

The Food Water and other Supplies Working Group here lists through Nov 7th 2023 for the FWSWG Draft Report, Nov 1 2023 version:

1 Leimomi Khan

Aloha, Rep Ilagan and Rep Amato

Regarding the Wildfire Prevention Working Group Report, I sent the following testimony to Rep Ichiyama and Rep Kila since their committee is also meeting to receive input on this report. It is also being sent for your consideration.

On Nov 2, 2023, at 5:05 PM, Marilyn Leimomi Khan <leimomikhan@gmail.com> wrote:

Aloha, Chair Ichiyama and VC Kila

Reviewed the Wildfire Prevention Working Group Report. It is very comprehensive. I found the maps of all of the islands most interesting. I live on O'ahu and did not realize how vulnerable we are to fires. Almost every part of the island is affected. The recommendations made are very comprehensive, but overwhelming. The challenge for state legislators will be to find the resources to allocate to implement the recommendations. The report does not contain estimated costs for implementing the recommendations, but does note that

- Hawaii spends less than other states on wildfire prevention and response, budgeting an annual average of \$3.2 million over the past decade; about \$2 per resident. In contrast, Washington state budgets, on a per capita basis, more than double the funding than Hawaii does for fighting wildfires, appropriating an average of \$83 million between 2015 and 2019. California set aside \$21 per resident in fiscal year 2022 — \$843 million. Oregon pays about 35 cents more per resident than Hawaii to fight wildfire but has

Mahalo,

Leimomi Khan

2 Nanea Loa, HAPA

FOOD, WATER, AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING
GROUP Greggor Ilagan, Co-Chair, Terez Amato, Co-Chair
Hearing Date: November 8th, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Ilagan, Amato, and members of the Food, Water, and Other Supplies Working Group, I am writing to express my appreciation for the work that your group has done to evaluate the availability and distribution of essential supplies for displaced individuals and families in the aftermath of the Maui wildfires. Your report has shed light on critical issues related to supply chains and has proposed actionable recommendations to address these issues.

However, I would like to draw your attention to the issue of inadequate language access during emergencies. As you noted in your report, language barriers can prevent Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals from receiving essential supplies during disasters. During and immediately after the wildfire, most, if not all, information was provided exclusively in English. The language access issues that occurred with the Lahaina wildfire underscores the importance of an effective Distribution Management Plan that caters to the community's diverse Needs.

This is a serious issue that can have life-threatening consequences for LEP individuals and their families. Following the wildfire, reports emerged regarding access issues for Lahaina's non-English speaking populations, particularly Filipino residents. In Hawaii, Filipinos represent the second-largest ethnic group in the State, accounting for approximately one-fourth of the State's 1.4 million residents. Of the nearly 48,000 Maui residents who can trace their roots back to the Philippines, about 5,000 of them lived in Lahaina, which accounted for approximately 40% of the town's population before the fire. Despite the significant representation of Filipino residents in Lahaina, many reported difficulties obtaining information and aid, and by extension supplies, due to language access issues.

I urge your group to consider establishing a working group on language access to address this issue. Such a working group could evaluate the current State of language access during emergencies, identify gaps and inefficiencies in language services, and propose concrete solutions to ensure that LEP individuals have equal access to essential supplies during disasters.

I believe that language access is a critical issue that deserves the attention of your group and the broader community. By establishing a working group on language access, we can ensure that everyone in our community, regardless of their language proficiency, has access to the essential supplies they need during emergencies.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.
Sincerely, Nanea Lo (she/they/'o ia) | Micro-influencer
Admin & Program Coordinator | [HAPA](#)
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action 5013-c

3) Anonymous testifier from HAPA Identical to previous testimony

FOOD, WATER, AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP Greggor Ilagan, Co-Chair, Terez Amato, Co-Chair

Hearing Date: November 8th, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Ilagan, Amato, and members of the Food, Water, and Other Supplies Working Group,

I am writing to express my appreciation for the work that your group has done to evaluate the availability and distribution of essential supplies for displaced individuals and families in the aftermath of the Maui wildfires. Your report has shed light on critical issues related to supply chains and has proposed actionable recommendations to address these issues.

However, I would like to draw your attention to the issue of inadequate language access during emergencies. As you noted in your report, language barriers can prevent Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals from receiving essential supplies during disasters. During and immediately after the wildfire, most, if not all, information was provided exclusively in English. The language access issues that occurred with the Lahaina wildfire underscores the importance of an effective Distribution Management Plan that caters to the community's diverse needs.

This is a serious issue that can have life-threatening consequences for LEP individuals and their families. Following the wildfire, reports emerged regarding access issues for Lahaina's non-English speaking populations, particularly Filipino residents. In Hawaii, Filipinos represent the second-largest ethnic group in the State, accounting for approximately one-fourth of the State's 1.4 million residents. Of the nearly 48,000 Maui residents who can trace their roots back to the Philippines, about 5,000 of them lived in Lahaina, which accounted for approximately 40% of the town's population before the fire. Despite the significant representation of Filipino residents in Lahaina, many reported difficulties obtaining information and aid, and by extension supplies, due to language access issues.

I urge your group to consider establishing a working group on language access to address this issue. Such a working group could evaluate the current State of language access during emergencies, identify gaps and inefficiencies in language services, and propose concrete solutions to ensure that LEP individuals have equal access to essential supplies during disasters.

I believe that language access is a critical issue that deserves the attention of your group and the broader community. By establishing a working group on language access, we can ensure that everyone in our community, regardless of

their language proficiency, has access to the essential supplies they need during emergencies.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.
Sincerely, The HAPA Team

4)Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director Hawaii Food Industry Association

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

I am writing on behalf of the Hawaii Food Industry Association to provide our recommendations and input on the Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group's draft report. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on enhancing disaster preparedness and response in our state and are grateful for the important work you have accomplished thus far. Our recommendations are based on conversations and working groups we have had in the past, with the goal of improving our ability to provide essential food supplies during times of crisis.

1. Designated and Funded Non-Perishable Food Storage Facilities:

We recommend the establishment of more designated and funded non-perishable food storage facilities for use in disasters at mass feeding sites. These facilities should be strategically located across the state, including both public and private sector operators who possess the necessary expertise in food storage and distribution. By funding and collaborating with companies that currently import and distribute our food supply, we can ensure a coordinated response to supply food items quickly and efficiently to affected areas.

2. Pre-Designated Mass Feeding Sites:

To further strengthen our disaster response capabilities, we suggest the creation of additional pre-designated mass feeding sites. These sites should be distributed geographically to ensure adequate coverage in the event of disasters impacting specific areas. We propose issuing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and establishing contracts with both private sector and non-profit sector operators who have the expertise to operate mass feeding centers. This proactive approach will enable us to swiftly mobilize resources and provide food to those in need during emergencies.

3. Centralized Information Hub:

To facilitate coordination and communication during disaster situations, we recommend the establishment of a central location for necessary information. This hub should serve as a resource for nonprofits, community helpers, food distribution entities, and food retail companies. It should provide a clear understanding of what is needed and who to contact to gain access to disaster areas and supply mass feeding centers. A comprehensive information repository will promote efficient collaboration among stakeholders and streamline our response efforts. In conclusion, we believe that implementing these recommendations will significantly enhance Hawaii's readiness to respond to food supply challenges during times of crisis. By partnering with both the private sector and non-profit organizations, we can leverage their expertise and resources to better serve our communities. We are committed to working closely with the FWSWG Working Group to help turn these suggestions into actionable measures that ensure the safety and well-being of our residents.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to supporting efforts to improve our state's disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Lauren Zirbel
Hawai'i Food Industry Association
President & Executive Director
Direct Line: 808-294-9968

5) Sandra-Ann Y.H. Wong A Law Corporation

Aloha Co-Chairs and Committee:

I applaud the work of the subcommittee, however, I believe that that the subcommittee also needs to look at the need for reliable power sources; e.g. electricity. Therefore, I echo the testimony of Hawaii Solar Energy Association.

I would like to testify during the hearing. Please allow me entrance into the Zoom meeting.

Thank you

PLEASE NOTE, MY CONTACT INFORMATION HAS CHANGED. PLEASE USE BELOW CONTACT INFORMATION.

Sandra-Ann Y.H. Wong
Attorney at Law, A Law Corporation
2101 Nuuanu Avenue, #804
Honolulu, HI 96817
808-228-1517

6)Francis Empeno Office of the Chairperson Hawaii Department of Agriculture

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



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

SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES INTERIM WORKING GROUP ON
FOOD, WATER AND OTHER SUPPLIES

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023
2:30 P.M.

FOOD, WATER AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP
DRAFT REPORT NOVEMBER 1, 2023

Co-Chairs Ilagan and Amato and Members of the Working Group,

On September 6, 2023, the House of Representatives formed an interim working group in response to evaluate specific topics related to the Lahaina Wildfire to make specific recommendations for appropriate legislative actions for the 2024 Regular Session.

On November 1, 2023, the House of Representatives Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group released a draft report to evaluate the availability and distribution of food and other necessary supplies for displaced individuals and families. The draft report includes six (6) recommendations on the following topics to improve availability and distribution of essential supplies to displaced individuals and families.

1. Distribution Management Plan Maintenance
2. Food Bank Reserves
3. "Right to Garden" Law
4. Hot Food Donation Standards Outreach
5. Emergency Prescription Refills



6. Emergency Surge Personnel

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (The Department) would like to submit **comments** on the recommendations for Distribution Management Plan Maintenance, Food Bank Reserves, and the “Right to Garden” Law.

Distribution Management Plan Maintenance

With respect to the current Distribution Management Plan and potential gaps in supply chain distribution, the Department adheres to the State of Hawai'i Emergency Operations Plan: State Emergency Support Function Annex #11, Agriculture and Natural Resources (“SESF #11”), as created by the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (“HI-EMA”). The Department would like to note that SESF #11 does **not** determine requirements for food supplies to support affected populations, nor obtain and deliver food supplies to include USDA commodities. These activities fall under State Emergency Support Function #6, Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services.

Food Bank Reserves

The Department is requesting \$15,000,000 in general funding for FY2024 to administer Farm to Food Bank projects for the purchase of locally grown, raised, and made food products and building more resilient food security in the event of future state-wide emergencies.

“Right to Garden” Law

The Department recognizes the importance of increasing the resiliency of food assistance programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) within the state of Hawaii, especially in the wake of disaster events. In October of this year, \$500,000 was released by Governor Josh Green for the DA BUX Double-Up Program (DA BUX), which doubles recipients' purchasing power for locally grown produce, using their federally funded SNAP benefits.

Additionally, the Department recognizes the importance of local food security and has administered the Micro-Grant for Food Security Program (MGFSP) which provides support for small-scale gardening, herding and livestock operations to increase the quantity and quality of locally grown food in food insecure communities. A total of approximately \$2.7 million dollars in award funds has been recommended for distribution to qualified applications which consist of both individuals and organizations for the MGFSP for FY2022.

The Department would like to note that an invitation to share information with the Food, Water, and Other Supplies Interim Working Group was received on September 20, 2023. The purpose of the information requested was to assist the working group in crafting impactful legislative recommendations to enhance the ongoing recovery process in the wake of the Maui wildfire disaster. A response was sent on September 29, 2023 with information relevant to the invitation, which included a request for funding for a disaster survey administered by the United States Department of Agriculture-National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) which would help establish a baseline of statistical data covering loss of crops/livestock, loss of commodity/product sales, damaged equipment, farm structures, other infrastructure, seeds, etc.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

7) Ted Ralston Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group

Testimony: Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group, to Hawaii House Working Group on Food, Water, and Other Supplies - November 8 2023 Honolulu Hawaii

Part 1. Spoken report

To: Chairs Amato and Ilagan and Members of Hawaii House Working Group on Food, Water, and other Supplies

Statement: Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group, organized under NHO Hawaii Pacific Foundation, welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Working Group Draft Report dated Nov 1 2023 with spoken and written testimony. We invite you to observe or participate directly in our ongoing Maui work.

Who we are, why we care, and how we are working in response to the Maui wildfires is outlined in the submitted report. We focus on fire intelligence, disaster logistics, personnel safety, regenerative reconstruction, and community inclusiveness.

Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group acknowledges Working Group findings. We interpret your set of recommendations as symptoms of larger enterprise-level gaps that must be addressed at the enterprise level. The end goal is to provide the public with an informed, prepared, cohesive, responsive, agile capability protecting life and property and fostering continuity of operations. Hawaii Pacific Advisory Group strongly recommends that the Legislature fund improvement of Emergency Management Response by generating Modernization Programs, as we are all on notice that former Unprecedented threats are now in the realm of reality.

A Modernization Program for Legislature action must include:

- 1) Establishment of an Integrated Fire and Disaster Intelligence network, to allow leaders to make informed, timely decisions, exploiting new technologies such as unmanned drones, hyperspectral sensors, predictive analytics and expressive AI.
- 2) Employment of Unified Command operational authority to ensure balanced response with accurate, continuous, actionable communication channels to the public.
- 3) Development of Structured Logistics operated at SDOT level, expediting but controlling the inbound flow of emergency materials from origin to destination, tied to specific need.
- 4) Adoption of developments in communication, bio-remediation, and regenerative reconstruction to reduce future threats as Maui builds back.
- 5) Incorporating Island knowledge to align FEMA practices with unique local circumstances quite different from the Mainland baseline.

We believe that your Working Group findings are fully embraced by our Advisory Group recommendations and would be delighted to work directly with your team on legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Ted Ralston Ted.ralston@gmail.com 808.738.6814

Part 2. Written submission

Background:

The Lahaina wildfires were unprecedented, setting a precedent for future threats, which must be acknowledged in public policy and planning. HPAG, a volunteer organization organized

by the Hawaii Pacific Foundation, recognizes the obligation to reduce threats, mitigate potential losses, and develop recovery and rebuild methods.

Main Points:

HPAG works in collaboration with national disaster and stability operations leaders to identify gaps and execute solutions.

The testimony aligns with the Working Group's findings on gaps in supply and logistics domains, resulting from the lack of an integrated Unified Command (UC) system for major emergencies.

HPAG has observed and addressed gaps within available resources, providing examples of delivering specialized PPE and collecting burn-zone intelligence data.

There is an urgent need for a major discussion on logistics, inspired by supply distribution gaps identified by the Working Group and HPAG.

Objective:

Our objective is to improve the State's risk and threat management and abatement capability.

How: We propose the use of unmanned systems for the following purposes:

- o Training in the use of Drone Surveillance and Fire mitigation methods (mapping, vegetation mitigation)

- o Risk assessment and Threat Management through surveillance, mapping, AI (trusted algorithm), data monitoring, predictive modeling, simulations, environmental impact assessments, and data collection.

We suggest adopting a Hub/Spoke model, with the airport serving as the command and control center, administration, monitoring, and management of the Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) statewide. Additionally, each on-island airport fire would have a certified representative for monthly meetings, trainings, and exercises.

Who:

We recommend utilizing existing government assets, including UH, Fire, DLNR, State and County Police, Solid Waste Management, National Guard, Public Works, and DOT.

Under the auspices of Lahaina Airport Fire, Firefighter George Purdy (HPAG member/Lanai Fire) is one of the few national Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with the use of UAS for fire surveillance. He will train, manage, and monitor the program statewide with the control for the program based in Maui County.

If not done:

Failure to support modernization efforts risks:

- o A loss of more property that may be equivalent to what occurred in Maui, with an early estimate of \$5.5 billion in property and loss of tourism revenue.

- o Necessitating further expensive, just-in-time investments in fire stations and equipment.

- o Liability based on what has been learned about the diligence required for fire abatement and intelligence, and the result of negligence regarding the failure to implement wildfire prevention measures.
- o The generational community and societal impact of the loss of human life and communities caused by preventable wildfires.

Conclusion: In conclusion, HPAG strongly recommends that the legislature supports improving Emergency Management Response by supporting Modernization Programs to allow for threat assessment, risk management, and an appropriate all-hazards response. We believe that the deployment of unmanned systems, modernization of emergency response enhancement, and the adoption of our proposed measures will significantly enhance public safety and protect against the devastating impact of wildfires and other hazards.

Contact Information:

Ted Ralston ted.ralston@gmail.com 808.738.6814

today's unstructured distribution and supply.

Attached is a list of our additional recommendations. We look forward to working with you.

8) Rocky Mould Executive Director Hawaii Solar Energy Association



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

Testimony Before the Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group of the Hawaii State Legislature with Recommendations in Response to the Lahaina Wildfire

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Greggor Ilagan and Terez Amato, and Working Group Members:

As we continue to mourn the shocking and tragic loss of life and property caused by the Maui wildfires, and plan for the challenging and complex task of healing and rebuilding ahead; we are grateful for the leadership of the Legislature and this Working Group.

Maintaining critical supplies of food, water and other goods is vital throughout various phases of disaster response and recovery. It sustains human life and well-being, and provides comfort and relief to citizens, family, friends and fellow humans. However, this cannot occur without reliable power and electricity. Reliable power and electricity is a fundamental public good that underlies the provisioning of other vital services. Electricity powers refrigerators that store life-saving and sustaining medicines and keep food and other perishables from going bad. It pumps water and makes ice; charges cellphones, ipads, and laptops; and keeps vital telecommunications networks open so that emergency responders can respond, residents can react and stay informed, and families can reach their loved ones. It is necessary to sustain ongoing activities at distribution and administrative facilities after the initial phase.

In response to the failure of West Maui's electric grid in the immediate aftermath of the catastrophic fires of August 8th, the solar industry rapidly mobilized and went to work. Our members, many of them Maui and Lahaina residents, donated their time, boots-on-the-ground, equipment, and financial resources to stand up emergency microgrids powered by solar panels and battery storage. Within days, resilient power systems were set up at ad hoc or planned distribution hubs at Napili Park, Pohaku Park (S-turns) and numerous other locations. These systems provided (and still provide) vital sources of electricity to serve the people of West Maui. They powered starlink communications networks, refrigeration trucks, and lighting systems to support the response and distribute food, water, and other critical services with clean, quiet, and emissions-free electricity in the people's time of need. To summarize, in cooperation with the community and other partners, we were able to:¹

- Deploy 13 distributed microgrids powered by solar and energy storage;
- Assess 24 potential sites;



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

- Serve 1,300+ people per day at partner sites;
- Install over 64 kW of distributed solar capacity and 200 kWh of storage capacity; and
- Build over \$600,000 of grounded value installed (and counting).

HSEA and its members look forward to working with this Working Group, the Legislature, and other stakeholders on the tasks ahead. Some initial recommendations pertinent to this working group include:

- ***Explicitly including power and electricity supply in the Distribution Management Plan, and make necessary updates based on recent experience and new capabilities;***
- ***Training emergency responders and disaster relief and recovery specialists on best practices, uses, and operating procedures for deploying and installing solar and energy storage systems*** (portable solar PV+Battery units, microgrids, and water distribution systems);
- ***Training solar and related industry professionals on emergency response and disaster recovery and relief processes;*** and including solar industry professionals in pre-disaster planning efforts;
- ***Procuring solar PV+Storage mobile generators*** for use by emergency responders and disaster relief and recovery teams (these systems can replace some diesel generators and provide clean, quiet and exhaust-free power at relief and distribution centers);
- ***Identifying site locations for installing resilient power systems on government facilities (including schools), first responder locations (e.g., fire stations) and other locations.*** These systems can include various combinations of solar PV and hot water, energy storage, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure and can either be reserved for first responders use or be designated for public use as resilience hubs.
- ***Procuring and installing distributed resilient power systems at government facilities, first responder sites, and other locations identified above.***

In addition to providing clean and renewable resilient power systems for emergency response; distributed, rooftop solar and energy storage can provide a longer-term solution to rebuild West Maui's electrical grid more resiliently and reliably, and at a relatively lower cost. We look forward to sharing our perspective further and promoting bills that support investments in resilient power systems that can aid in disaster relief and recovery, provide resilience in our communities, and constitute a more reliable electric grid in the future.



Hawaii Solar Energy Association
Serving Hawaii Since 1977

HSEA members include the majority of locally owned and operated solar and energy storage companies doing business in the state of Hawaii along with leading global cleantech manufacturers and service providers that invest and sell in our market. We employ thousands of residents in diverse green economy jobs that are innovating, designing, and building Hawaii's pathway to a renewable energy future. We advocate for policies that help Hawaii achieve critical climate and resilience goals by enabling residents and businesses to invest in and benefit from the transition to clean energy. These investments provide reliable and affordable power that reduces energy cost burden and contributes to Hawaii's energy security as we decarbonize our economy and electric grid.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

/s/ Rocky Mould

Rocky Mould
Executive Director

ⁱ Information provided by footprintproject.org. HSEA and its members partnered with footprintproject.org and other community organizations to locate and assess microgrid installation sites and procure, design, and install the equipment including but not limited to solar panels, batteries, inverters, and other balance of system components for resilient power systems.

9 Alice Lee Maui County Council Chair

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins




COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

November 7, 2023

Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

TO: The Honorable Greggor Ilagan, Co-Chair
The Honorable Terez Amato, Co-Chair
and Members of the Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **MEETING OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023; TESTIMONY ON THE FOOD, WATER AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP'S DRAFT REPORT**

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide input on your Working Group's excellent draft report. The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on the draft report. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I appreciate and agree with your six key recommendations and offer the following comments:

1. Distribution Management Plan Maintenance: Assuming this recommendation is pursued by the State, it would be beneficial to all for the plan to consider the input, authority, and role of the County government, the State government, community groups, and nonprofit organizations so that there is a clear road-map for future disaster response. I hope that the Legislature will consider funding this effort in the upcoming legislative session.
2. Food Bank Reserves: I agree that stronger State and County funding should be established for our food banks. I hope that the Legislature will consider this funding in the upcoming legislative session, as will the Maui County Council during deliberations on our Fiscal Year 2025 Budget in the spring.
3. "Right to Garden" Law: I have not seen this to be a significant issue in Maui County, but it would be wise to codify the right to garden in State law, overriding any private agreements such as homeowner-association bylaws or covenants, conditions, and restrictions. However, private agreements should allow restrictions on noise, odors, and maintenance. I look forward to reviewing proposed legislation in the upcoming session.

November 7, 2023

Page 2

4. Hot Food Donation Standards Outreach: This appears to be a common-sense protocol. I look forward to reviewing proposed legislation in the upcoming session.
5. Prescription Refills: This important and often time-critical issue should be addressed, and I agree with your recommendation to have a standing authorization for emergency refills. I look forward to reviewing proposed legislation in the upcoming session.
6. Personnel Surge Capabilities: While this recommendation may overlap with the issues examined by the House's other working groups, it is a sound idea that both the State and each county should carefully consider and perhaps coordinate together. I hope that the State Legislature will consider this funding in the upcoming legislative session and that the idea will also be discussed by the Maui County Council.

Your work is greatly appreciated, and I hope to continue to work cooperatively with the Legislature in the upcoming session on measures relating to the August 8 fires' response and recovery, noting that Maui County may not be in a position to fund many initiatives due to the fires' economic impact.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on your draft report. If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at alice.lee@mauicounty.us or at 808-270-7760.

paf:ebm:23-325a

10) Micah-Seth Munekata Ulupono Initiative



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES INTERIM FOOD, WATER,
& OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP
Wednesday, November 8, 2023 — 2:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative offers comments on the draft report by the House Interim Food, Water, and Other Supplies Working Group (FWSWG).

Dear Co-Chair Illagan, Co-Chair Amato, and Members of the Working Group:

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 appreciates the time and effort of the FWSWG to compile its draft report for public comment. There are many great recommendations listed in the report, and we hope our comments here can be helpful for the upcoming 2024 State Legislative Session. While Ulupono supports the recommendations made in the draft report, we believe that **local food production and its significance to disaster response and resilience** should be a central theme in the final report.

Natural disasters, food supply chain disruptions, and state emergencies have become a harsh, consistent reality for our local communities. Moreover, our state needs to consider and plan for nationwide emergencies that have the potential to impact Hawai'i and our mainland neighbors, such as California, simultaneously. While food storage is an important tool for disaster response, how will Hawai'i feed itself if it is completely cut off from the U.S. mainland for a long period of time? In such a scenario, where imports are limited/restricted and our stored food supply is in jeopardy, local food production becomes a critical need for our state's resilience.

Local food production not only addresses our long-term food security needs, but also supports wildfire prevention through active land management and ecosystem services. According to the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization (UHRO), nearly 40% of agricultural lands are considered fallow and can lead to "unmanaged grassland

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

999 Bishop Street, Suite 1202 | Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 ☎ 808.544.8960 📠 808.432.9695 | www.ulupono.com



fuels and absence of boots on the ground to detect and respond to fire.”¹ Active land management becomes an economic opportunity for the state while also promoting local agricultural production, an effort touted by both the Legislature and the general public. In an October 2023 piece titled “Reducing fire risk and restoring value to fallow agricultural lands,” UHERO mentions:

- Reducing the costs of land management and locally produced food can and should be coupled with large-scale fire prevention costs;
- This can be done by incentivizing active land management, such as by farmers and ranchers, to provide upkeep and maintain agricultural lands. For example, the State should consider expansion of favorable lease rates and payment for fire prevention services to support our local food producers; and
- With expanded agricultural production on once fallow lands, and fire risks reduced as a result, farmers and ranchers can support Hawaii’s economy.^{FW}

We must not forget the importance of local food producers across our state and the vital role they play when supply disruptions occur or natural disasters strike. In addition, our farmers and ranchers provide fuel (grass) reduction and land management, which increases Hawai‘i’s resilience to wildfires. These hard-working folks continue to answer the call during tough times, and we should seek to develop and support them with consistent funding and opportunities.

We hope that the FWSWG final report can reflect this perspective by recommending incentives for local food production in the upcoming legislative session.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

¹ <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/reducing-fire-risk-and-restoring-value-to-fallow-agricultural-lands/>

11 Lilly Ho Hawaii Food Bank



November 8, 2023

Rep. Greggor Ilagan, Co-Chair
Rep. Terez Amato, Co-Chair
House Working Group on Food, Water and Other Supplies

Re: Food Security, Resilience, and Disaster Preparedness

Dear Co-Chairs Ilagan and Amato, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, we are deeply grateful for the work of this committee and its focus on food, water and other supplies following the Maui wildfires. Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, and food banks play a vital role in addressing the needs of the community. While the focus of this committee is, of necessity, the wildfire response and the resulting significant food security challenges, we are hopeful that this heartbreaking situation allows us to address long-standing issues. In doing so, we can collaboratively increase food resilience and our collective readiness in the case of a major disaster — not only on Maui but across the State.

Hawai'i is at risk for natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis and wildfires. Our extreme isolation, combined with a "just in time" food supply system and a reliance on imports for the majority of food consumed in the State, is a significant vulnerability. In order to enhance our disaster preparedness and ensure we can meet the food supply needs of our community in the case of a major disaster, we must invest in local food systems and emergency food capacity and supplies.

Every day of the year, Hawai'i's high cost of living — the highest in the nation — makes food security an ongoing challenge for far too many families. One in six Hawai'i residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. One in four children is food insecure. And, these numbers are increasing. Hawai'i Foodbank is still serving 50% more people than we did prior to the pandemic, and our service numbers continue to increase. Inflation has increased food costs 26% since the beginning of the pandemic, and more and more families are unable to make ends meet without the support of the charitable food system. Even now, poised for another potential federal government shutdown, an estimated 80,000 federal employees in Hawai'i are facing the fact that paychecks may be suspended; we anticipate a significant increase in demand should this occur.

On top of all of this, the ongoing food insecurity levels in Hawai'i have significant implications for our emergency preparedness. Food insecure families are not able to meet the recommended 14-day supply of food and water in their homes and, thus, will be especially vulnerable in the time of a disaster. Addressing ongoing food security for these families is a critical step to ensure that our communities can withstand a major natural disaster.

This committee has an opportunity to increase food security in Hawai'i through food purchase funds, which would simultaneously invest in local food systems, increase local food production and emergency food storage capacity, and also support the daily food security needs of our community. We understand that invasive grasses fed the Maui fires, whereas land under agricultural management would be less vulnerable to fires. Hawai'i Foodbank strongly supports additional state agriculture. We have purchased more than \$7 million in local produce and proteins since 2020. We gladly purchase equally nutritious b-grade products and are flexible to update our orders based on farm product availability — making us a strong partner to local producers.



We are keenly focused on securing your support for local food purchases. Since the start of our Farm to Foodbank program, we have continued to fund purchases from local producers through philanthropic support and other sources. This is simply not enough to serve the needs of the Hawai'i community. We believe long-term sustainable funding for our Farm to Foodbank program is a win-win for agriculture and food security in Hawai'i.

In addition, food purchase funds would allow us to increase our regular stores of nonperishable foods, with a goal of significantly increasing emergency food storage levels. Currently, Hawai'i Foodbank maintains a reserve of 1 to 1.5 million pounds of food at any given time, which equates to approximately three weeks of supply during normal times. In the case of a major disaster, with many more people in need of food assistance, we estimate that these stores would last only a few days at most. Funds to increase our storage capacity and the volume of nonperishable food would ensure that the network of food banks and food pantries would increase our readiness and ability to respond to a major disaster.

Finally, food purchase funds will help to ensure we can meet the regular, ongoing needs of our community. On average, Hawai'i Foodbank and its network of agency partners stand in the gap daily for one in six Hawai'i residents. That is more than 16% of our population who may need a little help at the end of the month when the money runs out. It's our kūpuna who had planned and saved, but then lost everything in the 2008 economic crash. It's the single parent working multiple jobs, trying to juggle escalating child care and food costs. And, it's the young student whose family makes just enough to make them ineligible for assistance but still needs help from one of our Food 4 Keiki School Pantries.

Hawai'i Foodbank believes that consistent, equitable access to safe and healthy food is a fundamental human right. The Foodbank provided food for more than 14.5 million meals last year and works to be the healthy option for those experiencing hunger. Currently, more than 25% of the food distributed by Hawai'i Foodbank is fresh produce — increasing the health of the individuals and families served while also supporting local farmers and food producers. Supporting food banks means supporting our local community, farmers and food producers — altogether working toward a more resilient Hawai'i.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to share our thoughts and hope that we can partner with policy leaders in increasing food security in Hawai'i, both in blue skies and grey. Mahalo for your consideration and work in addressing these important matters.

With aloha,

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO
Hawai'i Foodbank

12 Grant Nakaya Office of Hawaiian Affairs (revised testimony)



Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group Draft Report Public Input Meeting of the House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

November 8, 2023

2:00 PM

Conference Room 309

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend to the OHA Board of Trustees the following **COMMENTS** on the House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group (FWSWG) Draft Report. **While OHA appreciates the thrust of this report, OHA wishes to emphasize that OHA's preliminary participation in the FWSWG's consultation with State Offices and Agencies on disaster response measures would have been of crucial benefit to the State and its trust obligations for the betterment of conditions of Native Hawaiians. OHA was not asked to contribute to this process, yet OHA has consistently responded to public needs during times of crisis.**

1. The Omission of OHA from Formal Consultation Regarding Disaster Relief Diminishes the Needs of Native Hawaiians Who Face Greater Inequities and Disparities

OHA is the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians.¹ Unfortunately, the fetid flow of historical injustice over the past 130 years has systemically severed Native Hawaiians from their 'āina (the natural world), their traditions, and their cultures. Accordingly, Native Hawaiians now endure some of the worst socio-economic conditions among all peoples in this State, with ongoing inequities and disparities that continue to undermine Native Hawaiian existence. One of the most challenging social determinants of health for Native Hawaiians is economic well-being,² where Native Hawaiians have the highest rate of poverty and unemployment among Hawai'i's major ethnic groups, and "lower average annual earnings than statewide averages for both men and women."³ Once again, at the highest rate among the State's major ethnic groups, 63% of Native Hawaiians are finding it difficult to survive,⁴ with a 60% majority of Native Hawaiians unable to make ends meet.⁵ As a result of these inequities, Native Hawaiians are particularly vulnerable to a lack of supplies and resources in the event of a natural disaster. While OHA is not a "first response" agency, we have consistently funded disaster relief efforts and advocates for resiliency and adaptation incorporating Native Hawaiian Knowledge.

OHA maintains a Disaster Relief Loan Program through OHA's Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund which offers loans of up to \$20,000 for home improvement, vehicle repair or replacement, or business stabilization for Native Hawaiians affected by a natural disaster.⁶ In addition to this program, OHA administers a separate Consumer Micro Loan Program to provide

¹ HRS §10-3.

² Dept. of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, *Assessment and Priorities for the Health and Well-Being in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders*, 2020, p. 12

³ *Id.*

⁴ Aloha United Way, *Aloha United Way, Alice in Hawaii 'i: 2022 Facts and Figures*, Nov. 2022, p.9.

⁵ *Id.* at 6.

⁶ OHA, *Disaster Relief Loan Program*, available at <https://loans.oha.org/disaster-relief/>, last accessed November 7, 2023.



Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group Draft Report
Public Input Meeting of the House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

low-cost loans to Native Hawaiians experiencing temporary financial hardship due to unforeseen events.⁷

OHA, in response to the wildfires that devastated Maui, opened a Coordinated Donation Management Center for Maui fire victims at Hakuone in partnership with Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke and the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) in August just 11 days after the August 8, 2023 wildfires that destroyed Lāhainā.⁸ On September 6, 2023, OHA committed \$5 million in disaster relief funds to aid beneficiaries affected by the Maui wildfires.⁹ On November 2, 2023 OHA, in partnership with the Maui Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce (MNHCO) began conducting a survey to assess the impact of the August 2023 Maui wildfires on the Native Hawaiian business community to determine critical needs and provide data for OHA to advocate for additional business disaster relief from state and federal resources.¹⁰

In April of 2018, severe flooding damaged or destroyed 532 homes and caused \$180 million in damage on Kauai.¹¹ On April 30, 2018, the 2018 Kīlauea eruption began would go on to last 4 months, resulting in the destruction of 716 homes, the displacement of 3,000 residents, \$236.5 million in damage to public infrastructure, \$27.9 million in farm losses, and \$415 million in tourism revenue losses.¹² In response to the disasters on Kauai and Hawai'i Island in 2018, OHA provided a disaster relief package for affected Native Hawaiians.¹³ In the midst of the Global Covid 19 Pandemic, OHA grant funding went to more than 30 nonprofits to support food security efforts in Native Hawaiian communities throughout Hawai'i.¹⁴

Despite Native Hawaiians experiencing extreme socio-economic disparities, with rural Native Hawaiian communities being particularly vulnerable due to a lack of resources, and OHA's consistent efforts to provide resources to protect and relieve Native Hawaiian communities affected by natural disasters, the FWSWG did not formally invite OHA to share insights, data, case studies, or best practices on the provision of food, water, and other supplies to communities affected by natural disasters. OHA is concerned that the working group's omission of data on Native Hawaiians will only exacerbate the disparities experienced by Native Hawaiians as a result of unresolved historical injustices.

2. The Proposed Recommendations of the Working Group Do Not Sufficiently Address Identified Vulnerabilities Especially Those Unique to Native Hawaiians

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ OHA, *Coordinated Donation Management Center for Maui fire victims opens in Hakuone*, August 19, 2023

⁹ OHA, *OHA Trustees commit \$5 million in disaster relief funds to aid beneficiaries affected by Maui wildfires*, September 6, 2023.

¹⁰ OHA, *Maui Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce and OHA launch Native Hawaiian Business Maui Wildfire Impact Survey*, November 2, 2023.

¹¹ Marcie Grabowski, *Kauai's 2018 record-setting rain caused by a series of supercell thunderstorms*, University of Hawaii School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, April 20, 2022.

¹² Sara LaJeunesse, *Eruption*, Ka Pili Kai Volume 2 No. 2, University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program, p. 25, (2020).

¹³ OHA, *OHA announces disaster relief package for Kaua'i and Hawai'i Communities*, June 7, 2018.

¹⁴ OHA, *30+ nonprofits to receive \$721,739 in OHA grant funding for food security*, August 4, 2020.



Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group Draft Report

Public Input Meeting of the House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

The Draft Report notes that “Hawaii spends up to \$3 billion a year importing more than 80% of its food. Any disaster event affecting the operability of the State’s main seaport, the Port of Honolulu, has the potential to disrupt or even cut off food resupply across the State, including most FEMA resupplies.”¹⁵ Food insecurity in Hawai‘i is a known issue. The City and County of Honolulu Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency noted in 2023 that currently, “more than 80% of Hawai‘i’s food is imported, leaving our food system vulnerable to natural disasters and climate shocks while also increasing our greenhouse gas emissions.”¹⁶ In 2018, the State of Hawai‘i Office of Planning noted that “[t]he 2008 Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan measured that about 15% of the food consumed in Hawaii was grown locally, and 35% of the fruits and vegetables consumed were locally grown.”¹⁷

Despite the overwhelming evidence that Hawai‘i is dangerously food insecure, the State’s policies have not made addressing this an issue. Important Agricultural Lands (IAL) are those lands that “(1) Are capable of producing sustained high agricultural yields when treated and managed according to accepted farming methods and technology; (2) Contribute to the State’s economic base and produce agricultural commodities for export or local consumption; or (3) Are needed to promote the expansion of agricultural activities and income for the future, even if currently not in production.”¹⁸ While the Legislature has recognized the importance of IAL, under the Hawai‘i Administrative Rules (HAR), IAL designations are voluntary such that “[a] farmer or landowner with lands qualifying under section 205-45, HRS, may file a petition for a declaratory order to designate the lands as important agricultural lands.”¹⁹

The Office of Planning has previously stated that food production in Hawai‘i is hampered in part by “pressure on the use of important agricultural land for higher value purposes.”²⁰ As of September 4, 2020, a total of 136,489 acres of land has been designated by the LUC as IAL, with approximately 37,410 acres of IAL on Kauai, 15,205 acres of IAL on Oahu, 27,102 acres of IAL on Maui, and 56,772 acres of IAL on the island of Hawai‘i.²¹ However, the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture (HDOA)’s 2020 Agricultural Land Use Baseline Study indicated that the state has 886,211 total agricultural acres as of 2020, experiencing “a decrease of 27,050, or minus 3 percent from 2015.”²²

¹⁵ House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group, *Draft Report*, November 1, 2023, p. 13.

¹⁶ City and County of Honolulu Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency, *Food Systems*, <https://www.resilientoahu.org/food-systems> last accessed November 7, 2023.

¹⁷ State of Hawaii Office of Planning, *Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan – Ten Year Measurement Update (2008-2017)*, March 7, 2018, page 39.

¹⁸ HRS §205-42(a)(1-3).

¹⁹ HAR §15-15-98(b).

²⁰ State of Hawaii, Office of Planning, *Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy*, October 2012, page 16, available at http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/spb/INCREASED_FOOD_SECURITY_AND_FOOD_SELF_SUFFICIENCY_STRATEGY.pdf, last accessed February 9, 2023.

²¹ State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture, *Designated Important Agricultural Lands – by Island*, September 4, 2020, available at <https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IAL-voluntary-summary-updated-9-4-20.pdf>, last accessed February 9, 2023.

²² HDOA, *Agricultural Land Use Baseline Study Updated*, March 8, 2022.



Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group Draft Report
Public Input Meeting of the House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

Further, HDOA noted that in the “[t]otal acres in planted crops in 2020 was 120,632, a decrease of 31,199 acres or minus 21 percent.”²³ In particular, the Baseline Study indicated that: the total agricultural acreage in Maui dropped 19 percent largely attributed to the loss of sugarcane production; Moloka‘i agricultural acreage remained stable; Lana‘i experienced an increase of 65 acres; O‘ahu agricultural acreage increased of 1.2 percent; Hawai‘i island experienced a loss of agricultural acreage of 0.14 percent largely attributed to loss by natural disasters, the 2018 Kīlauea Eruption, and invasive pests; and that Kaua‘i experienced a gain of 3.6 percent in agricultural acreage, with more than half of that increase due to seed production and commercial forestry operations, while diversified crops saw a 4.4 percent decrease.²⁴

Despite an overall loss of agricultural land and agricultural land engaged in crop production in Hawai‘i, nearly every district boundary amendment petition reviewed by the LUC in recent history has been to convert Agricultural or Conservation District lands to Urban or Rural District lands. A total of 24 DBAs have been filed with the LUC from 2010 as of the beginning of February 2023. A review of each DBA application filed with the LUC from 2010 to present indicates that, of the 24 DBAs filed with the LUC in this 13-year period, a total of 17 DBAs have been granted with one DBA being denied on initial submission but granted upon reconsideration; 3 DBAs have been withdrawn by the petitioner, 1 other was terminated by the petitioner, and 3 DBAs appear to be currently in progress.²⁵ Of these 24 DBA applications, the 17 were to redistrict Agricultural lands to Urban or Rural, with 1 petition to later revert the lands back to Agricultural at the request of the petitioner.

Beyond the threat that existing policies of the State of Hawai‘i place upon IAL and Agricultural lands, there is a lack of support for traditional farmers and small farmers. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFR) “as those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice.”²⁶ The USDA has affirmed that Native Hawaiians are recognized under the SDFR characterization²⁷ and a number of financial support instruments exist through the USDA for SDFRs.²⁸ While this distinction and the needs of those within this designation exist at the federal level, the State of Hawai‘i has yet to adopt the necessary policies and mechanisms to address

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ State of Hawaii Land Use Commission, *Completed Dockets: Boundary Amendments*, available at <https://luc.hawaii.gov/completed-dockets/boundary-amendments/>, last accessed 1/31/2023.

²⁶ USDA Economic Research Service, *Socially Disadvantaged, Beginning, Limited Resource, and Female Farmers and Ranchers*, available at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/socially-disadvantaged-beginning-limited-resource-and-female-farmers-and-ranchers/#:~:text=The%20USDA%20defines%20socially%20disadvantaged,and%20Asian%20or%20Pacific%20Islander.>

²⁷ USDA Farm Service Agency, *Minority and Women Farmers and Ranchers*, available at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/minority-and-women-farmers-and-ranchers/index>.

²⁸ USDA Farm Service Agency, *Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Fact Sheet 2019*, available at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-PSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2019/sda_loans-fact_sheet-aug_2019.pdf.



Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group Draft Report
Public Input Meeting of the House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group

inequities and disparities faced by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, like Native Hawaiian mahi'ai.

The World Bank has noted that agriculture especially has an “extreme vulnerability to climate change.”²⁹ Climate change is affecting farms by “reducing crop yields, the nutritional quality of major cereals, and lowering livestock productivity.”³⁰ Further, “[s]ubstantial investments in [climate change] adaptation will be required to maintain current yields and to achieve production and food quality increases to meet demand.”³¹

The FWSWG Draft Report asserts that “[h]ome gardens would substantially strengthen Hawai'i's food security.”³² However, intrinsic to the characteristics of a home garden is that the “production is supplemental rather than a main source of family consumption and income” and that home gardens “are a production system that the poor can easily enter at some level.”³³ Establishing, maintaining, and harvesting from a home garden takes time. Time is in vanishingly short supply for a significant portion of Hawai'i's populace, with nearly 40% of Hawai'i residents not getting the recommended amount of sleep every day, in part due to worries about money and the rising cost of living.³⁴ Beyond the lack of time many would have to maintain a home garden, is that a home garden would not reliably address Hawai'i's food insecurity. While a “Right to Garden” law would be beneficial, it would not address the underlying policy failures of the State of Hawai'i which do not recognize socially disadvantaged farmers, do not require mandatory designation of IAL, and consistently approve the redesignation of agricultural lands to urban.

OHA appreciates the opportunity to share our mana'o on this matter and urges the Working Group to consider the perspectives offered by Native Hawaiians through consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Mahalo nui loa.

²⁹ World Bank, *Climate-Smart Agriculture*, available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/climate-smart-agriculture>, last updated April 5, 2021, last accessed February 9, 2023.

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ *Id.*

³² House Food, Water and Other Supplies Working Group, *Draft Report*, November 1, 2023, p. 14.

³³ Galhena, D.H., Freed, R. & Maredia, K.M., *Home gardens: a promising approach to enhance household food security and wellbeing*, *Agric & Food Secur* 2, 8 (2013) p. 3. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2048-7010-2-8>.

³⁴ Stephanie Lum, *Hawaii is the most sleep-deprived state. You can blame the cost of living*, *Hawaii News Now*, November 6, 2023.

13) Liza Ryan Gill Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights



www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

FOOD, WATER, AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP

Greggor Ilagan, Co-Chair, Terez Amato, Co-Chair

Hearing Date: November 8th, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Ilagan, Amato, and members of the Food, Water, and Other Supplies Working Group,

We are writing to express our appreciation for the work that your group has done to evaluate the availability and distribution of essential supplies for displaced individuals and families in the aftermath of the Maui wildfires. Your report has shed light on critical issues related to supply chains and has proposed actionable recommendations to address these issues.

However, we would like to draw your attention to the issue of inadequate language access during emergencies. As you noted in your report, language barriers can prevent Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals from receiving essential supplies during disasters. During and immediately after the wildfire, most, if not all, information was provided exclusively in English. The language access issues that occurred with the Lahaina wildfire underscores the importance of an effective Distribution Management Plan that caters to the community's diverse needs.

This is a serious issue that can have life-threatening consequences for LEP individuals and their families. Following the wildfire, reports emerged regarding access issues for Lahaina's non-English speaking populations, particularly Filipino residents. In Hawaii, Filipinos represent the second-largest ethnic group in the State, accounting for approximately one-fourth of the State's 1.4 million residents. Of the nearly 48,000 Maui residents who can trace their roots back to the Philippines, about 5,000 of them lived in Lahaina, which accounted for approximately 40% of the town's population before the fire. Despite the significant representation of Filipino



www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

residents in Lahaina, many reported difficulties obtaining information and aid, and by extension supplies, due to language access issues.

We urge your group to consider establishing a working group on language access to address this issue. Such a working group could evaluate the current State of language access during emergencies, identify gaps and inefficiencies in language services, and propose concrete solutions to ensure that LEP individuals have equal access to essential supplies during disasters.

We believe that language access is a critical issue that deserves the attention of your group and the broader community. By establishing a working group on language access, we can ensure that everyone in our community, regardless of their language proficiency, has access to the essential supplies they need during emergencies.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

With gratitude,

Liza Ryan Gill

Coordinator and Re-founder

Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights

www.hicir.org

14 Hunter Evelin Food Systems planner with Supersistence

Aloha FWSWG,

TL;dr: Food and disaster planner seeks to support your efforts.

I am a food and agricultural systems planner with a focus on disasters and resilience. I'm interested to share with the FWS working group some of my research and consulting findings and related policy implications.

First, here is an [Emergency Feeding Planning Scaffold](#) I developed to demonstrate and articulate links between emergency planning (extant and needed) from the household to statewide scales. Informed by my [Emergency Feeding System Vulnerability Cascade](#) analysis, I've pursued various aspects outline in the scaffold, for example writing Hawaii County's Emergency Feeding Plan, organizing an emergency planning training cohort for the food banks and key feeding organizations statewide, and co-facilitating a session on [Emergency Feeding Lessons Learned](#) during COVID.

These and numerous other related efforts, from compiling [food bank infrastructure needs](#) with [Hawaii Hunger Action Network](#) or [agro-food program funding needs](#) with [AgHui](#), have also informed my writing of numerous preparedness and response related bills. A few examples being:

- Household Emergency Preparedness Assessments (CASPERs) by the Department of Health - [HB1301](#) / [SB1362](#) (2022)
- Hawaii Farm To Food Bank Program - [SB430](#) (2023)

Also some ideas in development that I didn't have time to fully draft before last session, despite interest from Rep. Gates, are viewable in [my 2023 Agrofood Policy list](#) under the 'Emergency Preparedness and Response' section, namely:

- Emergency Feeding Funds (Cache of Cash)
- Strategic Catastrophic Disaster Food Reserve
- Community Emergency Food Cache System (CEFCS)

Lastly, in response to Maui are a few efforts of note:

- [HDOA Disaster Response and Recovery Act](#) drafted to enhance SESF-11 activities.
- Maui Producer Impact Survey <https://hfuuhi.org/maui-response/>
 - Ideally this post-disaster survey work would be a standing aspect of response, as is done in various Australian states that survey and visualize impact data

§ New South Wales Department of Primary Industries runs the [Primary industries natural disaster damage assessment \(PiNDDA\)](#) survey and [reporting tool](#). The survey is ArcGIS Survey 123 and dashboard via ArcGIS Experience Builder.

§ Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries runs the [Agriculture Disaster Impact Survey](#) and response [dashboard](#). The survey is custom html and dashboard run through Microsoft Power BI.

In closing, as a food systems expert with a focus on disasters who happens to also be a policy wonk, I'm interested to support the efforts of the FWS Working Group and would be like to schedule a call or meeting with the working group.

Do let me know if this would be of interest and, as I believe your reporting deadline is soon, here is my bookable calendar to help find a time to meet.

Aloha nui loa,
Hunter

This concludes the list of written testimony submitted through Nov 7th 2023 for the FWSWG Draft Report, Nov 1 2023 version.

The Following is Testimony received After Nov 7th 2023:

AMY AGBAYANI, Co-chair HAWAI'I FRIENDS OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Hearing Date: November 8th, 2023. FOOD, WATER, AND OTHER SUPPLIES WORKING GROUP

TESTIMONY ON LANGUAGE ACCESS.SUBMITTED BY:

AMY AGBAYANI, Co-chair HAWAI'I FRIENDS OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Co-chairs Representative Greggor , Representative Ilagan Terez Amato and members of the working group:

Thank you for working on these critical matters.

I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights (HFCR), HFCR seeks equal access for all persons in Hawaii. Including immigrants and Limited English Proficient persons. HFCR, the Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant rights (with support of other community groups) submitted a letter 09/18/23 to Governor Green. I am submitting excerpts of this letter in my testimony to FWSWG. Our letter identified concerns and recommendations to address" the acute needs of the immigrant community, particularly those who are limited English proficient and there exists a large gap that only statewide executive coordination can fill. Additionally, the absence of a coordinated disaster communication plan between government and community providers has stressed the personnel and fiscal resources of non-profit and individual providers and leaves the community wondering who is in charge."

"The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 36% of Lahaina's residents aged 5 and older speak a language other than English at home. In comparison, the same report notes that only 25.9% of the state's total population, aged 5 and over, speaks a language other than English.¹ The most common languages encountered by community nonprofits and individuals are Hawaiian, Spanish, Tagalog, Ilocano, Chuukese, Marshallese, Pohnpeian and Tongan.

In the immediate aftermath of the fire, limited English proficient persons struggled to find in-person interpreters, translators, or remote virtual interpreter services at the Maui disaster resource centers. It appears that neither the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency nor the Maui Emergency Management Agency developed or implemented a plan to provide for these essential services as required by federal and state law.

Without competent language assistance, many limited proficient English speakers are reluctant to seek assistance or engage with government officials fearing they will be misunderstood, denied services, or arrested. The language barrier also poses a significant challenge for service providers unable to discern the specific needs and services being sought.

1. Communicate to all state government and community organizations receiving state and/or federal funding that ALL displaced and impacted Lahaina residents must be assisted. That no one is left out including those persons with limited English proficiency.
2. Remind state agencies of their legal responsibility to meet the language access needs of the Lahaina community. Specifically, we request that you issue a directive to state agencies to create/identify and translate vital information in the top 15 languages and to involve the OLA in this effort. An excellent model for this communication is Governor

Inslee's Washington State Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response: Language Access Plan which was issued under Washington's Essential Function 15 plan. 2 The COVID-19 Language Access Plan is attached.

3. Communicate directly to the various language communities your concerns for their well-being and make a public statement of concern and support for the Lahaina immigrant community recognizing their special circumstances and need for language accessible services. Create dedicated state-sponsored webpages/sites to provide multilingual information and resources for impacted limited English proficient residents and service providers.
4. Immediately designate a senior staff member to work with OLA, stakeholder agencies, and community groups to improve communication and support for Lahaina's limited English proficient families and individuals
5. Create dedicated state-sponsored webpages/sites to provide multilingual information and resources for impacted limited English proficient residents and service providers.
6. Designate a senior staff member (who reports directly to the Governor) to review California's approach to assisting FEMA-ineligible immigrants to limited state assistance following their flooding crisis and consider implementing a similar program for ineligible Lahaina wildfire victims: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/immigration-services/immigrant-storm-services>.
7. Convene an informal working group to include a senior member (who reports directly to the Governor), the Office of Enterprise Services, the director of OLA, and select community members to develop a coordinated plan to implement and fund online language services for the state's most public-facing agencies and to submit a funding request in the upcoming legislative session.

—