



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

Executive Officers

Gary Okimoto, Safeway Hawaii, *Chair*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Vice Chair*
Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 9, 2024
TIME: 3:01pm
PLACE: 225

RE: SB2924 Relating to Hawaii Emergency Management Agency

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Hawaii Food Industry Association to express our strong support for this measure, which proposes the authorization of general obligation bonds and the appropriation of funds for the planning, design, and construction of a warehouse to expand the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency's (HI-EMA) capacity to store and deploy life-saving supplies and equipment across all counties in the State.

Our organization recognizes the critical role that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency plays in ensuring the safety and well-being of our communities during natural or human-caused disasters. The proposed expansion of HI-EMA's warehouse facilities aligns with our shared commitment to preparedness, response, and recovery efforts that safeguard both residents and businesses across the Hawaiian islands.

The ability to store and deploy essential supplies and equipment efficiently is paramount in times of crisis, especially considering the unique geographic challenges of our state. As part of the food industry, we understand the importance of a well-coordinated emergency response system to ensure the timely distribution of food, water, and other necessities to affected areas. By supporting this legislation, the Hawaii Food Industry Association believes that the State will be better equipped to address the challenges posed by emergencies and disasters, thereby enhancing the resilience of our communities. We commend the Legislature for its foresight in

recognizing the need for infrastructure improvements that directly contribute to the safety and well-being of our residents.

We urge the Committee to approve this measure and move it forward for further consideration. The proposed appropriation for the planning, design, and construction of the warehouse is an investment in the overall preparedness and resilience of our state, and we believe it is a crucial step toward ensuring the continued safety and security of our residents. Mahalo for your attention to this matter and for your commitment to the well-being of the people of Hawaii.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4420



STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2924,
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to **SUPPORT SB 2924**.

The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency agrees with the legislature's intent found in SB 2924. It is vitally important for the state and its citizens to be prepared for all natural or man made disasters or emergencies, and to be able to respond in an effective, timely manner.

HI-EMA **strongly supports** SB 2924 that calls \$1,500,000 for the issuance of general obligation bonds and appropriate funds for HI-EMA – as long as it does not impact the Governor's executive budget priorities - to begin planning, design, and construction of warehouse facilities to store and deploy life-saving supplies and equipment to all counties within the State in the event emergencies on one or more of the Hawaiian islands.

Given Hawai'i's distinctive geographical features, it is imperative that we equip our state with the necessary tools and resources to quickly meet the needs of all our counties and citizens combined. Issuing general obligation bonds for fiscal year 2024-2025 will assist development of plans, designs, and eventual construction of the facilities to meet the demands associated with emergency threats. The appropriation authorized by this Act will go a considerable distance to develop the necessary plans to handle emergencies large or small.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 2924.

James Barros: james.barros@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300