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STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 420
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
www.hawaii.gov/labor
Phone: (808) 586-8675 / Fax: (808) 586-8685
Email: dliir.ocs@hawaii.gov

IN REPLY, REFER TO:
OCS 23.1141

March 28, 2023

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

Date: Thursday, March 30, 2023

Time: 10:05 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 211, State Capitol & Videoconference

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

Position: Support

Re: H.B. 314, H.D. 1, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO FOOD BANKS

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

This bill would appropriate funds to the Office of Community Services (OCS) to distribute these funds to food banks so that they could purchase food and distribute it to qualifying low-income people to supplement their food needs. The bill would require that the funds be allocated among the counties pursuant to the methodology that OCS uses in administering The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), our largest federal food security program.

The bill would appropriate sums, in amounts to be identified, for the two upcoming State fiscal years – FY 2023-2024, which starts on July 1, 2023, and FY 2024-2025, which starts on July 1, 2024. The funds would allow food banks to pay for “the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need.” Up to 15 percent of the appropriation could be used for administrative costs.

II. CURRENT LAW

Currently, Hawaii has no legislation at the State level in which a State agency receives appropriations to purchase food and distribute it, through food banks, to low-income people in the State. OCS currently administers federal programs that

perform similar functions, notably TEFAP – The Emergency Food Assistance Program. Under TEFAP, OCS receives large amounts of surplus food from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that is distributed through Hawaii food banks as the primary agencies, which in turn distribute the food through smaller secondary agencies to recipient low-income people in the State.

Recently, USDA introduced a very small supplemental program within TEFAP that provides \$25,000 to the State of Hawaii for a farm-to-food bank program. OCS administers this program through contracts with Hawaii Foodbank and with The Food Basket, which is the food bank for the Island of Hawaii.

III. COMMENTS ON THE BILL

The Office of Community Services **supports** the intent of H.B. 314, provided that the measure’s passage would not replace or adversely impact priorities in the Governor’s Executive Budget Request.

OCS has three primary areas of inquiry with the bill.

The first area of inquiry involves procurement issues relating to which food banks would participate in the food distribution. Currently, no specific food banks are identified in the bill and there is no formal definition of “food bank” in the bill. Thus, it is not clear whether the appropriation should go ONLY to the three food banks that OCS currently works with in administering TEFAP, or whether other agencies that function as food banks would be eligible to receive a portion of the funding. OCS currently works with the following food banks for TEFAP: Hawaii Foodbank for Oahu and Kauai, Maui Food Bank for Maui County, and The Food Basket for Hawaii County.

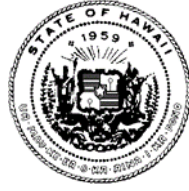
If the Legislature intends that the appropriation be made for these specific food banks, it would be best for the Legislature to name them in the bill. If that happens, OCS can immediately enter into contracts with them through procurement exemptions. If the Legislature wants to allow other agencies to participate, then OCS would need to issue a Request for Proposals, after issuing a Request for Information. An open procurement process would delay the commencement of the program by at least two months but would allow other food distribution agencies to participate.

A second area of inquiry relates to food selection. Currently, the bill does not require the administering agencies to focus on, for example, canned commodities as opposed to purchasing fresh local foods. Putting preference on local foods would improve the quality of food available to people needing this support and it would help local farmers and keep more funds within Hawaii.

A third set of questions relates to administrative costs. As the bill is currently written, it appears that the sums to be available for administrative costs – fifteen percent of the overall total – are intended to be for the food banks, without any portion for OCS. Since the bill currently does not yet specify the amount of funds to be appropriated, OCS cannot comment specifically on whether OCS would need additional funding and/or staffing for itself to handle the additional administrative work that this bill would impose on OCS's own current staff and budget. Accordingly, at this point OCS simply asks that the Legislature be open to allowing for a portion of the appropriation to be available for OCS to use for its own administrative responsibilities in implementing the bill. If the appropriation is to be made on a recurring basis, OCS might need additional staff to administer it, and would hope that the Legislature would authorize one additional FTE staff person for OCS.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 28, 2023

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

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [HB 314 HD1 SD1](#) – RELATING TO FOOD BANKS.

Hearing: Thursday, March 30, 2023, Time 10:05 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill and defers to the Office of Community Services as to administrative and budget needs. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds to the Office of Community Services to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to the food banks in the State in accordance with the Emergency Food Assistance Program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties. (SD1).

HD1 amended this measure:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion;
and
- (2) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

SD1 further amended this measure by:

- (1) Updating the legislative findings to clarify that, during fiscal year 2020-2021, Hawaii's four food banks distributed 36,500,000 pounds of food statewide;
- (2) Clarifying that the purpose of the appropriation is to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to the food banks in the State through the Office of Community Services;
- (3) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2023; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

DHS appreciates the Legislature's attention to the continuing nutritional needs of Hawaii's low-income residents as federal pandemic benefits are ending. The Department administers the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Since March 2020, SNAP has provided recipient households additional monthly SNAP benefits authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). This additional benefit is known as the Supplemental Emergency Allotment (EA). The minimum monthly EA amount issued is \$95, though the average household monthly EA amount has been \$199. The EA program has also helped boost revenue for local retailers.

Significantly, per the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, the last EA payment ended in March 2023. The end of the EA benefits will directly impact approximately 87,000 households statewide to maintain their nutritional needs. In addition, while the October 2022 increase in the minimum wage and January 2023 Social Security cost of living adjustment increased many residents' income, for SNAP recipients, these increases in monthly income decreased the monthly amount of SNAP benefits. Therefore, providing OCS with additional funds to purchase and distribute food will provide additional food resources for low-income residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, March 30, 2023; 10:05 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0314, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO FOOD BANKS.

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

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS THE INTENT** House Bill No. 0314, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO 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 years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to the food banks. The funds would be expended by the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

The bill would also take effect on July 1, 2023.

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. Even as the public health emergency draws to a close, families continue to struggle.

Testimony on House Bill No. 0314, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1
Thursday, March 30, 2023; 10:05 a.m.
Page 2

Because of this, it is imperative that the Legislature shore up Hawaii's social service safety net of which the network of food banks is a vital component. This is especially warranted in light of record general fund surpluses and the possibility of economic downturns in the near future.

On a technical note, we observe that this bill might be in conflict with Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and could be construed as facilitating 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.



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

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

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 30, 2023
TIME: 10:05am
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: HB314 HD1 SD1 Relating to 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. As the measure notes our state's food banks are essential every day in ensuring that food insecure individuals in Hawaii have access to food. In times of natural disasters or other crisis our food banks have also been tasked with taking the lead on mass feedings.

Unfortunately, due to the high cost of living and the recent historic inflation and other factors many people in our state face food insecurity. The food bank is a vital resource for these individuals and families.

These same issues mean that many people in Hawaii cannot afford to buy and store the recommended two weeks of food that experts recommend households have on hand in case of an emergency. Estimates vary but many experts agree that there is less than a week's worth of food in our state at any given time. Hoarding and panic buying by some could shorten that duration. As the agencies tasked with feeding our state in times of crisis it is vital that our food banks are adequately funded in order to fulfil that role, and of course to be able to continue to provide support to those who need it day to day.

We urge the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.

3/14/23 SB460 and HB314

Honorable State Representatives and Senators:

Thank you very much for your consideration of this very important measure. My name is Darin Shigeta, and I am currently the Board Treasurer for the Hawaii Foodbank, having been a Board Member for nearly 5 years.

I would like to submit brief testimony in support of H.B. 314 and SB460: Relating to Food Banks, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need, in accordance with existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

The Bill will facilitate the Foodbank's ability to continue our mission of providing food so that no one in our Community goes hungry. 1 in 6 Hawaii residents will struggle with hunger this year, including 82,000 children, lacking reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

As you are all aware, the COVID Pandemic completely changed the war on hunger on many fronts, a war that we are still fighting today. The Foodbank needed to almost double the amount of food distributed since the pandemic started, while also navigating changes to donation preferences, delivery protocols, operational impacts due to health and safety, and a very limited ability to hold fundraisers. While some have recovered from the pandemic's impacts, many have not, and now we are entering a new element of uncertainty with pandemic-related assistance used up, significant inflation, supply chain issues, and overall economic insecurity.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want – nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive;
- Allow food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items

In conclusion, the work that the Food Banks do on a daily basis is critical to supporting the needs of various communities within our Ohana. We respectfully request support for the crossover bills, which will allow us to continue to serve our mission to those who have been brave enough to raise their hand for help, advocating for those who have not yet drawn that courage, and positioning ourselves as Pillars of Hope in the event of a disaster or worst-case scenario.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration today.

Darin Shigeta



KOBAYASHI SUGITA & GODA, LLP
Attorneys at Law

Bert T. Kobayashi, Jr.*
Alan M. Goda*

John R. Aube*
Charles W. Gall*
Neal T. Gota
Charles D. Hunter
Robert K. Ichikawa*
Christopher T. Kobayashi*
Jonathan A. Kobayashi
Jan M. L. Y. Kutsunai*
David M. Louie*
Nicholas R. Monlux
Jonathan S. Moore
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Craig K. Shikuma*
Lex R. Smith*
Joseph A. Stewart*
Brian D. Tongg
David B. Tongg*
Caycie K. G. Wong

*A Law Corporation

Of Counsel:
Kenneth Y. Sugita*
Wendell H. Fujii*
Clifford K. Higa*
Burt T. Lau*
John F. Lezak*
Larry L. Myers*
David Y. Suzuki*
Maria Y. Wang

Kaylee K. Correa
Sianha M. Gualano
Austin H. Jim On
Stephen G. K. Kaneshiro
Travis Y. Kuwahara
Ryan D. Louie
Chelsea C. Maja

March 13, 2023

Re: Letter of support for SB 460 and HB 314

Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of **SB460** and **HB 314: Relating to Food Banks**, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry, and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want – nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively. Mahalo for your consideration.

Mahalo,
/s/ Craig K. Shikuma



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

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Re: **HB 314, HD1, SD1 - Relating to Food Banks**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
March 30, 2023, 10:05 AM

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB 314, HD1, SD1**. This bill appropriates funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with the emergency food assistance program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

**HCAN Speaks! Board
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Nearly half of children in Hawai'i live in households experiencing financial hardship. While almost 1 in 8 are in poverty, an additional one-third of families in Hawaii aren't officially poor but still don't earn enough to afford the basic life essentials.¹ As a result, over 50,000 of our state's keiki, or 1 in 6, face hunger.²

It is well established that the stresses of childhood poverty have both immediate and long-term effects on keiki's physical and mental health, behavioral self-control, academic achievement, and earnings as adults.³

That's why it's so important to support Hawai'i's food banks. They and their partner agencies help ensure that struggling families do not go hungry by distributing millions of pounds of food per year to those in need in our state.

Food banks were a lifeline during the pandemic, when our state had some of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. But even with folks back at work, the current high inflation has led to our state's food banks to continue to see unprecedented demand. That is unlikely to abate, as Hawai'i had the most expensive groceries in the nation⁴ even before the pandemic, and will continue to do so.

Many other states recognize the crucial role that food banks play in their communities by providing them with funding to purchase food to distribute to families who would otherwise go hungry. Hawai'i should do the same.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this bill.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ <https://www.auw.org/sites/default/files/pictures/ALICE-in-Focus-Children-Hawaii%20%283%29.pdf>

² <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hawaii>

³ <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/indicator/2014/06/childhood-poverty>

⁴ <https://meric.mo.gov/data/cost-living-data-series>



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Thursday, March 30, 2023 — 10:05 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 314 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Banks.

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve 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 choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports HB 314 HD1 SD1, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with the Emergency Food Assistance Program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

Over the last few 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 food producers 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 food producers 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 the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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

March 30, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 314, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO FOOD BANKS**

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:05 AM

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

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i'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 314, HD1, SD1, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to the food banks in the State in accordance with The Emergency Food Assistance Program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four 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 food banks 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.

During the pandemic, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau partnered with Hawai'i's food banks to provide local agricultural produce and proteins for their food assistance programs.

This partnership provided nearly \$3,000,000 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 Hawai'i's communities.

The dedicated funding for the emergency food assistance program will provide funds to Hawai'i's food banks 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.



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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 Collective

Date: March 28, 2023

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

Re: Support for HB314 HD1, SD1, Relating to Food Banks

Hrg: Thursday, March 30, 2023, at 10:05 AM, Conf Rm 211

The Obesity Prevention Task Force (OPTF), a program of Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI), is in **support of HB 314 HD1, SD1**, which would provide funding for the food bank system in Hawai'i.

Many people can benefit.

In Hawai'i, 1 in 10 people faces hunger, including 1 in 6 children. The cost to meet the demands of the more than 130,000 people in Hawai'i facing hunger is over \$80 million per year.ⁱⁱ

Many people in need do not qualify for SNAP benefits and depend on the food bank system for their meals. The demand for food is increasing, as Food Banks are giving out more food now than in previous years.ⁱⁱⁱ

Strengthen the safety net by funding food access.

The Hawai'i food bank system largely depends on private donations to help feed people. These donations help to provide a public good to our communities. This bill will bring state funding to those in need and not force food banks and their customers to rely solely on the generosity of private donors.

Food and housing are major financial obstacles in Hawai'i. Because there are few affordable state housing options for people, tens of thousands of residents leave for more affordable options. It is time for the state to support the social safety net to feed those who can barely afford housing and food.^{iv} Other states provide funding to support their food banks, and it is time for Hawai'i to do so.

Rising costs have made procuring food more difficult.

The increased cost of living worldwide has led to decreased donations to the Food Bank system. As prices rise for everyone, donations decline. The decrease in private donations has led to a food shortage for the Food Basket over the past year because private donations have fallen so sharply that they require significantly more funds to purchase food.^v This situation is not unique to the Food Basket. All food banks need more support to provide food to those who need it. The State of Hawai'i can be a partner by funding the food banks so they can meet the needs of our community.

Mahalo,



Nate Hix
Food Access Policy and Advocacy Coordinator
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force comprises over 60 statewide organizations and makes recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and healthcare 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 <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hawaii>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/09/people-are-really-struggling-hawaii-food-banks-scramble-to-meet-increased-demand/>

^{iv} <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/01/hawaiis-population-drain-outpaces-most-states-again/>

^v <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2022/09/26/hawaii-news/demand-grows-at-food-banks/>

HAWAII
**HUNGER
ACTION**
NETWORK

Aloha Harvest

County of Hawai'i

Hawai'i Alliance for
Community-Based Economic
Development

Hawai'i Appleseed

Hawai'i Children's Action
Network

Hawai'i Food Bank

Hawai'i Good Food Alliance

Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Kōkua Kalihi Valley
Comprehensive Health Center

Lanakila Pacific

Malama Kaua'i

Maui Food Bank

The Hawai'i Hunger Action Network is composed of advocates statewide dedicated to connecting communities and taking action to ensure all people in Hawai'i have enough food to live healthy, dignified, productive lives.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday March 30, 2023 – 10:00 A.M.
In Support: H.B. 314 – Relating to Food Banks

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of H.B. 314– Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need.

Hawai'i households are struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table.

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity– meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Many of these households fall into the asset-limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE) population with incomes too high to receive financial assistance, but too low to survive. In these times, communities rely on food banks, food pantries, and other forms of charitable feeding to care for some of our most vulnerable citizens. When these communities come knocking, our food banks, and emergency food system have repeatedly answered the call—no matter how large.

Food banks serve a critical need in our community with ever increasing demand.

Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry by sourcing, inspecting, and distributing over 21 million pounds of food in the last fiscal year alone. Food banks are experiencing increased demand like never before, seeing a more than 60% increase in food distributed from pre-pandemic distribution levels.

Funding priorities client choice and increases local food purchasing.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food banks and system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want –nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expand food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate as efficiently and effectively as our communities need them to.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



MAUI FOOD BANK
Helping the Hungry

March 30, 2023

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
In Support: H.B. 314- Relating to Food Banks

Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

The Maui Food Bank is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouses distribute over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh, locally sourced produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

Dollars for food purchases are essential to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want - nutrient-dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.

- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and

- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Richard Yust
Executive Director

Testimony Presented to
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
March 30, 2023, 10:05 a.m., Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

SUBJECT: Support for HB 314, HD1, SD1 – RELATING TO FOOD BANKS

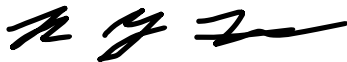
Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, & members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Lanakila Pacific strongly supports HB314 relating to supporting Hawaii food banks by strengthening the State Emergency Food Assistance Program (SEFAP). Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring those who are food insecure do not go hungry. All indications point to a significant increase in demand for food through community resources. The steep hunger cliff, caused by the reduction in SNAP benefits, will affect more than 80,000 families in Hawaii. In addition, the price of groceries has gone up 24% in the last three years in Honolulu. Hawaii's residents with low income will need to stretch dollars even further to eat. That is unacceptable, especially when Hawaii's food banks have the power to source efficiently and distribute food through network partners, in essence "stretch dollars" but in a more effective way, and feed our community if given the resources. The SEFAP is a good investment.

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. The Lanakila Meals on Wheels Program partners with the Hawaii Foodbank to ensure the seniors we serve do not go hungry.

We strongly urge you to pass this legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on this measure.

Respectfully,



Rona Yagi Fukumoto
President & CEO

Lanakila Pacific Board
Matt Miller, *Chair*
Savan Patel, *Vice Chair*
Alton Murakami, *Treasurer*
Dawn Hirano, *Secretary*
Maria Borje-Bonkowski
Cleo Brown
Paige Heckathorn Choy

Joy Ishiara
William H. Kern
Sean Mochizuki
Michael Morales
Lacey Shimabukuro
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Lanakila Pacific
Foundation Board
Emmit Kane, *Chair*
Keith Suzuka, *Vice Chair*
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Treasurer/ Secretary
Cecilia Fong
Kira Higa

Scott Kavanaugh
Derek Mizuno
Scott Nahme
Kristi O'Heron
Mike Robinson
Dwayne Takeno

President and CEO
Rona Yagi Fukumoto





March 30, 2023

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

Re: HB 314 HD1 SD1 – Relating to Foodbanks

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

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314 HD1 SD1, which appropriates funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with the emergency food assistance program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

HMSA supports Hawaii's food banks in addressing food insecurity in our community to strengthen health and well-being across our state. We have seen a significant increase in food insecurity in Hawaii and the stressors of the pandemic 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 314 HD1 SD1.

Sincerely,

David R. Herndon
Executive Vice President
Chief Business Operations Officer



LATE

March 29, 2023

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Gil Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Testimony in strong support of HB 314, Relating to Food Banks

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I **strongly support HB 314**, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with the emergency food assistance program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, and the State Emergency Food Assistance Program (SEFAP) established in 2022 provides important support to meet this ongoing need.

- Hawai'i has the highest cost of living in the nation, and food security is an ongoing challenge – one in six residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. One in four children is food insecure.
- The pandemic amplified the need, and the network of food banks responded by significantly increasing purchases to provide for our communities. We continue to serve 50% more people than we did before Covid.
- Inflation has increased food prices 24% since the beginning of the pandemic, making it difficult for many families to make ends meet and putting pressure on the charitable food system as well.
- Downturns in retail donations and USDA commodities have changed the food bank model. We purchase food efficiently and ensure we distribute equitably through our network of community partners.
- Purchasing food allows us to buy items that people want and need, rather than relying exclusively on donated and USDA commodity foods. We consistently hear requests for fresh produce and healthy protein, and SEFAP funds allow us to meet this demand and support the health and well-being of those we serve.
- Food banks are able to really stretch a dollar due to our relationships with producers, manufacturers, and distributors both locally and on the mainland. For each dollar received by Hawai'i Foodbank, we can provide food for more than two meals.
- Many other states support their network of food banks with core funding for food security needs.

We respectfully request the bill be amended to include funding for the Office of Community Services to administer the program.

Hawai'i Foodbank gathers donated, rescued, USDA commodity and purchased food and distributes it to those in need through our network of more than 200 agency partners. Ongoing, core funding allows us to purchase healthy foods, which helps us better support our agency partners who directly serve our communities and ensure no one goes hungry.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO, Hawai'i Foodbank

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:46:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melani Rawlins	Testifying for Sustainable Molokai	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

The Maui Food Bank is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouse distributes over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

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- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and*
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Director

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

March 30, 2023
10:05 a.m.
Conference Room 211 and Via Videoconference

Re: HB 314, HD1, SD1, Relating to Food Banks

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 314, HD1, SD1, which appropriate funds for the Office of Community Services to supplement the Emergency Food Assistance Program for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food distribution to those in need.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i SUPPORTS HB 314, HD1, SD1.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i is one of the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plans, serving 12.6 million members nationwide, and more than 269,000 members in Hawai‘i. In Hawai‘i, more than 4,200 dedicated employees and more than 650 Hawai‘i Permanente Medical Group physicians and advance practice providers work in our integrated health system to provide our members coordinated care and coverage. Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i has more than 20+ medical facilities, including our award-winning Moanalua Medical Center. We continue to provide high-quality coordinated care for our members and deliver on our commitment to improve the health of our members and 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 2022 Kaiser Permanente Hawai‘i invested \$245,000 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.

We support HB 314, HD1, SD1 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.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 2:00:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kihei Youth Center	Testifying for Kihei Youth Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

On behalf of the Kihei Youth Center located on Maui and in support of the Maui Food Bank, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

The Maui Food Bank is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouse distributes over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

Dollars for food purchases are essential to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want - nutrient-dense foods like fresh produce and protein are most requested.*
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and*
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively. Without it, many families would suffer.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Lehuanani Huddleston-Hafoka

Executive Director

Kihei Youth Center



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

LATE

March 29, 2023

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

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST ALBRECHT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ANN EBESUNO
BOARD CHAIR

MARK KRZYZANOWSKI
VICE-CHAIR

DENNIS LIN
TREASURER

JULIA ZEE
SECRETARY

STEPHEN UEDA

WARREN LEE

SAMANTHA COLLINS

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 314 HD1 SD1, Relating to appropriating funds to support Hawai'i's Food Banks

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Keith-Agaran,

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

The impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic have heightened the issues of food insecurity and hunger in our state to new levels. Due to the ongoing economic impacts of the pandemic on Hawai'i Island, our food banks in Kona and Hilo have faced the highest need in our thirty-four-year history, with record numbers of residents needing our services. Although the economy is improving, we are still serving over three times more than we served pre-pandemic as our residents' grapple with the long-term impacts of the pandemic, as well as 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. Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate as efficiently and effectively as our communities need them too. **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

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

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 3:05:12 PM
Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Cambra	Testifying for St. Joseph Church	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

The Maui Food Bank is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouse distributes over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

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- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and*
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Jodi Shin Yamamoto
612 Ahakea Street
Honolulu, HI 96816

March 30, 2023

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Gil Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: Testimony in support of HB 314, Relating to Food Banks

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

I am testifying on behalf of the Hawaii Foodbank in support of HB 314 relating to food banks.

As you know, HB 314 would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need. One out of six Hawaii residents struggles with food insecurity and getting food on their table every day. This is not acceptable. We can do better. With additional funds through HB 314, the Hawaii Foodbank and other food bank organizations will be able to provide needed fruits, vegetables, canned goods and staples to those in need, including many of our kupuna and keiki. I strongly urge you to continue your support of HB 314 and pass it for the betterment of our entire community.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Many thanks,

Jodi Shin Yamamoto

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 8:35:31 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hunter Heavilin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The proposed legislation, HB314, would provide much-needed funding to the office of community services to support the purchase, storage, and transportation of food for distribution to those in need. This funding would not only help to ensure that food banks have an adequate supply of nutritious food to distribute to families and individuals, but it would also reduce the financial burden on local food banks, allowing them to expand their reach and serve more people in need.

By supporting this legislation, we can take a crucial step towards combating food insecurity in our communities and helping families and individuals in need access the nutrition they require to thrive. I urge lawmakers to support HB314 and to prioritize funding for food assistance programs that support those who are struggling to put food on the table.

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 9:11:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Food security in Hawai‘i is a significant challenge for many individuals and families. Currently, one in six Hawai‘i residents faces food insecurity, including nearly one in four children. More than 82,000 children in the state will struggle with hunger this year, and Hawai‘i is projected to have the second highest rate of child food insecurity in the nation.

Food insecurity levels remain elevated after the COVID-19 pandemic. During fiscal year 2020–2021, the four food banks operated by the emergency food assistance program and their partner network collectively distributed 16,500,000 pounds of food, or more than twice as much food distributed prior to the pandemic. In fiscal year 2021–2022, these food banks and their partner network distributed more than 27 million pounds of food, representing more than a 60% increase from pre-pandemic distribution levels.

Food banks and their partners provide a critical safety net in response to ongoing food insecurity caused by natural disasters, economic pressures, and the high cost of living in Hawai‘i. Rising inflation rates have driven up food prices 25% in three years, and Hawai‘i's food banks have simultaneously experienced growing demand and decreased purchasing power.

The federal emergency food assistance program administered by the Office of Community Services provides food banks and their partners with critical resources for purchasing food and distributing it to those in need, combatting hunger on a daily basis across the state.

The state should appropriate funds to supplement the emergency food assistance program to ensure that Hawai‘i's food banks and their partners can continue to meet the ongoing food security needs of the people of Hawai‘i. Please pass HB314 HD1 SD1.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 10:33:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charity Hartman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need.

Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

Dollars for food purchases are essential to our food system because they:

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- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and*
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively, for the most benefit to our most vulnerable populations.

Mahalo for your consideration.

*Charity Hartman
Kahului, Maui*

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 10:38:02 AM
Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawehi Kina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

The Maui Food Bank is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouse distributes over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

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Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:22:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaime L Ribao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

The Maui Food Bank is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouse distributes over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

Dollars for food purchases are essential to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want - nutrient-dense foods like fresh produce and protein are most requested.*
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and*
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:36:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Santana	Testifying for Maui Youth and Family Service	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

Maui county residence-youth is experiencing food insecurity lacking access to affordable, nutritious food. Maui youth and family services serve a crucial role in ensuring that our youth who are food insecure do not go hungry.

Maui Youth and Family Services depend on the Maui Food Bank to ensure our clients nutritional needs are met on a daily basis. We have several programs within our non-profit organization that we serve- whether it be a healthy afterschool snack or a nutritious meal for our program outings- our youth depends on the Maui Food bank. Having worked with our youth in this capacity for more than 5 years, I've personally witnessed our youth go hungry due to not having access to food at home, School meals not satisfying their hunger, most of our clients enjoy attending our after school programs due to the fact they know they will be fed. Some even wanting to take the left over snacks home to their siblings.

These efforts provide a safety net that so many of our low and moderate income Maui youth rely on.

Mahalo

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 12:03:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Sparling	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a regular shopper at the Maui Food Bank, on behalf of some of our hospice patients/families, I strongly support this bill.. While the Food Bank provides a lot of calories for people, and do a great job with the resoures they do have, there is ALWAYS a need for more nutritious food - especially produce and meats, as noted in their testimony. As life gets evven more expensive, I hope that we can continue to support families with not just mac and cheese and crackers, but also a bit more of an array nutritious food - especially as there are often children involved. thank you

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 12:19:21 PM
Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samantha U'u	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

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One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than before the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

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- *Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

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Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 12:27:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pili Thibodeaux	Testifying for Women Helping Women	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

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Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Pili Thibodeaux

Women Helping Women- Deputy Director

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 12:40:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Walsh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

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Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 1:10:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert sahadun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing this testimony in support of this bill which will provide financial assistance for MFB to effectively distribute much needed good assistance to people in a county of three different islands. There is no question that the need is great in every area of the county, but locations that are underserved, isolated and face shipping, storing and distributing challenges (like Molokai) are in a unique situation that makes it difficult to provide the food that are needed in a consistent manner. It is difficult to go to the next level of distribution in terms of quantity and quality because of the lack of storage, and distribution options as Maui is the base of our Food Bank resource. MFB has done a tremendous job in bringing much needed food to Molokai and collaborating with businesses and local farmers to provide fresh food not only non perishables. They understand the challenges to get food from one island to the next and have gone above and beyond to service the needs of Molokai, but as the need to provide food grows so must our resource (MFB) and our ability to store and distribute on island grow and rise to the next level of servicing people in need. Your help financially through the passing of this bill will help greatly to accomplish that. This is a bill that will affect the care and provision for many individuals and families in need. Thank you for your attention, consideration and aloha to all of us in Maui County.

LATE

HB-314-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 1:30:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheila Roback	Testifying for Hale Hulu Mamo	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gil Keith-Agaran,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role in ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for their services to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

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- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.*

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Jason A. Economou

LATE

Jason.Economou@gmail.com ❖ (808)308-9015 ❖ 605 Linekona Place, Wailuku, HI

March 29, 2023

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

Re: HB314, HD1, SD1 Relating to Food Banks

Hrg: Thursday, March 30, 2023, at 10:05 a.m. Conf. Rm. 211

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

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 314, HD1, SD1 (Relating to Food Banks), which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need following the existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties. This funding would go a long way in assisting Hawaii's food banks and their partners as they work to ensure that our most vulnerable residents don't go hungry.

Hawaii's food banks are serving significantly more people than prior to the pandemic, but they can only do so much on their own. The food banks already have the trusted relationships and purchasing power necessary to efficiently source and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. Notwithstanding, they need to be regularly supported by the State of Hawaii for their services to Hawaii's residents. It is not uncommon for states to provide funding for food banks to ensure the food security needs of residents are met, and given all relevant data at hand, we know our residents are in dire need of such support. .

The Maui Food Bank (MFB) is the only non-profit agency in Maui County that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of perishable and non-perishable food to our neighbors in need. Our warehouses distribute over 3 million pounds of food annually - half a million pounds of this is fresh, locally sourced produce. MFB coordinates the delivery of donated and purchased food through a network of over 170 agency partners to reach individuals and families in need. These efforts provide a charitable social safety net that thousands of low and moderate-income Maui County residents rely on to feed themselves and their families each month. MFB also sends monthly shipments to support multiple partnering agencies on the neighboring islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i.

Dollars for food purchases are essential to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want - nutrient-dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.

March 29, 2023

Page 2

- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks play a critical role in our food and disaster response systems, and they need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively when we most need them. Throughout the pandemic, as well as the current economic crisis that has followed, Hawaii's food banks have provided exemplary and necessary services to our island communities. Please support them in return.

Mahalo,

Jason A. Economou