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ANNE E. PERREIRA-EUSTAQUIO  
DIRECTOR

JOANN A. VIDINHAR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
**OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 420  
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IN REPLY, REFER TO:  
**OCS 22.1015**

January 26, 2022

To: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair,  
The Honorable Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

Date: Thursday, January 27, 2022  
Time: 3:10 pm  
Place: Conference Room 225, State Capitol & videoconference

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

Re: S.B. 2169 – RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

**I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

S.B. 2169 would appropriate \$2 million 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.

**II. CURRENT LAW**

Currently, there are no local appropriations that supplement TEFAP or a TEFAP-like program. Since S.B. 2169 would involve appropriation of state funds, OCS would need to implement the fiscal as well as programmatic administration of a grant under S.B. 2169 separately from administration of TEFAP, although they could operate on parallel tracks.

**III. COMMENTS ON THE SENATE BILL**

OCS is pleased to support this bill, if amended. 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 persistence of the Covid-19 emergency.

At this point it is not clear how closely the Legislature wants this \$2 million grant to resemble a TEFAP operation, as opposed to merely putting funds in the hands of the non-profits that are administering TEFAP, and leaving administrative issues to OCS and the agencies to work out. For these reasons, OCS respectfully suggests that the bill should be amended to address these differences and thereby ensure that questions do not arise in the administration of food relief pursuant to this bill.

### **How TEFAP works**

Under TEFAP as currently administered, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides huge quantities of canned foods, other non-perishable food products (*e.g.*, cereal), and certain frozen foods (*e.g.*, chickens) from US Mainland sources. *See list at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/usda-foods-available-list-tefap>*. OCS orders these foods, in consultation with our TEFAP food banks, by “purchasing” the foods through our state account for shipment to Hawaii ports for pick-up by the food banks. The food banks then distribute these goods through their respective distribution networks to people who self-certify as income-eligible for receipt of these foods. The income limit for TEFAP is now 185% of the federal poverty limit for Hawaii as set by the Census Bureau. *See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>*.

The cash funding that USDA provides to the State and the local non-profit food banks is for administration only. In other words, USDA does not provide funding under TEFAP for local food purchases. USDA also pays, on its own end of the transactions, for the very large costs of shipping these US Mainland foods here to Hawaii.

USDA oversees TEFAP with multiple regulations involving such matters as safety of food storage, oversight over claims of food losses and damage, other general fiscal oversight, and civil rights policies to ensure that beneficiaries are not denied or limited in their benefits due to racial, religious, or other discrimination. At the State level, OCS has the obligation to ensure that the food banks, and agencies within their respective networks, comply with these requirements.

Within Hawaii, OCS allocates the administrative funding and “food-purchasing” allocation we receive from USDA for TEFAP based on Small Area Income Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) statistics. Last month, December 2021, the Bureau published nationwide SAIPE statistics for 2020. <https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2020/demo/saipe/2020-state-and-county.html>. For Hawaii, these statistics show the following mid-point estimates:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total Population<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>People in Poverty in Area</u>	<u>% in poverty Within Area</u>	<u>County's % of Statewide Poverty population</u>
State	1,455,271	121,182	8.9%	--
Hawaii County	200,629	24,301	12.2%	<b>20.0%</b>
Honolulu County	1,016,508	74,186	8.0%	<b>61.2%</b>
Maui County	164,754	15,690	9.5%	<b>12.9%</b>
Kauai County	73,298	7,005	9.9%	<b>5.8%</b>

OCS divides county-level TEFAP administrative funds that we receive from USDA on the basis of the SAIPE figures shown in the far-right column in the chart above. OCS holds those funds on behalf of the local non-profits for the respective counties. The non-profits submit cash requests to OCS for administrative expenses relating to TEFAP, and OCS reimburses them after review and approval.

**Adapting SB 2169 for TEFAP-like administration**

SB 2169 does not address a number of the characteristics of TEFAP in the above description, and it would be important to anticipate these issues and decide them in the next iteration of this bill. These issues include the following questions:

1. Does the Legislature expect the grant under this bill to be divided among the counties pursuant to the SAIPE formula?
2. What percentage of the funds received by the local agencies may be used for administration, rather than food purchases? OCS suggests that a figure of between 10% and 20% would be appropriate for administration, with the remainder being for food.
3. Will the funds used by the local agencies for administration be subject to the same standards of approval and fiscal review as in TEFAP?
4. This program would put administrative obligations on OCS – OCS will be responsible for reporting, monitoring, review and approval of program and fiscal documents, etc. For these reasons, OCS respectfully requests that a small portion of the appropriation be designated for OCS because of these increased obligations.

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<sup>1</sup> The total resident population figures are from the 2020 census: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/hawaii-population-change-between-census-decade.html>

5. Will there be any limitations on the types of foods that the local agencies may purchase with the food funds portion of the grant? Will it be a requirement to purchase locally grown fresh foods? This would be a major departure from the TEFAP model which does not use local foods.
6. Since the Legislature is identifying in the bill the private non-profit organizations that it expects OCS to work with, OCS requests that a provision be inserted in the bill to exempt OCS from the procurement requirements of HRS Chapter 103F for this grant. Such an exemption will ensure that we can contract with the agencies right away and put the money to use much earlier than would be the situation if we had to go through procurement.

We look forward to helping in any way that we reasonably can. We are always available to answer any questions and/or clarify our comments on this bill. 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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2169

**January 27, 2022**  
**3:10 p.m.**  
**Room 225 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 2169.

S.B. No. 2169 appropriates \$2,000,000 in general funds in FY 23 to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' Office of Community Services (OCS) to fund the operating expenses of the four Hawai'i food banks contracted by OCS to administer The Emergency Food Assistance Program in each of the State's counties.

B&F notes that 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.



Date: January 27, 2022

To: The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
The Honorable Les Ihara, Vice-Chair  
Committee on Human Services

From: Peggy Mierzwa, AlohaCare

RE: **SB2169** Relating to Food Assistance

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of SB2169**. This measure would appropriate funding to cover operating expenses of Hawaii Foodbank, Maui Food Bank, Hawaii Foodbank-Kauai, and the Food Basket.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving nearly 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 Hawaii.

When people lose everything, the food banks play a critical role in their lives. SB2169 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 Hawaii's food security systems are supported to meet the nutritional needs of Hawaii'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.

SB2169 ultimately supports Hawaii residents facing hunger. Mahalo for this opportunity to **support SB2169** and our communities.

We are grateful for your consideration of this important measure.

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



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

#### **Executive Officers**

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**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Vice Chair*  
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**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Immediate Past Chair*

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TO: Committee on Human Services  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: January 27, 2022  
TIME: 3:10pm  
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: SB2169 Relating to Food Assistance

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.

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 effected 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 are in support of this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.





January 27, 2022

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
Committee on Human Services

**RE: Testimony in support of SB2169, Relating to Food Assistance**

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, and Committee Members,

As the President and CEO of Hawaii Foodbank, **I am writing in strong support of SB2169**, 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.

**SB2169 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Marvin".

Amy Marvin  
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank

Testimony of  
Jonathan Ching  
Government Relations Director

Before:  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
The Honorable Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

January 27, 2022  
3:10 p.m.  
Via Videoconference

**Re: SB 2169, Relating to Food Assistance**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2169, 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 SB 2169.**

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 SB 2169 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.

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2169

TO: Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Ihara, & Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz  
Grants & Advancement Manager

DATE: January 27, 2022 (3:10 PM)

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Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **supports** SB 2169, 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 Oahu, 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 Hawaii 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 Hawaii 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.

Dear Members of the Hawaii Legislature,

I am a member of the board of the Hawaii Foodbank. I humbly ask for your support and passage of SB2169.

As a board member and volunteer, I have seen firsthand the need for food assistance among Oahu residents and the excellent work the Hawaii Foodbank performs to fill that need. I am also aware that the need is equally great on Kauai. This need for food assistance is especially acute among the elderly. It is particularly heartbreaking to see families with young children need this assistance.

As a board member, I can assure you that the management of the Hawaii Foodbank is doing everything in its power to solicit monetary and food donations and to spend those funds and store and distribute donated food as wisely and efficiently as possible. Management is constantly striving to improve operations. Safeguards are in place and continuously monitored to protect the safety and security of funds and donated foods. Ms. Amy Marvin, President and CEO of the Hawaii Foodbank, is a committed, dynamic, and skilled leader. She has an equally qualified and committed staff supporting her. The Hawaii Foodbank board does what it can and should do to support Ms. Marvin and her team.

In summary, The Emergency Food Assistance Program is an integral part of the services provided by the Hawaii Foodbank. If appropriated and distributed, the funds to support that program by funding the Foodbank's operations will be properly, wisely, and efficiently spent. Thank you.

Craig K. Shikuma  
441 Kupaua Pl.  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 12:35:25 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Kathryn Ellman	Testifying for The Hawaii Food Bank (Board Member)	Support	No

Comments:

We are continuing to see increased need for food assistance due to COVID-19 and anticipate that this need will continue for the next several years. This Bill will provide a mechanism for the State to support food banks and their partners with funding during this especially challenging time. The Hawaii Food Bank (and others supported by this measure) is providing a critical service to the 1 in 6 residents (and 1 in 4 keiki) who suffer from food insecurity on the island. Philanthropic support has begun to wane as the pandemic has continued, making State support all the more important. Thank you for your consideration in passing this Bill.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Ellman

Board Member, Hawaii Food Bank

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:28:49 AM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Mark Harbison	Testifying for Maui Food Bank	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Maui Food Bank. I am its Board Chair. I think everyone is aware of the crisis in food security confronting many on Maui during the Covid-19 crisis last year and the unprecedented response by food banks. MFB met the challenge of a tripling of its distribution operations, new distribution challenges imposed by Covid-19 restrictions on personal contacts, new grant application and reporting requirements, and a vast expansion of infrastructure and rental expenses for warehousing. Access to food the most immediate challenge facing Maui families when jobs suddenly disappear due to a massive decline in our central driver of economic activity (the visitor industry). This bill providing relief to local families is a vital part of recovery from the local impact of the pandemic.



TO: COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
Senator Laura Acasio  
Senator Kurt Fevella  
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha

From: Michael Miller, Tiki's Grill & Bar

Date: January 25, 2022

Subj: **SUPPORT of SB 2169 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE**

**We are in support of SB 2169 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE** and understand the need this bill helps to address. This **pandemic** continues to impact the lives and economic livelihoods of our neighbors and having food to nourish the body and mind to prevent other long-term effects.

We feel that a food bank in each county would be the best option to handle the challenges that come from being able to effectively manage the \$2M that is being discussed.

We agree with the Hawaii Food Bank assertion, *“There are organizations that specialize in disaster response but only food banks have existing infrastructure, networks, logistical expertise and other resources already in place, that allow them to effectively respond to mass feedings in a way no one else can. We have proven experience responding to crisis, and relationships with a **national network of food banks and the local food industry**, and the **trust of local communities** that uniquely positions us to respond swiftly when disaster strikes.”*

Please vote “yes” to move SB 2161 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE forward.

Mahalo,

Michael Miller / Director of Operations ---- michaelm@tikisgrill.com



**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 4:17:33 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Alicia Higa	Testifying for Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Alicia Higa, Director of Health Promotion at the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. I am testifying in strong support of SB2169 to fund the Hawaii Foodbank with the much needed funds to continue caring for our most vulnerable food insecure communities. As one of the Foodbank's largest partnering agencies on the Leeward Coast, we are fortunate to partner with them in operating 7 weekly school pantries (serving 1800 keiki/week), 4 weekly kupuna pantries (serving 600+ kupuna/week) and large scale community drive thru food distributions (serving 1,800-2,000 households at each distribution). With their support, we have been able to distribute over 5 million pounds of food and over 275,000 meals to those in need on the Waianae coast since the onset of the pandemic.

The Waianae Coast ranks highest in Honolulu County and the State for debilitating health conditions related to nutrition and food insecurity. It was estimated that nearly 1/7 Hawaii residents was food insecure prior to the pandemic. In a 2019 survey of over 1000 WCCHC patients, 38% of adults indicated that in the last 30 days they “worried about having enough food for themselves and their family”. Food insecurity has dramatically worsened with the current Covid-19 pandemic as witnessed by community utilization of our emergency food distribution programs. Without the food provided by the Hawaii Foodbank, thousands will go hungry, exacerbating the already poor health conditions experienced by so many in our community.

I humbly ask for your support on SB2169 to provide much needed funding to the Hawaii Foodbank.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**WAIANAЕ COAST  
COMPREHENSIVE  
HEALTH CENTER**  
www.wcchc.com

**Testimony to the Senate [Committee On Human Services](#)**

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

**RE: Senate Bill 2169: Relating to Food Assistance**

The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center strongly supports SB 2169 to support Hawaii food banks to continue their administration of the Emergency Food Assistant Program for the state.

Prior to the Pandemic, Hawaii's food banks were essential to meet food security needs. The Pandemic brought unprecedented impact to the economy which easily quadrupled the food insecurity of residents, especially in rural and lower income communities.

Hawaii's food bank systems are a coordinated, respected network with a deep reach into communities, especially the most vulnerable.

The Waianae Coast is one of the very vulnerable communities that has been lifted by the Hawaii food bank and their emergency feeding. Our residents continue to struggle daily in securing basic and healthy food. We cannot lose the food banks support for our community. The Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center is committed in its partnership with the Hawaii food bank to address the food insecurity needs of our Waianae Coast communities.

**We ask the Committee to support SB 2169 as a vital lifeline to our vulnerable citizens throughout Hawaii. Mahalo.**



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services  
Thursday, January 27, 2022; 3:10 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2169, RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE.**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, 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. 2169, RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE.

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 bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate \$2,000,000 in 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. 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 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. All one needs to do is visit one of our member FQHC's food distribution events and see the line of cars and people wait to receive some surplus food. It is shocking yet uplifting to see that people do care for their fellow citizens.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 2169**  
**Thursday, January 27, 2022; 3:10 p.m.**  
**Page 2**

The COVID-19 pandemic 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 a private bill. Because of this, the HPCA strongly urges this committee to consult with the Majority Attorney for clarification on legal check.

**With these technical suggestions, 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](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).



TO: COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
Senator Laura Acasio  
Senator Kurt Fevella  
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha

From: Jeffrey Vigilla, Chef Point of View Consulting

Date: January 25, 2022

Subj: SUPPORT of SB 2169 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

**We are in support of SB 2169 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE** and understand the need this bill helps to address. This **pandemic** continues to the impact the lives and economic livelihoods of our neighbors and having food to nourish the body and mind to prevent other long-term effects.

We feel that a food bank in each county would be the best option to handle the challenges that come from being able to effectively manage the \$2M that is being discussed.

We agree with the Hawaii Food Bank assertion, *“There are organizations that specialize in disaster response but only food banks have existing infrastructure, networks, logistical expertise and other resources already in place, that allow them to effectively respond to mass feedings in a way no one else can. We have proven experience responding to crisis, and relationships with a **national network of food banks and the local food industry, and the trust of local communities that uniquely positions us to respond swiftly when disaster strikes.**”*

Please vote “yes” to move SB 2161 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE forward.

Mahalo,

Jeffrey Vigilla / CEO | Executive Chef ---- [chefvigilla@gmail.com](mailto:chefvigilla@gmail.com)

**BOARD OF  
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January 26, 2022

The Honorable Joy San Buenaventura  
Chair  
Senate Human Services Committee

Re: Testimony in strong support of Bill SB2169

Dear Chair San Buenaventura and members of the Senate Human Services Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2169 which provides \$2 million in operating funds for Emergency Food Services for the foodbanks on all islands through the Department of Labor, Office of Community Services.

The COVID-19 pandemic also created an urgent need for us to look at food insecurity in our State and find ways to ensure that we have a reliable resource for food distribution statewide. With one in six people faced with hunger our State, we need to continue funding the foodbanks which has helped reach those in need on a day-to-day basis, as well as when crisis hits our community.

Within applicable rules and regulations, Hawaii Agricultural Foundation wholeheartedly supports SB2169. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me, (808) 386-2538.

Mahalo,



Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi  
Executive Director



THE SENATE  
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

Committee on Human Services  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 3:10 PM  
Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB2169 - RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, 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** SB2169, which appropriates funds to fund the operating expenses of the four Hawaii food banks contracted by the Office of Community Services to administer the Emergency Food Assistance Program in each of the State’s counties.

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 of the Emergency Food Assistance Program 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,

Liz Ho

Administrator

**UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS**  
**AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO**





**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  
The Senate  
Committee on Human Services

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

January 27, 2022

S.B. 2169 – RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the purpose of S.B. 2169 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 S.B. 2169.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director





Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
Thursday, January 27, 2022 — 3:10 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2169, Relating to Food Assistance**

Dear Chair San Buenaventura 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 SB 2169**, which appropriates funds to the four Hawai'i food banks contracted by the Office of Community Services to administer The Emergency Food Assistance Program in each of the State's counties.

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*



Randy Perreira  
President

# HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

888 Mililani Street, Suite 501 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone: (808) 597-1441  
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawai'i  
Hawai'i State Senate  
Committee on Human Services

Testimony by  
Hawai'i State AFL-CIO  
January 27, 2022

**LATE**

S.B. 2169 – RELATING TO FOOD  
ASSISTANCE

The Hawai'i State AFL-CIO is a state federation of 74 affiliate local unions and councils with over 68,000 members across both public and private sectors. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of S.B. 2169.

For nearly 18 months beginning March 2020, our Labor Community Services Program organized weekly food distributions on Oahu and in partnership statewide. We would not have been able to sustain such support for our communities statewide without the government's financial support of Hawai'i's food banks.

Because many people remain underemployed or unemployed, the need for food distribution persists. Our food banks are key to food security for our keiki, kupuna, and under/unemployed adults. As a pantry, it is our privilege to be part of such a crucial safety net service as food security.

We appreciate your consideration of our testimony and strongly urge passage of S.B. 2169.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
President

RP/dd



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

January 27, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES



**TESTIMONY ON SB 2169**  
RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE.

Room 225 & Videoconference  
3:10 PM

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Ihara, 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 SB 2169**, which appropriates funds to fund the operating expenses of the four Hawaii food banks contracted by the Office of Community Services to administer The Emergency Food Assistance Program in each of the State's counties.

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 that Hawai'i's foodbanks 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.



# THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

January 26, 2022

To: The Honorable Senator Joy A. Buenaventura, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Les Ihara, Jr., 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

**Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2169 SD1, Relating to Food Assistance**

ANN EBESUNO  
BOARD CHAIR

Aloha, Chair Buenaventura and Vice Chair Ihara.

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.

WARREN LEE  
VICE CHAIR

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 Hawaii 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 were serving 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.

DENNIS LIN  
TREASURER

JULIA ZEE  
SECRETARY

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.**

STEPHEN UEDA

JASMIN  
KIERNAN

MARK  
KRZYZANOWSKI

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill.

SAMANTHA  
COLLINS

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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

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



**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 11:33:12 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Shana Wailana Kukila	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

TO: Hawai'i State Senate Human Services Committee

FROM: Shana W. Kukila, Hilo, HI

RE: SB2169 Foodbank Funding

This testimony is in support of funding for food banks across the state of Hawai'i. As a former recipient and volunteer at the Hawai'i Island Foodbasket, I saw first hand the work they do. My hope is that their funding continue so they can keep their shelves stocked and the people in need fed on every island. In fact, it should increase. The people of Hawai'i show aloha every day by supporting our local food banks, and our leaders do, too. For this, we are thankful.

My only suggestion is that the state also include provisions to offer far more healthier, farm to table items to those in need. When I worked at the Foodbasket, they also valued providing healthy items by bringing in produce from local farms and giving out fresh fruit and vegetables in every "box" that was picked up. Some things were not so healthy, but there isn't much choice.

It's a win-win for farmers to sell their products to the state and for the state to pass it on to those in need who may not be able to grow their own or store it if they are on the streets or in a shelter. Nobody wants to live on canned goods alone, and even the poor deserve healthy food.

With aloha and compassion, I believe a huge portion of the federal pandemic relief funding should go to support those in need who are struggling and most vulnerable such as kupuna, single mothers and children, and the disabled. We also must remember our 'ohana in Tonga, who are still in dire need of help accessing clean water and food at this time. My hope is that our aloha can extend to our Tongan families suffering from the recent volcanic eruption and tsunami, and that our food can be shared with them as well. Our hearts, thoughts, and prayers are with them all.

Mahalo for allowing me this opportunity to testify in strong support of food bank funding in Hawai'i.

Aloha





**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:23:44 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Marsha Fahir	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

The Hawaiian food banks need sustainable state support. This bill will help provide the critical support that is needed.

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 9:50:10 AM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Hannah Hyun	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support to advance Senate Bill 2169, to appropriate funds that will help keep Hawaii food banks (and its partners) operating during this critical time.

There continues to be an increased need for food assistance across our state, and sadly, due to COVID-19 and other factors affecting our economy, philanthropic actions/work is not as doable for many as before.

Food is a basic necessity, and I don't see the dependence on food banks going away or decreasing for many years to come.

Again, I am in support of SB2169 that will allow our food banks to continue the good work they do to meet the need of food assistance across our State.

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 7:38:05 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Toby Tamaye	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB2169. I current serve on the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Foodbank as well as founder of their Young Professionals Group, Alaka'i. I have served in this role for five years and have seen the progress and effectiveness of Food Banks in Hawaii.

I know they are extremely careful in the appropriation of funding, and have the experience and knowledge to allocate funds to its maximum potential, for food collection and distribution in Hawaii. In addition, they are in the front lines for any crisis that our State faces in the future.

The COVID 19 pandemic has not only increased the daily need to fight hunger in Hawaii, but it also has caused a burden on fundraising due to the economic situation many of our businesses and individual donors have been facing over the past two years. The Hawaii Foodbank also was not able to raise monies from events, with the cancellation of most of their fundraising events in 2020 and 2021.

The monies allocated from the The Emergency Food Assistance Program is needed more than ever, and I hope you will consider supporting this important need for the community.

Please vote "yes" to move SB 2161 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE.



January 27, 2022

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
Committee on Human Services

RE: SB 2169, Relating to Food Assistance

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Ihara, and Committee Members,

I am writing to **SUPPORT** Senate Bill 2169. My name is Charla Teves and I am a student at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa. The news of radio djs mocking singer Paula Fuga when she spoke about her experience with childhood food insecurity motivates to support this bill. I am asking for your help to adopt policies that will eliminate hunger in our lifetime.

One in five Hawaii children struggle with hunger, according to Feeding America. At more than 55,000 children, they would fill the Stan Sheriff Center four times over and still overflow into the parking lot. The Hawai'i statewide food insecurity rate for 2020 was projected at 16.8%, but the figure was far greater for children at 29.4%, or 89,050, according to a November 2020 report by Feeding America. The pandemic has worsened the impact of poverty and hunger for children. The report said that Hawaii households with children were generally more likely to be food insecure, due to the closure of schools, where many children had access to free or reduced-price meals.

In 2021, I was one of 100 students nationwide awarded a Youth Service America and Sodexo Stop Hunger grant which enabled me to convene a Hawai'i virtual end hunger summit. Many state legislators, community leaders, students, and young adults convened to share their ideas such as supporting a statewide food policy and school gardens. I learned so much from the experience that I can no longer remain quiet. Please add my voice to the supporters for SB 2169.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

January 25, 2022

Committee on Human Services  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Chair Joy San Buenaventura and members of the committee:

I am writing in support of SB2169, Relating to Food Assistance. As you may know, the need for food assistance has grown during the Covid-19 pandemic and continues to be elevated. Over the past few years, Kauai has also had several landslides where residents are stranded and the Hawaii Food Bank has assisted with emergency response.

I humbly ask for your support in passing SB2169.

Sincerely,  
Laurie Yoshida  
PO Box 3717  
Lihue, HI 96766

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/25/2022 9:40:36 AM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Beth Tokioka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As the President of the Kauai United Way Board of Directors and a member of the Kauai Advisory Board for the Hawaii Foodbank - Kauai Branch, I have seen first hand how quickly and effectively HFB has responded to acute needs in our community. The Kauai north shore flooding of 2018 was devastating for the affected communities. HFB quickly responded and provided prolonged and targeted assistance for the communities that were cut off due to extensive road damage. As we all know, in 2020 COVID hit and HFB-Kauai went into high gear (and continues in that mode today) to assist residents in need throughout the island. The essential nature of these services is as evident today as it has been for the past four years of crisis response. While community fundraising efforts will continue, they will be difficult to sustain at the current level of need. Additional funding will insure HFB can seamlessly provide food for those in need throughout the state. Mahalo for your consideration!

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 1:28:11 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Addison Bulosan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha -

I'm writing in support of this bill. As you know, we are continuing to see increased need due to COVID-19 and anticipate that this need will continue for the next several years; however, we've also seen the federal commodities slow down considerably and philanthropy as well. As our communities rebuild it's imperative that this support continues in order for us to recover.

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:10:57 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Jason Economou	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Ihara, and Committee Members,

Thank you for taking up SB 2169 related to funding the important and necessary work being done by food banks throughout the islands. I strongly support this legislation, because supporting our food banks is an impactful way of supporting the most vulnerable residents throughout our state and investing in our communities. The pandemic period highlighted something that we already knew was true: food insecurity is a major problem for all of us in Hawaii, and our food banks are a lifeline for many thousands of residents. This lifeline must be supported and maintained if we have any hope of surviving future emergencies and upheavals.

Mahalo,

Jason Economou



**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 2:59:25 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Moana Lutey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am submitting testimony in support of this bill, which will assist in funding food banks in Hawaii. I am a board member of the Maui Food Bank and have held this position for just about three years. Due to the COVID pandemic, our food bank, as I am sure many others, have been severely impacted. With people out of work and very few food drives (due to covid concerns), food banks have been especially stressed.

I am asking for your support in passing this bill so that the food banks in our state can continue to provide the nutrition needed in our community. The sheer volume of food that has been distributed during the pandemic alone is nothing short of astounding. Without funding, many of our community members will not be able to obtain the nutrition they, and their families, need.

Thank you for your consideration.

**LATE**

**SB-2169**

Submitted on: 1/26/2022 4:26:45 PM

Testimony for HMS on 1/27/2022 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Stephen Ueda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill to provide funding to food banks.

There is still a need to support families affected by the pandemic.

DATE: January 26, 2022

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
CHAIR, SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA  
VICE-CHAIR, SENATOR LES IHARA

FROM: STACEY MONIZ  
PUKALANI, MAUI

RE: SB 2169 RELATING TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 27, 2022 AT 3:10 PM

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services:

Mahalo for setting this hearing date to hear important information on why the State must support the four Food Banks across the state with funding.

I stand in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB 2169.

Food Banks across the state fill the need for thousands of Hawaii residents who suffer from food insecurity. During this seemingly never-ending pandemic we cannot deny the fact that especially here in Hawaii more and more people, families, children are needing help with food. This is only going to continue as the pandemic hits its third year. Many families would be literally starving without the innovative ways these food banks find to distribute food and partner with other non-profit organizations to maximize the reach and ensure that people do not go hungry.

Food is a basic human need. It is only fair that the State of Hawaii put some funding into the food banks across the state. We all want to make sure people have food. It's part of our culture and part of our values.

Please support this important bill. I thank you for your consideration.