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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
INCENTIVES.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the consumption of  
2 fresh fruits and vegetables is an integral part of a healthy  
3 diet and central to the prevention of obesity and chronic  
4 disease. The legislature also recognizes that every community  
5 should have access to fresh and healthy dietary options, but the  
6 high cost of fresh produce often makes that difficult. This  
7 challenge is felt acutely by participants in the federal  
8 supplemental nutrition assistance program, which serves a low-  
9 income population that struggles to afford healthy food.

10           The legislature acknowledges that the State faces an  
11 estimated \$83,000,000 in annual costs related to food insecurity  
12 and hunger. Due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)  
13 pandemic and rising inflation, households are facing increasing  
14 food costs. Compared to the rest of the nation, households in  
15 the State spend the highest percentage of their annual budgets  
16 on food.



1           The legislature further finds that, through the national  
2 double up food bucks program, Hawaii has the opportunity to  
3 expand access to healthy foods for low-income residents who are  
4 eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits.  
5 Currently implemented in more than twenty states, the double up  
6 food bucks program provides matching federal grant moneys to  
7 state programs that incentivize the use of supplemental  
8 nutrition assistance program benefits for the purchase of fresh  
9 produce. Provided by both the United States Department of  
10 Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the  
11 United States Department of Agriculture food insecurity  
12 nutrition incentive grants program, these federal matching funds  
13 increase access to healthy dietary options while also  
14 invigorating local economies and addressing food insecurity.

15           The enactment of Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019,  
16 created the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, now commonly  
17 known as the DA BUX double up food bucks program. The DA BUX  
18 double up food bucks program began first with a pilot program in  
19 2012 by Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services on the  
20 island of Oahu and The Kohala Center on the island of Hawaii.  
21 The program provides a dollar-for-dollar match to supplemental



1 nutrition assistance program beneficiaries who purchase locally  
2 grown fruits, vegetables, and proteins at participating farmers'  
3 markets, grocery stores, and community-supported agriculture  
4 projects. By the end of 2023, the pilot program was available  
5 at fifty-eight food retailers across one hundred thirteen market  
6 sites and pick-up locations, including grocery stores, farmers'  
7 markets, community-supported agriculture programs, and other  
8 farm direct retailers. From 2020-2021, DA BUX supported four  
9 hundred seventy farm producers and eight distributors. Each  
10 dollar reimbursed to participating DA BUX food retailers for  
11 their issued discounts on local produce has an economic  
12 multiplier of 2.1. This means that each program dollar issued  
13 for local produce incentives contributes \$2.10 to Hawaii's  
14 economy. A \$3,000,000 investment by the State in this program  
15 would allow for a federal funding match that will contribute at  
16 least \$12,600,000 to the local economy annually. This result is  
17 a triple win for the State because it supports families,  
18 farmers, and the local economy. Additional funding will allow  
19 the statewide program coordinator, led by The Food Basket on the  
20 island of Hawaii, to obtain matching federal funds for continued  
21 support of the program.



1           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate  
2 funds to the department of agriculture for the continued  
3 administration of the Hawaii healthy food incentive program and  
4 to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in  
5 the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

6           SECTION 2. In accordance with section 9 of article VII, of  
7 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii and sections 37-91 and  
8 37-93, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined  
9 that the appropriation contained in this Act will cause the  
10 state general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025  
11 to be exceeded by \$                   , or                   per cent. The reasons  
12 for exceeding the general fund expenditure ceiling are that the  
13 appropriation made in this Act is necessary to serve the public  
14 interest and to meet the need provided for by this Act.

15           SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                   or so much  
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the  
18 continued administration of the Hawaii healthy food incentive  
19 program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who  
20 participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.



# H.B. NO. 1525

1           The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
2 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

3           SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

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INTRODUCED BY: \_\_\_\_\_



**JAN 08 2024**



# H.B. NO. 1525

**Report Title:**

HDOA; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program; Appropriation; Exceeds General Fund Expenditure Ceiling

**Description:**

Declares that the appropriation exceeds the state general fund expenditure ceiling for 2024-2025. Appropriates 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.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

