

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL 2590, HD1
RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2590, HD1. This bill establishes the Hawaii farm to food bank program and Hawaii food assistance program special fund to alleviate food shortages in the state. The Department expresses our **strong support**.

Farm to Food bank programs are a win-win program, helping alleviate food insecurity in our communities, while opening additional markets to our farmers and ranchers. With a stable source of funding, food banks are a consistent customer for our farmers. The fragility of our food supply chains was made apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hawaii farmers rose up and continued to feed their communities.

In addition, Farm to Food bank programs make healthy fresh foods grown and raised in Hawaii available to everyone, not just those that can afford it. Due to the ability for food banks to change their inventory quickly, this program would allow the food banks to act as 'ballast', purchasing when there is unexpected abundance in the market.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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Felicia Cowden
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Ross Kagawa



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Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
Email: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

February 20, 2024

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
HB 2590, HD 1, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 22, 2024
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT HB 2590, HD 1, Relating to Food Security. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kauai County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of HB 2590, HD 1, which would greatly affect the Kauai community.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2590, HD 1. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULOSAN
Councilmember, Kauai County Council

AAO:dmc



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 22, 2024; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2590, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, 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** House Bill No. 2590, House Draft 1, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.

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.

This bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2024-2025, for food bank purchases from local farmers via request for proposals through the Department of Agriculture.

This bill would take effect on July 1, 3000.

The HPCA asserts that the COVID-19 pandemic severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. Entire families continue to struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis. Our overreliance on tourism has weakened our ability to bounce back from COVID's dire economic realities. The only way for us to protect ourselves from the next global pandemic is for Hawaii to diversify its economic base and become more self-sufficient. And for us to do that, we need to grow more food.

Accordingly, the HPCA 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.



To: House Committee on Finance

Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, February 22, 2024

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of HB2590, Relating to Food Security

From: Andrew Ogata, Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) strongly supports HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture. Food insecurity was already one of Hawaii's biggest challenges prior to the COVID-19 epidemic and it is now reaching a crisis.

HHRC's mission is to *reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific*. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities.

During 2020 and 2021, HHRC partnered with the Hawaii Food Bank on food drops around the island and helps disseminate more than 500,000 pounds of food to thousands of families and saw first hand how desperate our families are to get healthy and fresh foods that they otherwise could not afford. We need our foodbanks to not only rely on donations but to get the resources they need so adequately address food insecurity in the islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Andrew Ogata, Director of Development, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center



46-056 KAMEHAMEHA HWY, SUITE 111
KANEEOHE, HI 96744

February 20, 2024

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Testimony in support of HB2590, Relating to food security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

We are testifying on behalf of the Aloha Diaper Bank.

We support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

Hawai'i Foodbank plays a crucial role in supporting our hunger relief efforts by serving as a vital partner in the fight against food insecurity. Through collaborative initiatives and resource-sharing, Hawai'i Foodbank enables partners like ourselves to access a diverse range of nutritious food supplies, amplifying it's capacity to serve the community. Their steadfast commitment to addressing hunger fosters a stronger network that allows partners to reach more individuals in need and provide essential nourishment to build a healthier, more resilient community.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Anne Komatsu
Executive Director

Cathy Kerch
Director of Programs and Operations



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Natalie Urminska
Kauai

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports HB2590.**

Food insecurity is a serious issue in Hawaii. Our state's farmers are a vital part of the solution, and the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program provides a crucial link between our farmers and those in need.

We believe it is essential to strengthen partnerships between the food banks and agricultural producers to bring fresh produce and other foods to households in need. Additionally, we are confident that the monetary appropriations will enable farmer and food banks to provide the much-needed food access for the state's residents.

The emphasis on local food sourcing is a strategic move towards enhancing the state's resilience in emergencies. By establishing a steady, local supply chain of essential food items, we mitigate the risks associated with external supply chain disruptions. Local sourcing ensures that, in times of crisis of local or global origin, our communities have reliable access to nutritious food.

In conclusion, the Hawaii Farmers Union strongly supports the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program. This program not only serves the State's immediate food needs but also provides a sustainable market for local food producers, keeping money circulating within the State to boost our local economy. We urge the legislature to pass this bill, recognizing its potential to significantly impact both our agricultural sector and the food security of our communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, February 22, 2024 — 1:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 2590 HD1, Relating to Food Security.

Dear Chair Yamashita 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 2590 HD1, which appropriates funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, to be extended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

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.

In response to the COVID pandemic, federal monies injected into Hawai'i through county initiatives helped grow 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, and continuing to strengthen the bonds between farms and food banks is a worthy investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 2:12:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dotty Kelly-Paddock	Hui O Hauula	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hui O Hauula is a small 501c3 nonprofit, located in the town of Hauula in the Koolauloa District. Hui O Hauula has worked in partnership with the Hawaii Food Bank since 2015. We now are blessed to participate in four food programs for families of Koolauloa. These include the Ohana Food Distribution, the Senior Food boxes (CSFP Program), a Food Pantry is available to our families three days per week MWF and we also provide Kaukau4Keiki food boxes for children and youth attending public schools. Hawaii Food Bank provides local produce, canned food and fresh meats to our nonprofit to help support the Koolauloa communities of Kaaawa, Punaluu, Hauula, Laie and Kahuku. These food programs serve 600-700 families every month in Koolauloa District. These important programs help provide food security for needy families throughout our District! Food security is a really critical issue in our area where there are many vulnerable families and seniors that depend on this food. The fresh produce provided also helps local farmers so this is a win-win!

Hawai'i Foodbank's Farm to Foodbank program, launched in March 2020, has been a tremendous success, providing healthy, locally-grown produce to those we serve.

We are one of more than 200 partner agencies, or emergency feeding organizations, to distribute food to the community. Each partner agency receives food safety and civil rights trainings, and all food is provided to our agencies free of charge. Together we distributed 19.5 million pounds of food, or food for 16.2 million meals, through these channels in 2023, including nearly 5 million pounds of fresh produce.

Please fund these programs!



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

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Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Finance

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 22, 2024
TIME: 1pm
PLACE: Room 308

RE: HB2590 HD1 Relating to the Food Security

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.

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

HFIA is in support of this measure. Addressing food insecurity and strengthening our local agricultural sector are goals we all share. This measure will allow for the purchasing of food from local farmers by local food banks. This helps bolster our states food supply for those in need during every day circumstances, or in times of crisis. It also provides economic support for our local agricultural sector. It's also worth noting that many food banks around the state are frequently have shortages of fresh fruits and vegetables. This measure will help ensure that those who are utilizing our food banks have access to fresh local healthy foods. We encourage you to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HIPHI Board

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HMSA

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John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Native Hawaiian Research Office

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Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
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COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

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/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce
Development

Date: February 20, 2024

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Re: HB 2590 HD1 Relating to Food Security

Hrg: Thursday, February 22, 2024 1:00 PM

Healthy Eating + Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, convened by the Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **Support of HB 2590 HD1**, which would provide funds to food banks to make purchases from local farmers.

Consistent Demand

Farmers sometimes produce supply beyond market demand, which often goes to waste, or farmers under produce because there is not always consistent market demand. Currently, this excess would go to waste or people are unable to obtain local foods because there is not enough. However, with a robust farm to food bank program, the food bank system can be consistent purchasers of locally sourced food.ⁱⁱ This system provides a steady demand for the local farming community, ensuring an opportunity for them to have consistent buyers of their foods. By the foodbanks consistently purchasing foods at fair market values, it helps our local food market. It is integral that farmers have consistent buyers so they can produce to scale. There is constant demand for fresh produce from the food banks, but it is often unavailable. This program can help fill that void by providing healthier food choices for our residents.

Help the Local Economy

This program will help local farmers sell more food within the State. The food they well will go to those most in need here in Hawai'i that depend on the food bank system. This investment will flow in all sectors of our economy as farmers and food distributors spend their earned money on other goods and services.

Sincerely,

Nate Hix
Social Impact Policy Manager
Hawai'i Public Health Insititute

ⁱ The Healthy Eating + Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, formerly known as the Obesity Prevention Task Force, was created by the legislature in 2012 and is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations. The HEAL Coalition works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

ⁱⁱ <https://kauainownews.com/2022/02/14/hawaii-food-basket-receives-donation-from-kaiser-for-new-program/>

Testimony of
Jonathan Ching
Government Relations Director

Before:
House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

February 22, 2024
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

Re: HB 2590, HD1 Relating to Food Security.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2590, HD1, which appropriates funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, with the funds to be administered by request for proposal via the department of agriculture.

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i SUPPORTS HB 2590, HD1.

Kaiser Permanente is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit health plans, serving 12.6 million members nationwide, and more than 274,000 members in Hawai'i. In Hawai'i, more than 4,200 dedicated employees and more than 650 Hawai'i Permanente Medical Group physicians and advanced practice providers work in our integrated health system to provide our members with coordinated care and coverage. Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i has more than 19 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.

Kaiser Permanente supports policies that ensure all Hawai'i 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.

Kaiser Permanente prioritizes food security as an area of community health focus, meaning that all people, in all communities, have access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food that meets

their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy lifestyle. However, we know that food insecurity has increased due to the effects of inflation and the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, Kaiser Permanente provides grants to Hawai'i food banks administering The Emergency Food Assistance Program's (TEFAP) Farm to Food Bank Program, which serves a critical role for many families facing food insecurities.

The grant funds served a twofold purpose through the food purchasing program. First, the funds are used as a match to draw down Federal funds, which require a 1:1 match. Additionally, Kaiser Permanente's grant funds support farm-direct bags of fresh produce for low-income seniors receiving a monthly supplemental food box through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), a USDA program that Hawai'i Foodbank runs in partnership with the Office of Community Services.

To ensure communities have reliable access to healthy food, Kaiser Permanente supports policies that minimize barriers to and maximize enrollment in federal nutrition assistance programs, such as SNAP, and support for federal nutrition standards for school meals, including meals with more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and less sodium and trans fats.

Our work is guided by our belief that access to nutritious food plays a critical role in supporting community health. Kaiser Permanente has also piloted interventions using medically tailored meals and launched a prescription produce program to help patients access fresh produce. By studying the effectiveness of these programs, Kaiser Permanente is building an evidence base for future policy interventions that reduce health care costs and improve patient outcomes.

We support HB 2590, HD1, because it will appropriate funds to food bank purchases from local farmers, which helps provide healthy, locally-grown produce and helps to continue to meet the food security needs of the people of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



February 22, 2024

House Committee on Finance

RE: Testimony in support of HB 2590, Relating to Food Security

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I am writing in **strong support of HB 2590**, which appropriates funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, with the funds to be administered by request for proposal via the department of agriculture.

Food insecurity is a critical issue in Hawai'i, where one in six residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. One in four children is food insecure. Hawai'i has the highest cost of living in the nation, and inflation has driven food prices up by more than 25% since before the pandemic—greatly exacerbating the problem and putting far too many families at risk of going hungry, or making impossible choices between food and rent, food and medicine, or food and transportation. Food insecure households are especially vulnerable to a natural disaster, as they do not have the capacity to set aside a fourteen-day supply of food and water.

The Farm to Food Bank program addresses these critical needs while investing in our local food systems at the same time. Every dollar in the Farm to Foodbank program does double duty—not only is it invested in local agriculture, supporting our local farmers, helping to buoy our local economy and food system, and decreasing our dependence on imported food, but it allows us to provide fresh, healthy, Hawai'i-grown produce and proteins to those we serve. We know that food insecurity is highly correlated with negative health outcomes such as diabetes and heart disease, and that as budgets grow tighter, households tend to shift towards less expensive food options—which are often highly processed and significantly less healthy. The ability to provide fresh produce to those we serve will have a long-term positive effect on the health of our entire community.

Hawai'i Foodbank established our Farm to Foodbank program during the pandemic through a partnership with the Hawai'i Farm Bureau, with a commitment to purchase locally produced foods from local farmers and ranchers when their regular markets shut down. For the first three years of the Farm to Foodbank program, Hawai'i Foodbank purchased and distributed more than seven million pounds of local produce and proteins, funded primarily through COVID-era federal pandemic relief funds. Since those funds have lapsed, we have continued to fund our Farm to Foodbank program through private philanthropic support and other sources, and are currently purchasing between 25,000 – 30,000 pounds of local produce per week, including culturally relevant products such as poi, 'uala, and 'ulu. HB2590 would allow us to continue and grow these important programs.



Hawai'i Foodbank is Hawai'i's largest hunger relief organization, fiercely dedicated to our mission of nourishing our 'ohana today while working to end hunger tomorrow. We work with a network of more than 200 partner agencies across O'ahu and Kaua'i to provide food assistance to an average of more than 150,000 people each month.

Hawai'i Foodbank provides all food, including locally purchased produce, to our network of partner agencies free of charge, and our partner agencies then distribute that food into our communities directly. Last year, we distributed food for more than 16.2 million meals across the islands we directly serve, including nearly 5 million pounds of fresh produce. Together with the Maui Food Bank, serving Maui County, and The Food Basket, serving Hawai'i Island, our network of food banks and partner agencies provide food assistance to all those facing hunger across the State.

Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

Amy Miller
President and CEO
Hawai'i Foodbank



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

February 22, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 2590, HD1
RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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 2590, HD1, which appropriates funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

The Coronavirus Pandemic 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 Foodbanks partnered with local food producers to ensure that farmers and ranchers could survive.

At the onset of the pandemic, Hawai'i's Foodbanks partnered with farmers and ranchers to provide local agricultural produce and proteins for their food assistance programs. As organizations that aggregate and distribute food, Foodbank staff brought valuable logistical insight to these programs. The combined efforts of Hawai'i's Foodbanks, 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.

HB 2590, HD1, will provide funds to Hawai'i's food banks that support non-profit and community feeding programs by providing locally grown or produced foods to communities in need. This will also help Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers while also providing local nutritional food to those who need it most.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



To: The House Committee on Finance (FIN)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024, 1pm

In strong support of HB2590 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the FIN Committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org **strongly supports HB2590 HD1** that appropriates funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, to be expended by the Department of Agriculture via requests for proposals.

Many families in Hawaii struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis, and the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated this situation. This measure is a wonderful idea that supports our farmers and at the same time helps our local families in need by providing local, fresh, healthy options. Efforts to support our farmers also builds our resiliency and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food.

Please pass **HB2590 HD1** so that we all may reap these benefits.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



Food+ Policy Internship 2024

food@purplemaia.org

February 20, 2024

Subject: *H.B. 2590 HD1, Relating to Food Security*

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Finance Committee,

The Hawaii Food+ Policy wholeheartedly supports HB 2590 HD1 and urges your favorable consideration in providing crucial funding for sustainable agriculture. Our organization stands behind this initiative, recognizing its potential to address pressing issues faced by our local food producers.

Our intern, Nanea Kelii, embodies the spirit of our commitment to sustainable community food systems. As an organic farmer and a current student in the Sustainable Community Food Systems program at UH West Oahu, Nanea emphasizes the significance of cultivating food as a fundamental duty, as people's lives hinge on access to nutritious sustenance.

The necessity for funding is paramount in ensuring access to sustainable food sources, particularly from our local farmers, especially given the current challenges of inflated food prices. Local producers in Hawaii are grappling with fierce competition from continental suppliers. Which results in elevated price points that jeopardize accessibility for those dependent on local products and those committed to supporting Hawaii's economy.

In light of these challenges, it is evident that a proactive approach is needed to support our local food producers and ensure a reliable food supply for our communities. House Bill 2590 represents a crucial step in the right direction, aligning with our organization's mission to foster a sustainable and resilient food system for Hawaii. We trust you will consider the merits of this bill and contribute to the realization of a thriving and sustainable food ecosystem in our beautiful state.

Mahalo,

Kaitlyn + The Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2024, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



Residential Youth Services & Empowerment

PO Box 11662 Honolulu, HI 96828

February 22, 2024

Testimony in support of HB2590, Relating to the food security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of Residential Youth Services & Empowerment. Residential Youth Services and Empowerment is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization operating a youth access center and shelter services in Kailua, Oahu. From 8am to 8pm seven days a week, youth ages 14–24 can use our drop-in services free of charge. Our goal is to provide safety and help youth get off the streets, so that they can live and thrive as healthy, happy young adults.

I support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

Every can, box or bag of food fills a critical need in our local community. Our weekly Hawaii Foodbank pick-ups help feed the youth we support and give them the resources they need to thrive.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carla Houser".

Carla Houser
Executive Director

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 9:39:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is how we support our local economy, our independent farmers, food sovereignty, better eating & health, especially for Food Bank receipts, and reduce our carbon emissions. It's win, win, win for everyone. Mahalo nui loa for taking steps for a healthier, more secure Hawaii.

February 22, 2024

Testimony in support of HB2590, Relating to food security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of Surfing The Nations.

I support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

Surfing The Nations hold a Feeding The Hungry food distribution drive every thursday in Wahiawa, which is only possible with the help of the Hawai'i Foodbank, we are fighting against the hunger in Hawaii and are feeding around 300 families every week in Wahiawa.

Produced food is the biggest blessing to these people because that is not an option for them to buy with a low income and we all know how important it is for our bodies so i believe, it is life saving when we get good greens to give out to these families.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Alicia Grankulla, director of Feeding The Hungry, Surfing The Nations



February 22, 2024

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: HB 2590 HD1– RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2590 HD1, which would appropriate funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, to be expended by the Department of Agriculture via requests for proposals.

HMSA recognizes that the donations Hawaii’s food banks receive can easily fall short of what is needed. This is why we strongly support the efforts of lawmakers to help food banks purchase produce from Hawaii’s local farmers. This strengthens food bank supplies, supports our local economy by keeping money within our community, and benefits the health and well-being of our resident because locally grown produce is likely to be fresher and more nutritious.

Hawaii’s food banks play vital role in combating food insecurity in Hawaii. Passing this bill would help to positively impact the overall health and well-being of the people they serve. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2590 HD1.

Sincerely,

Dawn Kurisu
Assistant Vice President
Community and Government Relations



**NEW LIFE BODY OF CHRIST
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

74 S. Kamehameha Highway
Wahiawa, HI 96786

"TOUCHING PEOPLE—CHANGING LIVES"

February 21, 2024

Testimony in support of HB2590, Relating to food security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of New Life Body Of Christ Christian Church.

I support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

We are a Hawai'i Foodbank agency partner who regularly distributes food to those who need it in our community as well as surrounding communities. The Hawaii Foodbank is a vital part of helping those in need in our communities. We have served over 18,000 people in the past year through our partnership with the foodbank and we continue to see an increase in the needs of the families we serve.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. Henderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bishop Michael A. Henderson
Senior Pastor
New Life Body of Christ Christian Church

PHONE: 808-622-6650

EMAIL: NLBCADMIN1@HOTMAIL.COM

WEBSITE: NEWLIFEBODYOFCHRIST.ORG

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things become new"

2 Corinthians 5:17

February 21, 2024

Testimony in support of HB2590 HD1, Relating to Food Security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

On behalf of Lanakila Pacific, I am testifying in support of HB2590, which addresses food insecurity needs while also investing in local agriculture. As a partner agency, part of a network of more than 200 organizations, with the Hawaii Foodbank, we know that the Farm to Foodbank program, launched in March 2020, has been a tremendous success, providing healthy, locally-grown produce to people they serve.

Food security is a growing concern, and it is important for the community and the Hawaii Foodbank to support locally grown food as one of the levers to alleviate food shortages. As a state isolated by the ocean, we need to be able to feed our citizens in an emergency. Supporting farming in Hawaii to do so is a win-win.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Rona Yagi Fukumoto
President and 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
Ryan Yamamoto

Lanakila Pacific
Foundation Board
Emmit Kane, *Chair*
Keith Suzuka, *Vice Chair*
Bryan Kapeckas,
Treasurer/ Secretary
Cecilia Fong
Kira Higa
Scott Kavanaugh

Derek Mizuno
Scott Nahme
Kristi O'Heron
Sharon Paris
Mike Robinson
Ryan Shiroma
Dwayne Takeno

President and CEO
Rona Yagi Fukumoto





Rev. Headrick Hunkin

94-230 Leokane Street

Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

Phone: (808) 542-1001

February 22, 2024

To whom it may concern:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

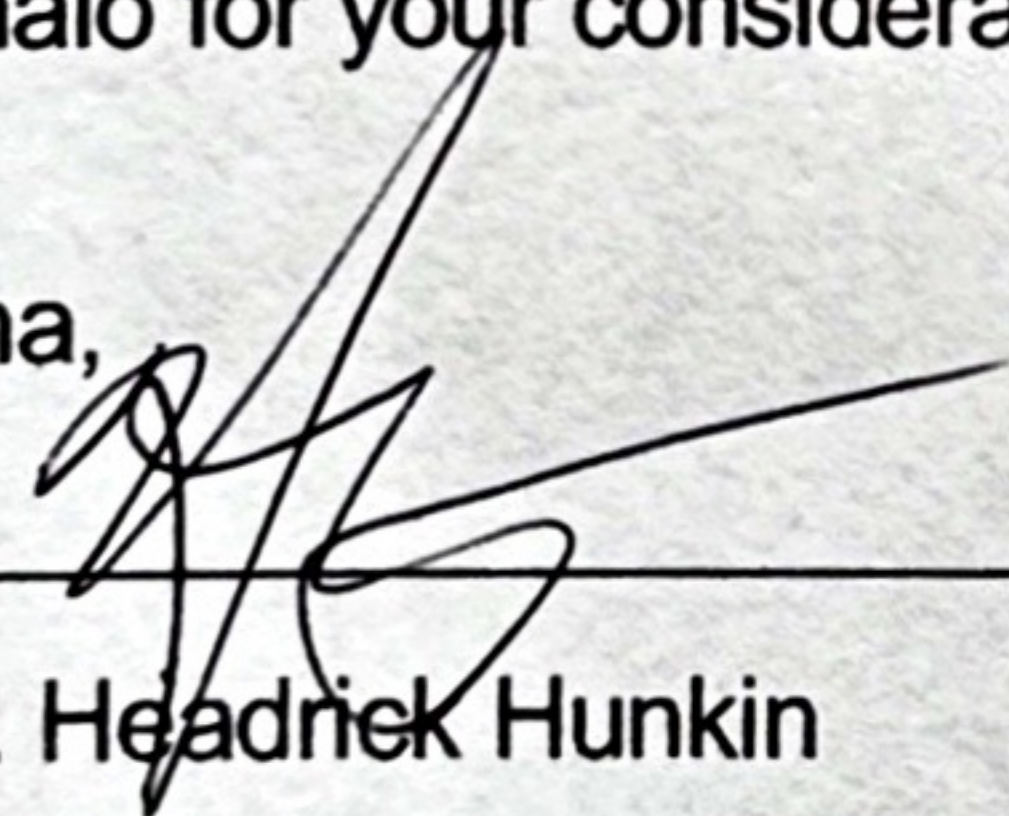
I am testifying on behalf of Lighthouse Outreach Center Assembly of God.

I support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

We are a Hawai'i Foodbank agency partner who regularly distributes food to those who need it in our community. During the pandemic we have served 800+ families of Oahu. It has been a blessing to partner with Hawaii Foodbank and our partnership is very important to our organization. Without Hawaii Foodbank we will not have the ability to serve our community and that's a fact. We do outreach during School breaks, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Having to wait for organizations who have helped us in the past is very hard in which we appreciate but knowing that Hawaii Foodbank is always there to meet the need when we desperately need it is very comforting. We are also able to meet the needs of those who are desperate for food outside of our operating hours as well.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,



Rev. Headrick Hunkin

Senior Pastor

Lighthouse Outreach Center Ministries



JESUS IS ALIVE FELLOWSHIP

66-405 Waiakua Beach Rd., Haleiwa, HI 96712

Phone: (808)637-9361 Mobile: (808)927-5396

E-mail: jjafcofhawaii@aol.com

February 22, 2024

Testimony in support of HB2590, Relating to food security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of Jesus Is Alive Fellowship.

I support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

Hawaii Foodbank is a great support to our agency to help our hunger relief work and to get more food to serve our community.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Estrelita Andres

Food Coordinator



EXPERIENCE LIFE
PEOPLE | POWER | PURPOSE

February 22, 2024

Testimony in support of HB2590, Relating to food security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of *King's Oahu*.

I support HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchases from local farmers to be expended by request for proposal via the Department of Agriculture.

We have been able to provide groceries to around 60,000 families with the help of the Hawaii Foodbank. The Hawaii Foodbank is a critical partner in our efforts to alleviate hunger, providing us with a steady supply of food that allows us to serve our communities in need. Thanks to their support, we can expand our outreach and ensure that no individual or family in our area is left without the essential sustenance they need.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Margaret Vesnefski
Minister/ Community Director
King's Oahu
5740 Kalaniana'ole Hwy.
Honolulu, HI 96821
(808) 561-2287

5740 Kalaniana'ole Highway Honolulu, HI 96821
Office: 1-808-466-3273



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: House Committee on Finance
Re: **HB 2590 HD1 – Relating to Food Security**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
February 22, 2024, 1:00 PM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB 2590 HD1**. This bill appropriates funds for food bank purchase from local farmers, to be expended by the Department of Agriculture via requests for proposals.

According to Feeding America, more than 50,000 – or one in six – Hawai'i children are facing hunger.¹ Especially with highest cost of living and the second-most expensive groceries in the nation,² it is nearly impossible for the low-income families in Hawai'i to afford to buy healthy food, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

In addition, 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, recent high inflation rates have led to our state's food banks to continue to see demand that's higher than before the pandemic.

This program has the added plus of supporting our local farms. Farm to food bank programs are a win-win, by providing healthy local food to those who need it and purchasing from local farmers.

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

Sincerely,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hawaii>

² <https://meric.mo.gov/data/cost-living-data-series>

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

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 10:27:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeri Di Pietro	Hawai`i SEED	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai`i SEED strongly supports HB 2590, HD1. We need to grow Hawai`i's agricultural production and support locally grown food, for a multitude of practical and economically productive reasons. By creating a vehicle to ease the purchasing process from local farmers into the Food Bank system of distribution, it eases the process for hard working farmers. Keeping our Food Banks stocked with locally produced food benefits the community and is also an economic stimulus. Investing in locally grown food creates more diversified jobs and makes community farming a lucrative and rewarding career. Please support Farm to Foodbank. Mahalo



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308
Thursday, February 22, 2024 AT 1:00 P.M.**

To The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

SUPPORT HB2590 HD1 RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like to testify to **SUPPORT HB2590 HD1**.

The Chamber notes that within three months of the wildfires of August 8, 2023, Maui Food Bank surpassed its usual annual supply of three million pounds of food, demonstrating the State's need to expand its food storage capacity in the event of further disaster situations. Food insecurity is a rising critical issue in Hawaii. As the cost of food in the State has increased by more than five per cent in the last twelve months, addressing the ongoing food security needs of the people of Hawaii is imperative.

We support the idea of purchasing food from local farmers to help food banks as this benefits Hawaii's economy and local farmers. We urge the committee to include language for the food banks to work directly with local farmers and ranchers on their supply and needs, as well as the local restaurant industry to identify needed items.

Further, there are other organizations that address food insecurity on Maui and across the state, like Feed My Sheep. We strongly encourage the Legislature to broaden the scope of this bill, and the opportunity to receive grant funding, to any nonprofit organization addressing food insecurity.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT HB2590 HD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 7:02:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Leake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai'i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai'i's agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

David Leake, Kaneohe

Testimony of Kiana Otsuka in Support

Committee on Finance

February 22, 2024 at 9:15AM

Conference Room 308

HB 2590 HD1

Relating to Food Security

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am passionate about sustainable food systems and improving food equity in Hawai'i. I am writing in **strong support of HB 2590 HD 1**, which appropriates funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, to be expended by the Department of Agriculture via requests for proposals.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai'i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,
Kiana Otsuka

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 7:21:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Lu Kelley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Do the right thing.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Mary Lu Kelley, Koloa, Kauai

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 7:42:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erik Meade	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on HB 2590, HD1, which I support.

It is heartbreaking that the cost of living in Hawai'i is so high that people cannot afford to eat. I know people who rely on foodbanks and believe that locally grow food has less of a carbon foot print and helps keeps money spent in Hawai'i to stay in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your consideration,
Erik Meade, Honolulu

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 8:23:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

Help address the hunger that too many families experience in Hawaii. Food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes. This bill will help struggling families and the community. Please move it forward. Mahalo.

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 8:33:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lisa lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Lisa Lee, Honolulu

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 8:52:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eliel Starbright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes. Eliel Starbright, Kapaa

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 9:09:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angelina Bezhenar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair Yamashita of the House Committee on Finance,

Vice Chair Kitagawa of the House Committee on Finance,

and members of the House Committee on Finance,

House Bill 2590 HD1

Thursday, February 22, 2024 – 1:00PM

House Conference Room 308

Aloha, my name is Angelina Bezhenar and I am testifying in support of HB2590, which will appropriate funds for food bank purchases from local farmers.

As the cost of food continues to rise in the state of Hawaii, having resources available to our communities is both important and necessary. This bill will give food banks the opportunity to support our economy by purchasing food from local farmers through the funding that they are granted if this measure is passed. Having affordable options with fresh fruits and vegetables is sometimes not possible for individuals and families that are existing on a tight budget, but with this bill, that can change. Providing people in need access to healthy, locally grown food has the ability to improve their livelihood and quality of health. Through this effort, thousands of clients of the food banks can be provided with fresh produce.

By appropriating funds to food banks in Hawaii, our people, farmers, and economy will be positively impacted, which is why I am in support of HB2590.

Thank you for your consideration,

Angelina Bezhenar

Senate District 12

House District 24

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 9:12:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marlies Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support local foods!

support our farmers and consumers.

grow it in Hawaii, so the money stays in Hawaii

keep it local, organic, healthy

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 9:16:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Keala Fung, Honolulu

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 9:45:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2329.

Restored loko i‘a or fishponds are a key component of a healthy ahupua‘a system. They play an important environmental function supporting healthy nearshore fisheries and bolstering local food security.

Loko i‘a (fishponds) remain a key resource for sustainably feeding local communities. Loko i‘a are also important cultural sites providing space for communities to gather, connect to place, learn and mālama.

Please support SB 2329.

Mahalo for your support.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 9:52:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this food bank measure. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy. Win-win-win! Please pass it.

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 12:22:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai'i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai'i's agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 4:10:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sven Sorge	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Sven Sorge

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 6:41:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholle S L Konanui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

It is sad that hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration!

Nicholle S. L. Konanui, Pahoia, Hawai‘i Island

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 8:55:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Weiss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill providing local food for local people. Less importing food from the mainland also equals less shipping emmissions.

Local grown food should be supported.

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 9:07:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Douglas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

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HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 9:49:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 9:51:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Mick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai'i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy.

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Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai'i's agricultural sector and bolster local food security.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Marilyn Mick, Honolulu

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 9:57:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai'i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy.

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Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai'i's agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Jodie Thayer, Kauai

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 12:34:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am to respectfully ask that you support SB 2590 HD1.

Hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 1:04:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai'i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai'i, benefiting our economy.

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Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai'i's agricultural sector and bolster local food security.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili, O'ahu

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 2:52:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

When people are hungry it is our unequivocal responsibility to feed them. This should be our number one priority and defines who we are as a community.

In addition to reducing hunger, food banks help to build communities by providing jobs and purchasing goods and services from local businesses, creating an economic stimulus in the areas they serve. Importantly, food donations also help low-income families free up money to meet other basic needs.

Supporting locally sourced food benefits the local economy, helps us become less dependent on tourism and more resilient and secure as an island chain. Growing, processing, and distributing food locally creates and sustains community-based jobs. Direct marketing channels between farmers and consumers boosts local farmers' incomes.

Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai'i's agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Jonathan Simonds

Kapa'au, HI 96755

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 4:39:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am writing as a small family farmer in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

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Closer proximity relationships with our food will in turn also reduce carbon emissions related to shipping and packaging waste associated with importation from the United States.

Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Susan Stayton, Lawai, Kauai, HI

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 5:54:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica dos Santos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB2590, a bill that addresses critical issues of food security in Hawai'i by appropriating funds for food bank purchases from local farmers. As a concerned resident of our state deeply committed to combating food insecurity and supporting our local agricultural community, I believe that this legislation is a vital step towards achieving these important objectives.

HB2590 comes at a crucial time when food insecurity is a rising concern in Hawai'i, exacerbated by factors such as natural disasters, economic challenges, and the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill recognizes the invaluable role that food banks play in providing essential support to individuals and families in need, especially during times of crisis, such as the aftermath of Hurricane Iniki, COVID-19, and the recent Lahaina wildfire.

The recent Lahaina wildfire serves as a stark reminder of the unpredictable nature of disasters and their impact on food security. Following the wildfire, the demand for food assistance sharply increased, underscoring the urgent need to expand food storage capacity and strengthen our resilience against future disasters. By appropriating funds for food bank purchases from local farmers, HB2590 not only addresses immediate food needs but also supports local agriculture and strengthens our food system's resilience.

Investing in farm-to-food bank initiatives not only benefits those experiencing food insecurity but also contributes to Hawai'i's economy and supports local farmers. By purchasing locally grown produce and products for distribution through food banks, we not only provide nutritious food to those in need but also stimulate our local economy, create jobs, and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

Furthermore, administering these funds through the Department of Agriculture via request for proposal ensures accountability, transparency, and efficiency in the distribution process. This approach ensures that the funds are used effectively to address food insecurity while supporting local farmers and strengthening our food system.

In conclusion, HB2590 represents a proactive and holistic approach to addressing food insecurity in Hawai'i by investing in local agriculture and supporting our food banks. I urge you to support

and prioritize the passage of this critical legislation for the well-being of our communities and the sustainability of our state.

Sincerely,

Jessica dos Santos

HB-2590-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 6:42:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in strong support of SB 2590 HD1.

Sadly, hunger is on the rise in Hawai‘i and therefore so is the number of households which rely on food banks. This measure would provide a source of funding for the program to fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai‘i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve our food needs, provide local food producers with a supporting market and keep money in Hawai‘i, benefiting our economy.

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Please support SB 2590 HD1 to help grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector and bolster local food security. Mahalo for your consideration!

Kathy Shimata

Honolulu