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WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 1211

January 31, 2025
1:34 p.m.
Room 225 and Videoconference

RELATING TO A STATE BREAST MILK BANK

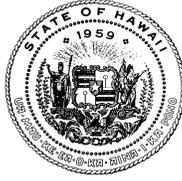
The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 1211: 1) establishes a State Breast Milk Bank (SBMB) under the Department of Health to accept and provide breast milk to assist parents and guardians in providing breast milk to their infant children; 2) establishes the SBMB Special Fund (SBMBSF); 3) appropriates an undetermined amount of general funds for FY 26 to be deposited into the SBMBSF; and 4) appropriates an undetermined amount of special funds out of the SBMBSF for FY 26 and FY 27 for the operation of the SBMB.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund, which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and

4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding S.B. No. 1211, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed SBMBSF will be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



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**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 1211
RELATING TO A STATE BREAST MILK BANK**

SENATOR JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

January 31, 2025, 1:34PM, CR 225 & Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) requests that this measure be
2 considered as a vehicle to provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the
3 priorities and requests outlined in the Governor’s executive budget request.

4 **Department Position:** The Department supports this measure and offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Family Health Services Division (FHSD) provides the following
6 testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 We support the establishment of a state-run breast milk bank to improve infant health and
8 address disparities in access to safe donor breast milk. This initiative aligns with the priorities of
9 our Maternal and Child Health Branch, Women’s and Reproductive Health Section. The bill’s
10 creation of the Breast Milk Bank Special Fund and funding framework—combining user fees,
11 federal grants, and appropriations—offers a strong foundation for program oversight,
12 implementation, and administration. With careful planning and strategic use of funds, this
13 program will significantly benefit Hawai‘i families and infants.

14 **Offered Amendments:** None

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

LATE

SB-1211

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 12:12:08 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Barrett	Testifying for Kauai County Committee on the Status of Women	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair and Members,

My name is Lori Barrett and I am submitting testimony in **strong support** of [Bill Number], which seeks to establish a breast milk bank to provide safe, donated human milk to infants in need. This initiative is critical for ensuring that all babies have access to the healthiest start in life regardless of their mother's circumstances.

The Health Benefits of Breast Milk

Breast milk is uniquely designed to meet the nutritional needs of infants, providing essential antibodies, enzymes, and hormones that support immune system development and overall health. According to the **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the World Health Organization (WHO)**, human milk is the optimal source of nutrition for newborns. It can significantly reduce the risk of infections, allergies, and chronic illnesses. For preterm or medically fragile infants, donor breast milk has been shown to **lower the risk of life-threatening conditions. One of them is** necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), a severe intestinal disease that disproportionately affects premature babies.

Supporting Mothers and Families in Need

Not all mothers can breastfeed due to medical complications, low milk supply, or other challenges. Mothers facing economic hardship may also struggle to afford infant formula, which has seen **rising costs and supply chain disruptions** in recent years. A breast milk bank would provide a **financially sustainable** alternative for families who might otherwise be forced to rely on expensive formula or unsafe feeding substitutes. This bill supports equitable nutrition for all infants, particularly those from underserved communities by ensuring access to safe, pasteurized donor milk.

Economic and Healthcare Savings

Investing in a breast milk bank is a moral imperative and a **financially sound decision** for the state. Studies have shown that increased breastfeeding rates lead to **lower healthcare costs** by reducing the incidence of childhood illnesses such as respiratory infections, gastroenteritis, and diabetes. Access to donor milk can also reduce hospital stays for premature infants, **saving taxpayer dollars** in Medicaid and healthcare expenses.

Conclusion

By passing [Bill Number], the legislature can **support families, improve infant health, and reduce long-term healthcare costs**. Establishing a breast milk bank ensures that all infants—regardless of their family’s financial status or a mother’s ability to breastfeed—can receive the nutrition they need for a strong, healthy start in life. I respectfully urge you to vote **strongly in support** of this bill.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lori Barrett, Chair

Kauai County Committee on the Status of Women

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