling families and individuals out there who desperately need nutritious food. I urge you to support this bill as it extends and improves upon the success of the current program and is sorely needed by our farmers and our community.

Sincerely,

John Dobovan



March 10, 2021

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

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

In Support

Dear Rep. Hashem, Rep. Perruso and members of the Committee:

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

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

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

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

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

Larry Geller
Project Director
GreenWheel Food Hub

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:28:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Strongly Support SB512 SD2 to Increase Access to Healthy Foods!

www.WeAreOne.cc



**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture
Friday, March 12, 2021; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325
Via Videoconference**

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

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

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 0512, Senate Draft 2, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

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

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

This bill would also take effect on July 1, 2050, to facilitate further discussion.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

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

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0512, Senate Draft 2
Friday, March 12, 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.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

March 12, 2021 10:00 AM

In SUPPORT of SB512 SD2:

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the committee,

On behalf of our 27,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly supports SB512 SD2**, 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 and encourages sustainable agricultural practices the further supports Hawai'i's farmers, fishermen, and ranchers. Passage of this bill is especially necessary during the COVID-19 health and economic crisis and we feel that appropriating additional funds to this program is money well spent.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB512**.



ALOHACARE

Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021

To: The Honorable Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice-Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Senior Policy Analyst, External Affairs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mahalo for considering SB512 SD2.

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



Kamehameha Schools®

House Committee on Agriculture

Date: March 12, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

TESTIMONY

By Pia Chock

Strategy Consultant, Community & 'Āina Resiliency Group

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

E ka Luna Ho'omalū Hashem, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalū Perruso, a me nā Lālā o kēia Kōmike, aloha!

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

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

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

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

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!

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 6:40:12 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorraine Leslie	American Diabetes Association	Support	No

Comments:

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) supports SB 512, legislation requiring more flexibility in state funding provided to the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program by 1) removing the \$10 daily cap on incentives that can be issued to SNAP recipients for the purchase of local foods, and 2) allowing healthy local proteins to be eligible purchases.

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

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

Diabetes is an epidemic in the United States and in Hawaii. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over 30 million Americans have diabetes and face its devastating consequences. An estimated 142,000 people in Hawaii, or 12% of the adult population, have diabetes. An additional 442,000 have prediabetes and are at risk for developing the disease.

Maintaining a healthy weight by consuming a diet of nutritious foods is can reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease. As such, the ADA supports policies that remove affordability barriers to healthy foods.

It is imperative we take steps to improve access to nutritious foods for all but perhaps most importantly for our keiki. Studies have shown obese children and adolescents are five times more likely to face obesity in adulthood. Obesity is associated with childhood-onset of type 2 diabetes, adult onset of type 2 diabetes and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease-the largest cause of mortality among people with diabetes.

Every year, 8,000 people are diagnosed with diabetes in Hawaii. The ADA supports SB 512 to stop this epidemic by improving access to nutrition foods today and for future generations in our state.

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



House Committee on Agriculture

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

Friday, March 12th, 2021 10:00 a.m.

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

HAPA strongly supports SB 512 SD2 to remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX). HAPA appreciates that SB 512 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 SD2 and measures such as these that support farmers and families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Anne Frederick
Executive Director

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

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



March 11, 2021

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means and Agriculture and Environment

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

The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
The Honorable Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

RE: Strong Support for SB 512

Hrg: March 12, 2021 at 10:00 am, House conference room 325 Via Videoconference

The Hawaii Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 400 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawaii through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. Therefore, as stewards of public health, HPHA is advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA strongly supports SB 512, which improves access to healthy food options by making fresh, locally grown produce more affordable for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. Specifically, SB 512 will: (1) remove 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 Double Up Food Bucks Program); (2) allow healthy proteins as eligible purchases under the program; (3) makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program. This benefits low-income individuals and families in our community who need assistance, while also supporting local farmers and investing in our local economy.

SNAP is a vital resource for those with low-income and experience food insecurity. Food insecurity is directly related to poor health outcomes and contributes to health inequities. Specifically, individuals who experience food insecurity have a higher risk for conditions such as malnutrition and obesity due to low-nutrition options with less expense processed foods versus access to fresh foods and healthy proteins.¹ In December 2020, there were over 189,000 low-income SNAP recipients in the state. This is a 20% increase from the year before, demonstrating a growing need in our population.² As stewards of public health, HPHA is an advocate for health equity for vulnerable populations. Access to healthy food options is a key policy intervention to ensure health equity.¹

Increasing access to healthy food and supporting local agriculture is good for public health and the local economy. We strongly support SB 512 and respectfully ask that you pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue affecting members of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holly Kessler'.

Holly Kessler
Executive Director
Hawaii Public Health Association

References:

1. Kumanyika, S.K. A Framework for Increasing Equity Impact in Obesity Prevention Am J Public Health. 2019; 109, (10): 1350-1357
2. Action Alert: DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks. Hawaii Public Health Institute. <https://www.hiphi.org/dufb2021/?emci=d4280b9e-5a81-eb11-85aa-00155d43c992&emdi=7de334dc-e981-eb11-85aa-00155d43c992&ceid=2353485>. Accessed March 10, 2021.

7192 Kalanianaʻole Highway, Suite A143A, PMB 226, Honolulu, HI 96825-1832
www.hawaiipublichealth.org info@hawaiipublichealth.org



March 11, 2021

To: Chair Hashem
Vice Perruso
House Committee on Agriculture

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for SB512 SD2**

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

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

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

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

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

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.



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

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

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

The “Da Bux” program matches SNAP dollars spent on 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’s dietary guidelines state:

*“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.

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

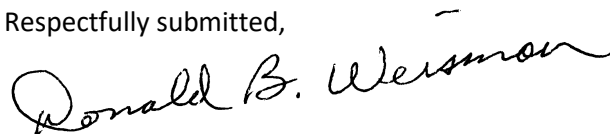
Finally, we understand that finding funding during this difficult budget crisis will be challenging. However, the recent passage of federal relief funding legislation is expected to help address the state's budget concerns. **We hope, at minimum, that legislators will be able provide funding to maintain existing "Da Bux" programs through this budget cycle. The rough estimated total cost to maintain existing programs will be \$4,250,000 to support fruit and vegetables incentives discounts from July 2021-Aug 2023 (that figure could be met through combined state, private and federal funding). That would support approximately 12,500 Hawaii SNAP customers per month.**

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

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

The American Heart Association urges legislators to consider the American Heart Association's suggested amendments to SB 512, SD2 to help reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables to those who might be economically challenged to afford access to those foods vital to improved health and reduced obesity.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald B. Weisman
Hawaii Government Relations/Communications Director



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Friday, March 12, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.

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

Dear Chair Hashem and Members of the Committee:

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

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

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

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

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

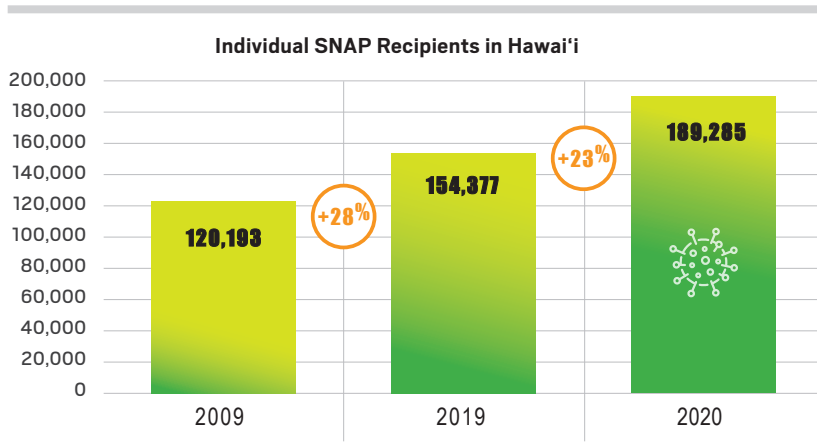
Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Attachment

SNAP DA BUX Expansion Proposal

Feeding communities by uplifting local farmers

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



THE PROBLEM

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



THE SOLUTION

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



By the Numbers

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

PROJECT CONCEPT

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



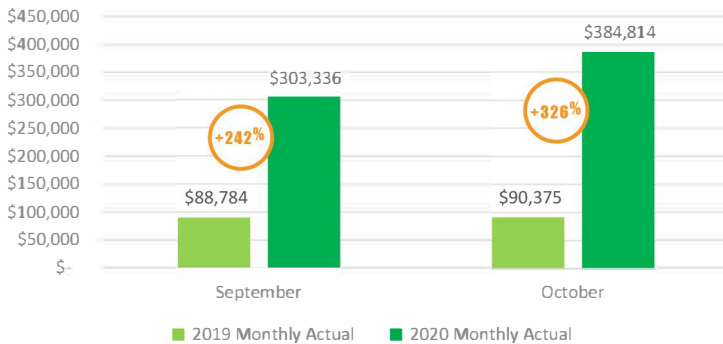
Potential Impact: \$23 million

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

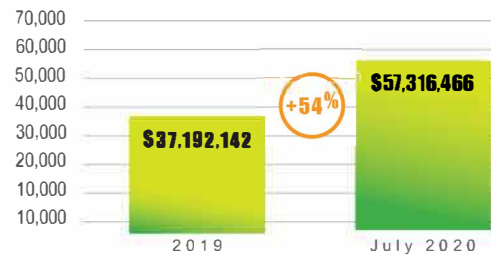
State funding	\$ 2,500,000
Federal GusNIP grant	\$ 2,500,000
Total funding for DA BUX	\$ 5,000,000
Federal SNAP purchase	\$ 5,000,000
Total funding for SNAP & DA BUX	\$ 10,000,000
Economic multiplier	2.3
Potential economic impact	\$ 23,000,000
State funding leverage ratio	3.0x

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

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



Monthly SNAP Benefits Paid for Hawai'i SNAP Participants



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

9th

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

23%

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

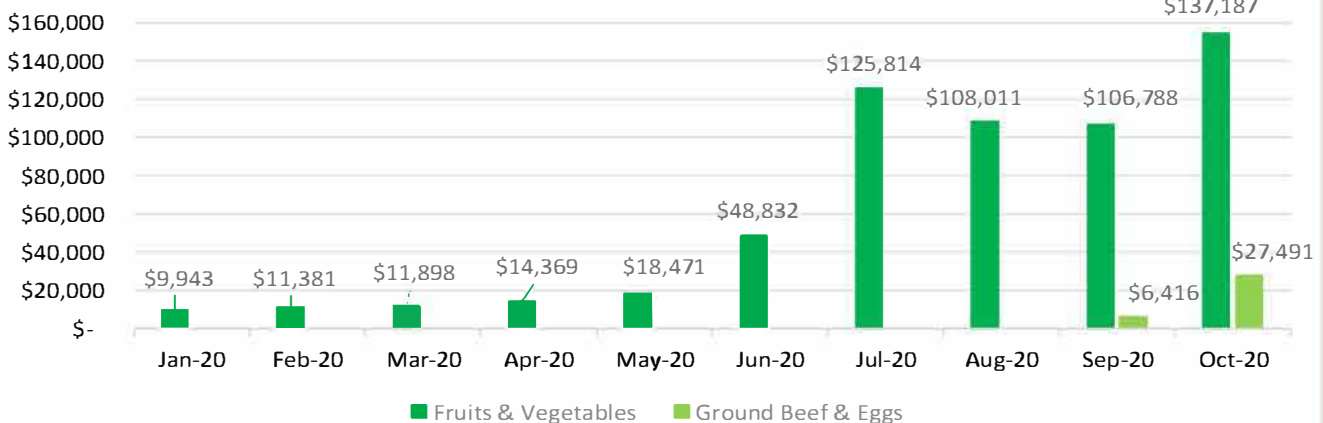
54%

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

14x

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

Monthly Total DA BUX Incentives Redeemed in 2020



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

² The list of qualifying items was expanded in 2020.

PROJECT BENEFITS

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

Triple-Win Solution

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

Furthermore, state funds generate significant leverage:

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



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

OBJECTIVES

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

OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONS

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

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



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

To: The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perusso, Vice Chair
And Members of the House Committee on Agriculture

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

Re: Testimony in Support of SB512 SD2
Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives
Date: Friday, March 12, 2021
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: Via Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Perusso and members of the Agriculture Committee,

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

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

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

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



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
March 12, 2021 – 10:00 A.M. - Videoconference

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Friday, March 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM
Via Video Conference

House Committee on Agriculture

To: Representative Mark Hashem, Chair
Representative Amy Perruso, Vice Chair

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HIPHI Board

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Chair
KM Consulting LLC*

*Michael Robinson, MBA, MA
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*JoAnn Tsark, MPH
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Molokai Community Health
Center*

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Resources*

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Pediatrics*

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

*Garret Sugai
Kaiser Permanente*

Date: March 11, 2021

To: Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture

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

Hrg: March 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM via Videoconference

The Obesity Prevention Task Force, a program of Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ, is in **Strong Support of SB 512, SD2**, which expands the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program by allowing the program to include healthy local proteins and removing 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 DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks (DA BUX), provides a dollar-for-dollar match on locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients. Through this program, low-income families are able to bring home healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and bring in more income, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

Incentivizing the use of SNAP dollars for fresh fruits and vegetables not only stretches food dollars for families, but it also brings home nutritious food that the entire family can enjoy. Crediting SNAP dollars creates room in the families' budget for other household and healthcare expenses so that food dollars can be spent on locally grown food such as taro, papaya, Hamakua mushrooms, and other produce instead of cheaper, unhealthy alternatives.

DA BUX provides a strong return on investment.

In 2019, the Hawai'i State Legislature provided \$100,000 in funding to expand the DA BUX program statewide. This small investment grew to a nearly \$2 million through matches from philanthropic organizations and federal government. This funding allowed the program to expand to over 60 new retail locations, greatly increasing SNAP participants' access to the program. After the expansion, more than two-thirds

(77%) of all SNAP-participating households having a Double Up Food Bucks retailer within a reasonable shopping distance of their homes, a 272% increase from 2018 to 2020ⁱⁱ.

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

The demand for DA BUX has risen significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hawaii's tourism-dependent economy has been devastated by the pandemic, with the highest rate of unemployment in the nation at 9.3% in December 2020^{iv}. There has also been a dramatic uptick in SNAP recipients – over 189,000 SNAP recipients in the state, a 20% increase from the year before^v. In December 2020, SNAP sales of incentivized local produce at 30 participating DA BUX grocery stores increased 167% compared to 2019 average sales.

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

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for health, agriculture, and the local economy, and is a lifeline for many during the pandemic. We are in strong support of this measure and respectfully ask you to **pass SB 512, SD2** 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 Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

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

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

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

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

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

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



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting SB 512 – Relating to SNAP Incentives
House Committee on Agriculture
Scheduled for hearing at Friday, March 12, 2021, 10:00AM

Dear Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 512**, which would remove the \$10/day purchasing cap and allow the purchase of local protein under the Healthy Food Incentive Program. The bill would also appropriate funds to ensure the program continues for another two years.

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

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

The economic impact of SNAP incentives is hard to overstate. On top of the economic benefits detailed above, there are additional federal funds available for the program, which can only be unlocked through a match. While we understand that the appropriation was removed due to

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

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

The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.

budget constraints, we're still hopeful of obtaining the match from Hawai'i's philanthropic community, and appreciate the state's former economic support.

This bill is truly a win for everyone—families, farmers and local businesses. There is no downside. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



March 10, 2021

Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

Support of SB 512, S.D.2 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Incentives (Removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program; specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program; effective 7/1/2050.)

Friday, March 12, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.; Conference Room 325 Via Videoconference

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

March 11, 2021

To: The Honorable Mark Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy Perruso, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture

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

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST
ALBRECHT

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

ANN EBESUNO
BOARD CHAIR

WARREN LEE
VICE CHAIR

DENNIS LIN
TREASURER

JULIA ZEE
SECRETARY

STEPHEN UEDA

TINA TAMAI

JASMINE
KIERNAN

MARK
KRZYZANOWSKI

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 512 SD2, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Aloha Chair Hashem and Vice Chair Perruso,

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

The Food Basket has been pioneering dollar-for-dollar matching programs for locally grown produce 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 Hawaii'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 food 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 average 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>.

WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG

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SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 4:14:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Food insecurity is an unacceptable situation for many Hawai'i families. Until we know that not a single child or family member is free from food insecurity, supplemental assistance programs should always be expanded. Mahalo for supporting our communities especially during this difficult economic time.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 4:44:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristen Alice	HOPE	Support	No

Comments:

Hope Services Hawai'i, Hawai'i Island's largest homeless services provider, strongly supports this bill.



Date: March 11, 2021

To: House Committee on Agriculture
The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

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

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector 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.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 8:17:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Mulinix	Our Revolution Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee,

On behalf of Our Revolution Hawaii's 7,000 members and supporters, we stand in STRONG SUPPORT of SB512 SD2, double up bucks program, which helps low-income families bring home more healthy food, and helps local farmers sell more of their produce.

Please vote in support of SB512 SD2.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Dave Mulinix

Cofounder & Hawaii State Community Organizer

Our Revolution Hawaii



To: The House Committee on Agriculture
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Friday, March 12, 2021, 10am

In strong support of SB512 SD2

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Agriculture Committee members,

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

The Double Up Food Bucks Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh local produce. SB512 SD2 will help low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

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

Please pass SB512 SD2 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



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO

DATE: Friday, March 12, 2021 (10:00 a.m., Conference Rm. 325)

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

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

CCH supports SB 512, SD2, 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, SD2. 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.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/9/2021 3:58:05 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wendy Arbeit	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Whatever the law can do to support local farmers and help low-income families to purchase Hawaii-grown produce will benefit Hawaii by keeping dollars in the local economy. Matching SNAP dollars without a daily limit is an excellent use of our tax dollars as it will support the health of the purchasers as well as local agriculture. Since this Act is so beneficial, it certainly should take effect as soon as possible, and not be delayed the absurd amount of nearly 30 years.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/9/2021 4:42:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kodie Solis-Kalani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha nui kākou,

I support SB512 because it increases access by allowing 'ohana to purchase enough healthy, nutritious foods, especially those of low-income. The health of our people equals the health of our communities while also supporting local farmers and local economy.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/9/2021 5:54:59 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hunter Heavilin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture,

Social safety net programs to address household food insecurity are critical to sustain individuals and families across the islands. The Double Up Food Bucks program is an exemplary approach that achieves manifold outcomes through increasing access to fresh health food, expanding local farm sales outlets, and incentivizing local purchasing by food market outlets. I **strongly support SB512** and hope this committee will as well.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

-Hunter Heavilin

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/9/2021 10:51:08 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I write in support of SB512. In my experience, SNAP kept food on the table throughout the entire pandemic while I was unemployed and had no income as an artist. I prioritized fresh, locally-grown foods from Kokua Kalihi Valley - Roots Cafe Market because I knew it would be my best line of defense in keeping my immune system healthy during COVID. With the double bucks program, I was able to support local farmers while also supporting myself. The best way for us to survive as a community is to continue to prioritize healthy, local food that draws on our ancestral practices. Please pass SB 512 to continue to support Hawaii's families and people.

Mahalo nui, Rebecca Maria Goldschmidt

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 7:57:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keisa Liu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Keisa Liu and I am writing in **full support of SB512 SD2.**

Things have changed since I was a child on WIC, Free Lunch, and Food Stamps. I am happy to say for the better. There is continued interest and push to make sure there is access to fresh fruits and vegetables for everyone, regardless of socio-economic status.

Access to healthy food is one more step in ensuring ALL of our keiki have everything they need to grow into their fullest potential. That is why I am in **full support of SB512 SD2.**

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 8:39:50 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am a tax payer, parent, and health educator for the state health department. I live in Pukalani on Maui.

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

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

I encourage you to vote in strong support of SB512. Good for our people and good for our economy.

Mahalo, Kristin Mills

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 8:54:57 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heidi Teraoka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB 512 to expand the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program by removing the \$10 daily cap and allows healthy local proteins to be eligible under the program.

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

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

Mahalo for the chance to provide written testimony.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 9:14:10 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I come from Papakālea, O‘ahu currently residing in Mā‘ili‘ili. I'm writing in support of SB512 because purchasing enough healthy, nutritious foods should be easy to begin with for Hawaii's low-income families. This bill will help families to reduce household food insecurity and improve their overall health. This bill also supports local farmers and the local economy in which Hawai‘i needs to start investing and creating plans now to sustain that in case of a catastrophic event one that we're currently in like the pandemic.

Support this bill.

me ke aloha ‘Āina,

Nanea Lo

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 9:43:45 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 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 SD2 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. This boosts SNAP participation, helps our local economy, advances our food production goals and reduces healthcare costs! It really is a triple win, and I hope the state will continue to fund and expand the program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 10:54:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Loren Lindborg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

DA Bux Double Up Food Bucks offers solutions to important issues in Hawaii like making healthy foods more affordable, supporting local farmers by offering incentives for buying local and by encouraging economic activity by keeping food dollars in the Hawaiian economy.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 11:02:13 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bev Brody	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to voice Strong Support for SB 512 which expands the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program by removing the \$10 daily cap and allows healthy local proteins to be eligible under the program. This bill supports local farmers through incentivizing the purchase of locally-grown produce. It also makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families during these unprecedented times. And thirdly, it stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy! It's truly a WIN-WIN-WIN!

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 11:21:30 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jean Butel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB 512, expansion of the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program. Since the start of the BA BUX program, access to a Double-Bucks retailer near SNAP participating households has increased by 349%. Having access to fresh fruits and vegetables benefits the health and wellbeing of SNAP beneficiaries and supports local farmers. During this time of uncertainty, it is important to support the families most impacted from COVID-19. Let's keep Hawaii's families healthy. Please support SB 512.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 11:56:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aimee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB512 because it supports a healthy lifestyle and local farmers. There really should be no cap on using SNAP benefits for locally grown foods sold at venues other than supermarkets and grocery stores. People need to eat well. Thank you.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:03:35 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

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

The program is a win-win-win for the state. Please pass this bill into law asap.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:20:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shelley Fey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in strong support of the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks incentive program and the expansion to remove the \$10 daily cap and inclusion of local protein to be eligible under the program. The benefits of enhancing this program is undeniable. It makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families, it supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food and it stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

I encourage you to support this program by passing bill SB 512.

Mahalo,

Shelley Fey

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:21:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Heather Mohr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha! I'd like to show my support for the expansion of the Da Bux program. Increased accessibility and affordability not only encourages our local families to invest in their health and wellness but this program also supports our local food producers, farmers and retailers.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:27:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gaylene L Barron	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill except for the ACT effective date of July 1, 2050. I believe this measure will help struggling families with food resources adding much needed support during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Gaylene Barron

88 Mamao Place

Haiku, HI 96708

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:36:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

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

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

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 12:58:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
briana kawata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SUPPORT LOCAL FARMERS AND OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 1:06:03 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaimo Muhlestein	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB 512, SD 2.

My health has turned for the better because of diet and exercise. The diet I chose to eat is fruits, vegetables, and proteins. WHOLE FOODS.

The other benefit... is the savings cost. Buying WHOLE FOODS is good on the budget.

Please pass SB 512, SD 2

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 1:14:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB512 is really a win-win type of bill. It help people in the SNAP program gain access to fresh, locally produced food which supports their health (and the development of children's minds and bodies) and provides incentives for local food producers to make Hawai'i more self-sufficient. Imua! Noel Kent Professor Emeritus UH Manoa

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 1:36:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Carolyn Eaton and I am an Oahu voter. I strongly support SB 512 to promote healthy diets for every family which must rely on the SNAP benefits. I choose these healthy, fresh fruits and vegetables for myself and know first hand their prices often exceed the prices of "fresh" produce shipped from great distances. This seems like a winning arrangement--good for local ag and good for struggling families. Mahalo for your consideration of SB512.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 2:11:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha

Please support this bill! We must make it easier for Hawaii's low income families to buy enough local healthy food, especially in this time of food insecurity.

Mahalo!

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 2:20:12 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Valerie Rose	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This bill for Da Bux Double Up Food Bucks Program is a triple win for families, farmers, and the local economy

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 2:21:21 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, my family consists of just me and my mom. She lost her job in October and I have been out of work for two years. Last November I enrolled in SNAP. Through this program, in conjunction with Da Bux Double Up Food Bucks, I am able to purchase fresh local produce that I otherwise could not afford. During December I was able to purchase local ground beef, eggs and seafood. Even when my mom and I were working full time we would normally buy the cheapest options, which was not always healthy or local. The past few months we have been eating better thanks to SNAP and Da Bux. We would appreciate have the program expand to include more local products. Mahalo nui.

Date: March 10, 2021

To: The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture

Re: **Strong Support for SB512 SD2**, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: March 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM via Videoconference in Conference Room 325

Aloha House Committee on Agriculture,

As a member of the East Hawai'i community and licensed healthcare professional I am writing in **strong support of SB512 SD2**, 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.

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 SD2** 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-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 3:25:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
mary santa maria	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha ,

Please pass this bill. 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.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide support testimony

Mary Santa Maria

Maui

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 4:23:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this bill which is so important for the health of our keiki!

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 5:48:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support the Double Up Bucks Program to enhance SNAP benefits to include healthy proteins.

Mahalo for allowing me to provide testimony.

Barbara J. Service MSW (ret.)

Senior Advocate

March 10, 2021

TO: House Chair Mark J. Hashem
House Vice Chair Amy A. Perruso
House Committee on Agriculture

SUBJECT: **S.B. 512 S.D. 2 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

HEARING: Friday, March 12, 2021, 10:00AM
Via Videoconference, State Capitol
Conference Room 325

Aloha, Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Caitlen Tacadena. I am a college student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, majoring in Social Work at the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health. I am testifying in favor of Senate Bill 512 Senate Draft 2 to expand the double-up food bucks program administered by the Hawaii department of agriculture. By doing so, locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and healthy proteins will be accessible to families who receive assistance through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Fruits and vegetables are essential to health, especially for children. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it is crucial to encourage children to eat more fruits and vegetables. The CDC has found that childhood dietary patterns are associated with food patterns later in life. Children need to have healthy eating habits to reduce the risk of developing poor nutrition in the future. Fruits and vegetables provide the necessary vitamins and minerals needed to prevent various health problems such as heart disease, stroke, and some forms of cancer.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has affected many local families and has expressed the dire need for assistance during these trying times. Many Hawaii residents are struggling to put food on the table. The Department of Human Services has found that in February 2020, the total of SNAP recipients was 152,252. A year later, the total recipients increased to 197,958. Families are needing assistance programs such as SNAP now more than ever. This bill could also help Hawaii farmers as eating local produce can protect and enhance farmland security.

I strongly support this bill as I believe it will positively impact and change the lives of local families who are currently struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our hard-working local farmers who also need our support, and overall, will help create a happier and healthier Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Caitlen Tacadena

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2021 10:24:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Farias	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support SB512 it is an awesome program that allow families access to and in fact encourages purchase of healthier locally grown foods. In addition it supports local farmers thus supporting their Ohana in the process. SB 512 also supports families going out into the communities and shopping at the Farmer's Markets, thus setting the tone for healthy food choices not just now but in the future, and community building and relationships even once one is no longer receiving SNAP benefits.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 12:23:17 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Everyone needs access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and proteins.

Hawaii farmers can provide these healthy foods at reasonable prices.

We will be healthier, more self-sufficient if we work together in Hawaii.

Expand this government program to support local people and local farmers.

Mahalo!

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 8:34:48 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Siobhan Coad	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am strongly in support of SB 512. This bill promotes equitable access to local produce for families who experience food insecurity. This bill invests in the members of our community and empowers Hawai'i from within. Not only does this bill improve the health and nutrition of those utilizing SNAP benefits, but it injects capital into our own local food and agricultural systems. COVID-19 has illuminated how important the ability to be self-sustaining is, and passage of this bill is a good step in the right direction.

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 9:22:48 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rayleen Egami	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. The cap per day limits the ability of a person to be efficient when purchasing produce/goods. Not everyone can shop on an everyday basis in order to maximize SNAP benefits at \$10 match/day by returning everyday to maximize this benefit. I feel that it incentivizes the use of more resources to access this benefit at its true potential. We live in a state where everything is expensive, including food items. I feel there are more efficient ways that this benefit could be utilized in a manner that provides easier pathways for access. Mahalo nui!

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 9:33:32 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support sb512 sd2

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 11:06:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brooke Holderbaum	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, respected members of our state Congress,

I am writing support SB512, because it will promote a shift toward consuming locally-produced food and support the local economy. In the short term, the bill seems to benefit the health of food-insecure residents and local farmers as well as reduce the environmentally unfriendly shipping of some goods to our islands. In the long term, the economic, health, and environmental benefits can persist, and possibly expand, to other areas of our lives.

Mahalo,

Brooke Holderbaum

Maui resident

SB-512-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2021 11:20:14 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB512. As an educator with many students whose families rely on SNAP, I know that it would make a huge difference in kid's lives & school performance to be able to eat more fresh produce and healthy proteins. Please pass SB512.