

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



ANNE E. PERREIRA-EUSTAQUIO
DIRECTOR

JOANN A. VIDINHAR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JOVANIE DOMINGO DELA CRUZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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IN REPLY, REFER TO:
OCS 22.1055

February 28, 2022

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair,
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Date: Tuesday, March 1, 2022

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

From: Jovanie Domingo Dela Cruz, Executive Director
DLIR – Office of Community Services

Position: Support

Re: H.B. 1745 HD 1 – APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII'S FOOD BANKS

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

H.B. 1745 HD1 would appropriate an unspecified sum to the four food banks in the State that perform distribution services for the federal TEFAP program. The funds would be directed to the Office of Community Services (OCS), an agency attached to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to administer the grant. OCS is the State administrator of the TEFAP program and thus already works with the four identified food banks.

The bill states that the funds “shall be used for general operations, including staffing, transportation, food purchase, food storage, and food distribution costs.” The bill further states that OCS would distribute the funds “pursuant to the same methodology used by The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) of the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture to determine the allocation of TEFAP foods to each of the food banks.”

II. CURRENT LAW

Currently, there are no local appropriations that supplement TEFAP or a TEFAP-like program. Since H.B. 1745 HD1 would involve appropriation of local funds, OCS would need to implement the fiscal as well as programmatic administration of a grant under H.B. 1745 HD1 separately from administration of TEFAP, although they could operate on parallel tracks.

III. COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED BILL

OCS is pleased to support this bill. We also appreciate the confidence that the sponsors of the bill are expressing in OCS’s abilities to administer such a grant. OCS joins the sponsors of this bill, and the four food banks, in our mutual firm belief that food insecurity is a very serious challenge in Hawaii at present, especially because of the lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1745, H.D. 1

March 1, 2022
11:00 a.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII'S FOOD BANKS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1745, H.D. 1, appropriates unspecified general funds in FY 23 to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Office of Community Services (OCS), to help Hawaii's food banks meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bill specifies that the funds are to provide operational support for the Hawaii Foodbank, Maui Food Bank, Hawaii Foodbank – Kaua'i Branch, and The Food Basket, provided that 1% of the funds shall be allocated to OCS to carry out the purposes of this Act, provided further that the remaining funds shall be used for general operations, including staffing, transportation, food purchase, food storage, and food distribution costs.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Gabe Johnson
Kelly Takaya King
Michael J. Molina
Tamara Paltin
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
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WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

February 28, 2022

TO: Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

DATE: February 28, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF HB 1745, HD1, RELATING TO APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII'S FOOD BANKS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure to appropriate funds to support Hawaii's food banks.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity throughout the State, with many in our communities facing increasing difficulties in meeting their basic needs for food and nutrition.
2. Many of our working families rely on organizations like the Maui Food Bank to provide the food assistance they need to prevent hunger and the negative health, employment, education and other outcomes that result from hunger and inadequate sustenance.
3. With the decline in federal funding for local food assistance, additional support from the State is needed to ensure there are no gaps in the ability of Maui Food Bank to serve our community members in need.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.



February 26, 2022

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: Testimony in support of HB 1745, Appropriating Funds to Support Hawaii's Food Banks

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Committee Members,

As the President and CEO of Hawaii Foodbank, **I am writing in strong support of HB 1745**, which would appropriate critical funds to address food insecurity in our State.

Food insecurity is a grave issue in Hawai'i. **One in six Hawai'i residents will struggle with hunger this year, including 82,000 children.** That's approximately one in four keiki who may go to bed hungry, or whose parents or grandparents will choose to go without so that their keiki can eat. **Hawai'i has the second highest rate of child food insecurity in the United States.**

Imagine having to make the choice between buying food for your family or other crucial needs, such as electricity, childcare or medicine. Due to our high cost of living, many hardworking residents are forced to do this on a regular basis. **No one should be in the position to have to make a choice to go hungry.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing economic difficulties for many families and presented new challenges for others who found themselves struggling to put food on the table for the first time. And, food prices have increased significantly during COVID. Grocery prices have gone up 15% in the last two years, and some foods are much more expensive than they were before—the cost of meats, fish, poultry and eggs have risen by 32%. Earlier in the pandemic, many households were kept afloat by unemployment benefits, federal child tax credits, and CARES Act funds, but continued federal pandemic aid is uncertain.

Meanwhile, at Hawaii Foodbank, **we are still serving 50% more people in 2021 than we did in 2019.** Last year, we distributed 23 million pounds of food on O'ahu and 2 million pounds of food on Kaua'i, providing food for more than 20 million meals—about **twice as much food as prior to the pandemic.** We have been able to meet the increased need due to a major increase in federal funds and philanthropy; however, we need support from the State to continue to meet the needs of our community and ensure no-one in our State goes hungry. Already, federal commodity distributions to Hawai'i have decreased substantially over the past year, and philanthropic support, while still higher than before the pandemic, has declined as well.

HB 1745 will provide crucial operational support to Hawai'i's food banks and ensure we can continue to provide healthy, nutritious food to those we serve. Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

Amy Marvin
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank



To: House Committee on Finance

Hearing Date/Time: March 1, 2022 11:00 AM

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1745 HD1

From: Heather Lusk, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

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

The Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) strongly supports HB 1745 HD1 which would increase the amount of funds available for Hawaii's food banks. Food insecurity was already one of Hawaii's biggest challenges prior to the COVID-19 epidemic and it is now reaching a crisis.

HHHRC's mission is to *reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific*. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities.

During 2020 and 2021, HHHRC partnered with the Hawaii Food Bank on food drops around the island and helps disseminate more than 500,000 pounds of food to thousands of families and saw first hand how desperate our families are to get healthy and fresh foods that they otherwise could not afford. We need our foodbanks to not only rely on donations but to get the resources they need so adequately address food insecurity in the islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Heather Lusk, Executive Director, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 1, 2022

**H.B. 1745, H.D. 1 – APPROPRIATING FUNDS
TO SUPPORT HAWAII'S FOOD BANKS**

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose of H.B. 1745, H.D. 1 which appropriates funds for the operating expenses of the four Hawaii food banks in each of our counties.

The COVID-19 worldwide pandemic continues to exacerbate economic inequality, reveal large scale disparities between the haves and have-nots, and stress our local non-profit safety net providers. Data shows that one in six Hawaii residents currently faces food insecurity, including more than 82,000 children. Passage of this measure will ensure that the food banks on Oahu, Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii have sufficient funds to continue to meet the food security needs of our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H.B. 1745, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1745 HD 1

TO: Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, & Finance Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz
Grants & Advancement Manager

DATE: March 1, 2022 (11:00 AM)

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **supports** HB 1745, HD1, which appropriates additional funding for operational expenses for the four foodbanks in Hawai'i that provide fresh and shelf stable food to persons experiencing food insecurity through the Emergency Food Assistance Program, including Hawai'i Foodbank.

The economic disruption precipitated by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic substantially increased food insecurity in our county and across the state. During the first nine months of the pandemic, HHRC responded to this urgent community need through food distribution efforts in partnership with Hawai'i Foodbank and volunteers from groups like Rotary International in urban Honolulu, windward O'ahu, and the North Shore. (See, e.g., Hawai'i News Now, "[Hundreds Line Up for Free Drive-Thru Food Distribution Event in Kaneohe](#)," 9/21/20). We helped deliver over 300,000 pounds of food to those in need during those months.

While we have scaled down our food distribution efforts since 2020, HHRC currently provides food assistance to the community in partnership with Hawai'i Foodbank on the third Wednesday of each month at the Nā Kūpuna Makamae Center in Kaka'ako.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those related to substance use and mental health conditions. Many of our program clients and participants have also been deeply impacted by trauma, including histories of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Tuesday, March 1, 2022 — 11:00 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1745 HD 1, Appropriating Funds to Support Hawai'i's Food Banks.

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the 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 supports HB 1745 HD 1, which appropriates funds to help meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last two years, one of the most pressing issues for many local families has been food insecurity. With many out of work and surviving on government unemployment support, communities have relied on the efforts of food banks and local farmers to meet their basic need to eat.

Federal monies injected into Hawai'i through county initiatives helped to support a local farm-to-food bank effort, in which food banks were able to purchase local products for distribution to needy communities. This effort was a win-win-win, in that local farmers had a market to sell their products when hotels and restaurants shuttered their doors, local families received fresh and nutritious food products made locally island-wide, and food banks that were struggling to purchase shelf-stable food due to nationwide shortages were rescued by Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers who provided local food to their communities.

The Farm-to-Food Bank efforts across the state led to many important foundational relationships between local farmers, ranchers and community feeding organizations that helped struggling communities cope with the social and economic consequences of the COVID pandemic. Unfortunately, natural disasters, food supply chain disruptions, and state emergencies have become a harsh, consistent reality for our local communities. Food banks across the State will need support to meet these food security challenges.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Tuesday, March 1, 2022; 11:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1745, HOUSE DRAFT 1, APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII FOOD BANKS.

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Yamane, and Members of the Joint 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** House Bill No. 1745, APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII FOOD BANKS.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live 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 bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2022-2023 to fund the operating expenses of Hawaii Foodbank, Inc.; Maui Food Bank, Inc.; Hawaii Foodbank, Inc.'s Kauai Branch; and The Food Basket, Inc., for staffing, transportation, food purchase, food storage, and food distribution; provided that one percent be allocated to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations for administrative purposes. The bill would further require the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' Office of Community Services to allocate the sums among the four food banks by utilizing the priorities system set forth in Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations Section 251.4(h), which is used to determine the distribution of food from the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2050.

Testimony on House Bill No. 1745
Thursday, February 15, 2022; 11:00 a.m.
Page 2

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 and underemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis.

This situation has greatly exacerbated the need for the Foodbank, its branches, and the Food Basket. This bill would provide desperately needed resources to ensure that the Foodbank, its branches, and the Food Basket will continue to be able to meet the needs of our struggling families.

On a technical note, we observe that this bill might be in conflict with Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and could be construed as direct state funding to private entities. Because of this, the HPCA strongly urges this committee to consult with the Majority Attorney for clarification on legal check.

Despite this technical observation, the HPCA strongly urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

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



Date: March 1, 2022

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice-Chair
Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

From: Peggy Mierzwa, Community & Government Relations

RE: **HB1745 HD1** Relating to Food Assistance

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of HB1745 HD1**. This measure would appropriate funding to cover operating expenses of Hawai'i Foodbank, Maui Food Bank, Hawai'i Foodbank-Kauai, and the Food Basket.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving over 80,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. We are the only Hawai'i health plan that exclusively serves Medicaid patients. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for 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 Hawai'i.

When people lose everything, the food banks play a critical role in their lives. HB1745 HD1 will create a Hawai'i emergency food assistance program and fund Hawai'i's food banks so they can continue to meet an essential need of the community. Through the pandemic, the volume of food distribution more than double from prior to the pandemic. The need for food has not diminished although funding from the federal and philanthropic has declined.

Nourished people are healthy people, and without health, our communities fall apart. We appreciate the Legislature's intent to ensure that Hawai'i's food security systems are supported to meet the nutritional needs of Hawai'i's families, including children, seniors, and low-income communities. Recent health and economic events devastated people, families and communities. This funding will help to bring food security to those still in need.

HB1745 ultimately supports Hawai'i residents facing hunger. Mahalo for this opportunity to **support HB1745 HD1** and our communities.



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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 1, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1745, HD1
APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII'S FOOD BANKS

Room 309 & Videoconference
11:00 AM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, 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 Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1745, HD1, which appropriates funds to help Hawaii's food banks meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Coronavirus Pandemic has disrupted Hawai'i's local food systems and caused many local producers to lose their local markets. Many catered to tourism, large-scale events, hotels, restaurants, cruise ships, farmers' markets, and school lunch programs, which were non-existent during Hawai'i's shutdown.

Like small businesses around the state, without open and consistent markets, local farmers and ranchers will decrease food production levels and will likely downsize and/or go out of business. To help address the state's food security during the pandemic, Hawai'i's Foodbanks partnered with local food producers to ensure that farmers and ranchers could survive.

After urgent health issues, feeding our community is the most critical challenge we face in the continuing coronavirus pandemic. With no clear end to the crisis within sight, we are already seeing the attention of leaders from around the world shift as food producer markets contract and transportation networks are shaken to their core.

At the onset of the pandemic, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau partnered with Hawai'i's Foodbank to provide local agricultural produce and proteins for their food assistance

programs. This partnership provided nearly \$300,000 of locally grown, high-quality, nutritious produce to our communities in need. We were also a food partner at the Foodbank's mass food distributions which provided locally grown produce for over 50,000 families. As an organization that aggregates and distributes food, the Hawai'i Foodbank staff brought valuable logistical insight to these events. The combined efforts of the Hawai'i Foodbank, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau, and other partner organizations allowed tens of thousands of families to have access to food during unprecedented times. This win-win partnership connected local producers that lost markets and revenue sources due to COVID-19 with the Hawai'i Foodbank to meet the increased demands of feeding Hawaii's communities.

The dedicated funding for the emergency food assistance program will provide funds to the Hawai'i's foodbanks that support non-profit and community feeding programs by providing community meals during emergencies. This also will help keep Hawai'i's farmers farming while also providing nutritional food to those who need it most. More than ever, the State of Hawai'i needs to assure local food production to meet the needs of the hundreds of thousands of Hawai'i families affected by this emergency and future emergencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



February 28, 2022

Re: HB1745, HD1

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the Finance Committee:

Food insecurity is a critical issue in Hawaii, we ***strongly support*** HB1745, HD1 because:

- Food insecurity levels drastically increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic and remain significantly higher than prior to the pandemic.
- One in six Hawai'i residents is food insecure, including one on four children. Hawai'i has the second highest rate of child food insecurity in the country.
- Many federal support programs such as the federal child tax credit and the federal unemployment relief program have ended, even though families are still struggling.
- Federal food commodity programs and philanthropic support have decreased over last year as well, leaving food banks with less resources while need remains elevated.
- This bill will provide crucial support to our food banks to allow them to continue to meet the food security needs of our community.

The **Hawai'i Hunger Action Network** is a statewide partnership of anti-hunger institutions and advocates working to ensure all people in Hawai'i have enough food and water to live healthy, dignified and productive lives. Our Network members have been actively involved in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and ensuring that communities across the State had access to food.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Members of the Hawai'i Hunger Action Network

"Phil" Augustus Acosta, Aloha Harvest

Megan Fox, Malama Kauai

Kristen Frost Albrecht, The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

Rona Fukumoto, Lanakila Pacific

Alicia Higa, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development

Daniela Kittinger & Gavin Thornton, Hawai'i Appleseed

Daniel Leung, Kapiolani Community College, Culinary Arts Department

Pi'ikea Miller & Chris vanBergeijk, Hawai'i Community Foundation

Amy Miller Marvin & Laura-Kay Rand, Hawai'i Foodbank

Sharon Kaiulani Odom, Kokua Kalihi Valley

Tina Porrás-Jones, Parents and Children Together

Harmonee Williams and Tina Tamai, Hawaii Good Food Alliance

Rich Yust, Maui Food Bank



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

February 13, 2022

To: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Lukes, Chair
The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

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

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1745, Relating to appropriating funds to support Hawaii's Food Banks

Aloha, Chair Lukes, Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Yamashita,

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

The impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic have heightened the issues of food insecurity and hunger in our state to new levels. Due to the economic impacts of the pandemic on Hawai'i Island, our food banks in Kona and Hilo have faced the highest need in our thirty-three-year history, with record numbers of residents needing our services for the first time in their lives. In 2020, we served nearly six times more individuals than we served pre-pandemic. Although the economy is improving, but we are still serving three times more than we served pre-pandemic as our residents' grapple with the long-term impacts of pandemic unemployment, illness, and the rising costs of rent, groceries, gas, and utilities.

Due to ongoing breaks in the supply chain, the need remains high and is forecast to remain high for the next couple of years; federal commodities are falling; and philanthropy, while still higher than pre-pandemic levels, is much reduced over the height of the pandemic. The State's food banks need support to continue to ensure no-one goes hungry.

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

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST
ALBRECHT

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

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WARREN LEE
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DENNIS LIN
TREASURER

JULIA ZEE
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STEPHEN UEDA

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KRZYZANOWSKI

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February 28, 2022

The Honorable Representative Sylvia Lukes, Chair
The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1745, Relating to appropriating funds to support Hawaii's Food Banks

Aloha, Chair Lukes, Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Yamashita,

My name is Warren Lee, and I am a board member with The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank. Our mission is to "End hunger in Hawaii County". We strongly support this bill.

The impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic have heightened the issues of food insecurity and hunger in our state to new levels. Due to the economic impacts of the pandemic on Hawai'i Island, our food banks in Kona and Hilo have faced the highest need in our thirty-three-year history, with record numbers of residents needing our services for the first time in their lives. In 2020, we served nearly six times more individuals than we served pre-pandemic. Although the economy is improving, but we are still serving three times more than we served pre-pandemic as our residents' grapple with the long-term impacts of pandemic unemployment, illness, and the rising costs of rent, groceries, gas, and utilities.

Due to ongoing breaks in the supply chain, the need remains high and is forecast to remain high for the next couple of years; federal commodities are falling; and philanthropy, while still higher than pre-pandemic levels, is much reduced over the height of the pandemic. The State's food banks need support to continue to ensure no-one goes hungry.

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warren Lee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Director

Before:
House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

March 1, 2022
11:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference

Re: HB 1745, HD1, Relating to Food Assistance

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1745, HD1, which appropriate funds to enable Hawaii's food banks administering The Emergency Food Assistance Program to continue to meet the food security needs of the people of Hawaii during this time of unprecedented need due to the disturbances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i SUPPORTS HB 1745, HD1.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i is Hawai'i's largest integrated health system that provides care and coverage for approximately 265,000 members. Each day, more than 4,400 dedicated employees and more than 650 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.

We know that food insecurity increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The four Hawai'i food banks administering The Emergency Food Assistance Program served a critical role for many families facing food insecurities due to job loss and other reasons related to the pandemic and were able to meet the State's increased need for food during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic due to a major increase in federal funds and philanthropy. However, with consistent federal funds, via American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), ending these food banks will struggle to continue to meet the needs of our local residents who need this help.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i supports policies that ensure all Hawaii residents have access to affordable, high-quality health care. Further, Kaiser Permanente supports "whole-person care," including the provision of access to services and resources that address beneficiaries' physical health, mental health and social needs. Food security means that all people, at all times, have

physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy lifestyle. To this end, in 2021 Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i invested \$322,000 in grants to community-based organizations to improve food security in Hawaii by increasing availability of emergency food distributions and improving participation in federal food programs such as SNAP. We also carried out our own SNAP campaign to at-risk members. In additions, some of our investments leveraged matching funds for the Double Bucks and TEFAP programs. These grants went on to support programs that increased food security for pregnant and postpartum mothers in low-income, underserved communities. Finally, Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i distributed nearly 450,000 pounds of food to furloughed and displaced hotel workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We support HB 1745, HD1 because it will provide necessary funding to enable Hawai‘i’s food banks administering The Emergency Food Assistance Program to continue to meet the food security needs of the people of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

HB-1745-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2022 9:31:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/1/2022 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Julia Zee	The Food Basket, Inc., Hawaii Island's Food Banks	Support	No

Comments:

To: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair and The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1745, Relating to appropriating funds to support Hawaii's Food Banks

Aloha, Chair Luke and Vice Chair Yamashita,

My name is Julia Zee, and I am a board member with The Food Basket, Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank. Our mission is to "End hunger in Hawaii County". I strongly support this bill.

The impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic have heightened the issues of food insecurity and hunger in Hawai'i to new levels. The Food Basket on Hawai'i Island has faced the highest need for food in our 33- year history, with record numbers of residents needing our services for the first time in their lives. In 2020, we served nearly six times more individuals than we served pre-pandemic. Many are still struggling to make ends meet, dealing with unemployment and the rapidly rising cost of groceries, gas, utilities and housing. We are still serving three times more individuals than pre-pandemic years, and we anticipate the need to continue for a couple more years while we deal with breaks in the supply chain and decreased availability of federal food commodities. Hawai'i's food banks need support now to continue to serve those in need and to ensure that no one goes hungry. Help us end hunger in Hawai'i. I respectfully ask you and your committee to pass this bill with funding to begin July 1, 2022. Mahalo.



February 25, 2022

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: HB 1745 HD1 – Relating to Appropriating Funds to Support Hawaii’s Food Banks

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

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1745, HD1, which appropriates funds to help Hawaii's food banks meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective 7/1/2050.

HMSA supports the efforts of Hawaii’s food banks to address food insecurity in the community. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased food insecurity in Hawaii and has highlighted the growing challenge that families in our community face. As the Chair of the Hawaii Foodbank board of directors I have been able to see the issue up close and the concerning future in which food insecurity will be an ongoing challenge for years to come.

Therefore, we applaud the legislature’s efforts to appropriate funds to support Hawaii’s food banks to meet the needs of Hawaii residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1745 HD1.

Sincerely,

David R. Herndon
Executive Vice President
Chief Business Operations Officer



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 1, 2022, 11:00AM
Conference Room 308 and via Videoconference

Re: Testimony in Support of HB1745, HD1 – APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII'S FOOD BANKS

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

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. The UPW also represents 1,500 members in the private sector.

UPW **supports** HB1745, HD1, which appropriates funds to help Hawaii’s food banks meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It’s important that we continue to support the Hawaii Food Bank and its mission to address food insecurity. The ongoing COVID pandemic only intensified this need, resulting in the amount of food distributed by the food banks to more than double the volume from years prior to the pandemic. Continued funding will help to ensure that these vital services and support for our community remains available across our State.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Kalani Werner
State Director



To: Chair Sylvia Luke
Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita
House Committee on Finance

From: David W. Heywood, Health Plan CEO
UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Hawaii

Re: HB 1745 HD1, Appropriating Funds to Support Hawaii's Food Banks;
In Support
March 1, 2022; Conference Room 308

UnitedHealthcare (UHC) serves approximately 59,000 QUEST Integration (Medicaid) and 37,500 Medicare Advantage members in Hawaii. We also provide Medicare Part D, Medicare Supplemental, and other health programs/services in the islands. Our team is comprised of over 400 employees across the islands with offices in Honolulu, Kahului, and Hilo.

UHC **supports** HB 1745 HD1, which appropriates funds to help Hawaii's food banks meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Food security is an important component to one's overall health and well-being. We know that the COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the need to support organizations that sustain some of our most vulnerable community members through food. The funding in this legislation would go a long way towards helping to ensure that those in need can receive a necessity for good health.

We strongly urge the passage of HB 1745 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

Testimony Presented to
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
February 28, 2022, 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 308

SUBJECT: Support for HB1745 HD1 – RELATING TO APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO SUPPORT HAWAII’S FOOD BANKS

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, members of the Committee on Finance:

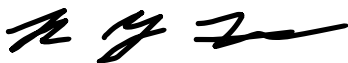
Lanakila Pacific strongly supports HB1745 which appropriates funds to support Hawaii’s Food Banks.

Lanakila Pacific is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides services and social enterprise programs to build independence and improve the quality of life for individuals with cognitive, physical, social, or age-related challenges. Lanakila Pacific operates the Lanakila Meals on Wheels program delivering meals to homebound seniors and others who were impacted by the pandemic. Access to meals, and food in general, keep people independent. Food insecurity is a critical issue in Hawaii.

- Food insecurity levels drastically increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic and remain significantly higher than prior to the pandemic.
- One in six Hawai'i residents is food insecure, including one on four children. Hawai'i has the second highest rate of child food insecurity in the country.
- Many federal support programs such as the federal child tax credit and the federal unemployment relief program have ended, even though families are still struggling.
- Federal food commodity programs and philanthropic support have decreased over last year as well, leaving food banks with less resources while need remains elevated.
- This bill will provide crucial support to our food banks to allow them to continue to meet food needs.

We strongly urge you to pass this legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Respectfully,



Rona Yagi Fukumoto
President & CEO

Lanakila Pacific Board
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1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
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TO: Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 1, 2022
TIME: 11am
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: HB1745 HD1 Appropriating Funds to Support Hawaii's Food Banks

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.

HFIA is in support of this measure to appropriate funds to help Hawaii's food banks meet the significantly heightened need for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Hawaii food banks are a vital resource for those in our communities dealing with food insecurity. Over the past two years our food banks have had to manage unprecedented demand. The economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the supply chain issues currently impacting the global food supply chain have also affected our food banks. Supporting our local food banks is a direct and necessary way for our State to support those in need in our communities. We encourage the committee to vote yes on this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 20, 2022

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

RE: Testimony In Support on SB2169, Relating to Food Assistance

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

I am Wes Perreira, Director of Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i. I am writing in strong support of SB2169, which provides operating support for the food banks in each county working with the Office of Community Services to provide emergency food for people struggling with food insecurity.

Our team has worked with persistent intensity since COVID-19 first shut down the island in March 2020. Even now, two years later, Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i continues to serve more than double number of people each month compared to pre-pandemic numbers. To continue to provide at this level, we have had to increase our budget by more than 50% and have had to add three people to our team. Last year, we distributed nearly two million pounds of food to ensure that individuals and families on Kaua'i had the food needed.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created economic challenges for many families on Kaua'i and across the state. Many are struggling to put food on the table for the first time ever. The problem has further increased with the cost of food like meats, fish, and poultry rising above 30% more than what they were before. Federal funds from the CARES Act was a crucial support for many but continued aid is unforeseeable.

Feeding America estimates that it could take several years for households experiencing food insecurity to recover from the pandemic. After the 2008 recession, it took ten years until food insecurity levels returns to the levels they were before the recession. The Hawai'i Foodbank team has had a long history of emergency response and are committed to standing in the gap for Kaua'i families through the long tail of COVID-19.

As you know the north shore of Kaua'i experienced a devastating storm and resulting flooding on April 13 – 15, 2018. Realizing the community impact of the storm, Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i had a truck filled with food and water headed into the area before the rain even stopped. It was an emergency that garnered significant initial media attention and strong philanthropic support. That support waned as the months following the event passed. Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i team continued to serve the Hanalei region with elevated support for 18 months after the flooding, until the community was fully restored.

As with Hawai'i Foodbank on Oahu, the Maui Food Bank, and the Food Basket on Hawai'i Island, Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i is committed to serving our residents who are struggling with food insecurity in each of the four counties. We aspire to give them hope for a better tomorrow as they work to recover from

the devastating health and economic impacts of the pandemic. We believe that SB2169 will provide critical support to Hawai`i's food banks, which will allow us to provide nutritious food to those in need.

Mahalo Nui,



Wes Perreira

Director, Hawai`I Foodbank Kaua`i



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For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai
Pharmacare Hawai'i

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Food Security Coalition

Date: February 28, 2022

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

Re: Support for HB 1745, HD1, Appropriating Funds to Support
Hawaii's Food Banks

Hrg: March 1, 2022 at 11:00 AM via videoconference

The Obesity Prevention Task Force, a program of Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI), is in **support of HB 1745, HD1**, which appropriates funds to support Hawai'i's food banks.

One in five children in Hawai'i face hunger, ranking Hawai'i as having the nation's second highest food insecurity rate for children.ⁱⁱ Food banks provide a critical service in Hawai'i by nourishing families in need who are forced to grapple with the state's high cost of living. Food banks proved essential as COVID-19 hit Hawai'i and reliance on food banks dramatically increased. As the Legislature continues to explore ways to support food banks in the longer term, we hope it will consider institutionalizing this support in ways that invest in food resiliency through initiatives such as a farm to food bank program.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Committee **PASS** HB 1745, HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Amanda Fernandes'.

Amanda Fernandes, JD
Policy and Advocacy Director

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

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

ⁱⁱ Feeding America, *The Impact of the Coronavirus on Local Food Insecurity in 2020 & 2021*, March 2021.
https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Local%20Projections%20Brief_3.31.2021.pdf