
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.

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 building a
3 healthy and thriving local food system for Hawaii. The
4 legislature further finds that between eighty-five and ninety-
5 five per cent of the State's food supply is imported and
6 Hawaii's farmers face significant barriers to growth in local
7 food supply.

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

15 Additionally, the benefits added to the supplemental
16 nutrition assistance program during the COVID-19 pandemic
17 expired in March 2023. This resulted in a benefits decrease of



1 \$200 a month on average for more than eighty thousand SNAP
2 households. This means that statewide, Hawaii will see a
3 decrease in benefits of more than \$16,000,000 per month. With
4 the loss in food money payments, supplemental nutrition
5 assistance program participants will benefit from the State's
6 commitment to other food assistance programs, such as the
7 Hawaii's Double Up Bucks Program discussed below.

8 The legislature further finds that, through the Gus
9 Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program administered by the
10 United States Department of Agriculture, Hawaii has the
11 opportunity to accelerate the growth of local food production
12 for the State while addressing food insecurity for low-income
13 residents who are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance
14 program benefits. Currently implemented in more than thirty
15 states, the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program provides
16 matching federal grant moneys to state programs that incentivize
17 the use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits
18 for the purchase of fresh produce. These federal matching funds
19 increase access to healthy dietary options while also
20 invigorating local economies and addressing food insecurity.



1 The legislature additionally finds that the Hawaii's Double
2 Up Food Bucks Program began with an initial pilot program in
3 2012 by Kōkua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services on the
4 island of Oahu and The Kohala Center on the island of Hawaii.
5 The enactment of Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, created
6 the Hawaii healthy food incentive program, and in tandem with a
7 federal Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program grant award,
8 united the Double Up Food Bucks programs statewide under one
9 name, DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks. This program provides a
10 dollar-for-dollar match to supplemental nutrition assistance
11 program beneficiaries who purchase Hawaii grown fruits and
12 vegetables at participating Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
13 Program food retailers. By the end of 2023, the pilot program
14 was available at fifty-nine food retailers across one hundred
15 market sites and pick-up locations, including grocery stores,
16 farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture programs, and
17 other farm direct food hubs. From 2020-2021, DA BUX supported
18 four hundred seventy farm producers and eight distributors.
19 Each dollar reimbursed to participating DA BUX food retailers
20 for their issued discounts on local produce has an economic
21 multiplier of 2.1. This means that each program dollar issued



1 for local produce incentives contributes \$2.10 to Hawaii's
2 economy. A \$2,000,000 investment by the State in this program
3 would allow for a federal funding match that will contribute at
4 least \$12,800,000 to the local economy annually. This result is
5 a triple win for the State because it supports families,
6 farmers, and the local economy. Additional funding will allow
7 the statewide program administrator, led by The Food Basket
8 Inc., Hawaii island's food bank in partnership with the Hawaii
9 Good Food Alliance, to obtain matching federal funds for
10 continued support of the program.

11 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
12 funds to the department of agriculture for the continued
13 administration of the Hawaii healthy food incentive program and
14 to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in
15 the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

16 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for
19 the continued administration of the Hawaii healthy food
20 incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries



1 who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance
2 program.

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

5 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
6 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
7 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
8 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state
9 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
10 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the
11 appropriation contained in this Act will cause the general fund
12 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further
13 exceeded by \$ or per cent. The combined total
14 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these
15 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling
16 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
17 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the
18 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

19 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
20 serve the public interest; and



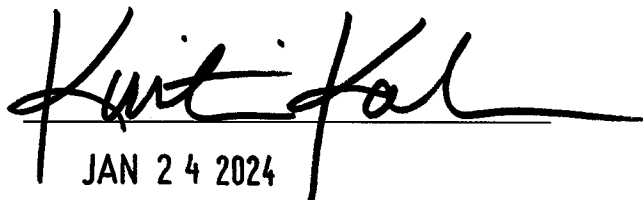
H.B. NO. 2771

1 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
2 addressed by this Act.

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

4

INTRODUCED BY:


JAN 24 2024



Report Title:

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

Description:

Appropriates funds 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.

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