

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1196

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 20 2023

RE: H.B. No. 1248
H.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 1248, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services; Department of Agriculture; Executive Office on Early Learning; one member of the County Council of the County of Maui; Aloha Harvest; Hawai'i Primary Care Association; We Are One, Inc.; Ho'ōla Farms; Okimoto Corporation; Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; Food+ Policy Internship 2023; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; Hawai'i Pacific Health; Hawaii Farmers Union United - Hana Chapter; Hawai'i Food Bank; Malama Kaua'i, Hawaii Medical Service Association; Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice; The Kūpuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; American Heart Association; Farm Link Hawai'i; Hawai'i Public Health Institute; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; Ulupono Initiative; 350Hawaii; Hawaii Food Industry Association;



Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Early Childhood Action Strategy; Aloha Care; Hawai'i Good Food Alliance; Hawai'i Hunger Action Network; The Food Basket; KTA Super Stores; Hawai'i Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; Kaiser Permanente; and fifty-five individuals.

Your Committee finds that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest federal food assistance program in the nation, which provides eligible Hawaii residents with monthly benefits to purchase food. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, more than sixty percent of SNAP beneficiaries are members of families with children in Hawaii. Your Committee additionally finds that the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as Double Up Food Bucks or DA BUX, is a state program that offers discounts on Hawaii grown fruits and vegetables to low-income recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The DA BUX Program has the added benefit of supporting local agriculture and enhancing public health and food security, while retaining dollars in-state to support Hawaii's local economy. Your Committee further acknowledges that the 2019 Coronavirus Disease Pandemic has exacerbated the need for programs like DA BUX, since many residents continue to face economic and health-related challenges in its aftermath. Therefore, this measure appropriates funds for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program and provides matching funds to eligible Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients in the State.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1248, H.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture and
Environment,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



