

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 21, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [HB 1248 HD1](#) – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

Hearing: Thursday, February 23, 2023, Time 11:30 a.m.
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill, and defers to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) as to administrative and budget needs. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The bill's purpose is to appropriate funds to DOA for the continued administration of the Hawaii healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1). The measure was amended by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The Hawaii healthy food incentive dollar-for-dollar matching program helps SNAP participants double their purchasing power. Especially during this time of elevated food costs,

continuing the program doubles the value of SNAP participants' benefits spent on Hawaii-grown fresh fruits and vegetables. This supports local farmers and keeps food dollars in the local economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 21, 2023

TO: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Measure: H.B. No. 1248 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES
Hearing Date: Thursday, February 23, 2023
Time: 11:30 AM
Location: Conference Room 308

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support

EOEL supports H.B. No. 1248 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Agriculture regarding implementation and budgetary needs.

EOEL works with stakeholders to establish a system that ensures a solid foundation of early childhood development and learning for Hawaii's children from prenatal to age five. Healthy eating in childhood is important for children's growth and development and prevents various health conditions.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides eligible Hawaii residents with monthly benefits to purchase food. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, in Hawaii, more than 60% of SNAP beneficiaries are in families with children. This bill would not only allow families and children better access to healthy, nutritious food by doubling their purchasing power, but also supports local farmers. Recognizing the importance that nutrition plays in children's growth, development, and learning experiences, EOEL supports this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
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

**FEBRUARY 23, 2023
11:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1248, HD1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES**

Chairperson Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1248, HD1. This measure appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program (HHFIP) and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program. The Department is in strong support of this bill and offers comments.

The Department is in strong support of this measure commenting that the DOA served as the administrator of the HHFIP, partnering with The Food Basket in Hilo, Hawaii, Ulupono, The Hawaii Good Food Alliance, and other food system groups addressing food insecurity in Hawaii. The Department looks forward to continuing the effort to provide nutrition to the food insecure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

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

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

February 21, 2023

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Finance

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 23, 2023; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
HB 1248, HD1, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for the Hawai'i Food Incentive Program and provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The Maui County Council adopted Resolution 23-43, "URGING THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT AND ADOPT THE PRIORITY FOOD POLICIES RECOMMENDED BY THE TRANSFORMING HAWAII'S FOOD SYSTEMS TOGETHER INITIATIVE," in support of this measure. Therefore, I offer this testimony on the Council's behalf.

The Maui County Council **supports** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This measure facilitates the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, which is an integral part of a healthy diet and central to the prevention of obesity and chronic disease.
2. The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as DA BUX, incentivizes beneficiaries who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program with a dollar-for-dollar match on locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables. This measure provides the essential funding to continue this valuable program.
3. This measure advances the following Maui County General Plan policy: "Expand public awareness and promote programs to achieve healthy eating habits . . ."

For the foregoing reasons, the Maui County Council **supports** this measure.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:44:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglass S. Adams	Department of Research and Development, County of Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitigawa, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of HB 1248 HD1, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawaii healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program. This program has proven to be exceptionally successful in developing a food security system for low to moderate income populations in all counties.

We strongly encourage the Committee to move HB 1248 HD1 forward with a POSITIVE recommendation for House passage.

very respectfully

Douglass S Adams

Director, Dept of Research & Development

County of Hawaii

Date: February 21, 2023

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

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for HB1248, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners are working to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS strongly supports passage of HB1248, which would continue the Double Up Food Bucks (Da Bux) program, which expands families' access to healthy and nutritious food. Da Bux matches SNAP dollars spent on fresh fruits and vegetables with a financial benefit to local growers and food retailers. Low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. Food markets participating in the program have seen increases in fresh produce sales. In addition, state supplemental funding would be potentially matched by federal funding adding yet another benefit to Hawai'i's investment in these important programs.

Da Bux helps reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables to those who might be economically challenged to afford access to those foods vital to improved health and reduced obesity.

HB1248 is a significant positive step in helping Hawai'i build back better from the pandemic and provides a proven support to the state's population of families and children. ECAS supports its passage.

We thank you for your consideration of this measure.



**American
Heart
Association.**

American Heart Association testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1248, HD1, “Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives”

The American Heart Association strongly supports HB 1248, HD1 and asks that the legislature fully fund the \$3 million, two-year funding request.

Chairman of the Board

Jason Fujita

President

Zia Khan, MD

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For more than 50 years, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly Food Stamps) has been vital in addressing food insecurity and nutrition in the United States. It has an impact on health, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency. The program helps more than 45 million Americans struggling through underemployment and low or stagnant wages. The majority of benefits go to households with children, older adults or those with disabilities.

For more than a decade, SNAP nutrition incentive programs across the country like Hawaii’s DA BUX program have existed to reduce hunger and improve nutrition among low-income families while also supporting local agriculture and the economy. The DA BUX program works by providing matching dollars to SNAP recipients to purchase additional fresh fruits and vegetables at participating retailers and farmers markets.

DA BUX directly addresses nutrition insecurity by helping families stretch their food dollars and incentivizing them to buy healthier options. The program helps families teach their children healthy behaviors, establishing lifelong habits that will support their overall health and wellness. Roughly half of all SNAP recipients have children in their homes. In addition, DA BUX acts as a catalyst for the local economy. Farmers and retailers alike benefit from increased sales of local produce.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated a problem that has long existed in Hawaii – nutrition insecurity, or a household’s inability to provide enough nutritious food for every person to live an active, healthy life. Today, local families are finding it harder than ever to put nutritious food on the table. According to data from Feeding America, the number of Hawaii residents dealing with food insecurity has grown by 51 percent since 2019. In addition, about 81,000 keiki across the state are food insecure this year.

Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain problems for millions of American households. Research shows that SNAP benefits are often not adequate to last a family the entire month. A 2016 report by the Food Research and Action Center summarized the important role SNAP plays in addressing food insecurity. **Importantly, the majority of SNAP recipients who are eligible for work do so while on the program, underscoring that many recipients are using the program to overcome underemployment or temporary job loss.**

Although diet quality has been steadily improving in the U.S. during the past two decades, overall dietary quality is still poor. Most significantly, there is a widening gap associated with education and income. Despite the important role SNAP plays in

Serving Hawaii since 1948

Our Mission:

“To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.”

For more information on the AHA’s educational or research programs, visit www.heart.org or contact your nearest AHA office.

addressing hunger, additional data indicate that SNAP recipients have worse diet quality than income-eligible non-participants.

The DA BUX program is already successfully in place at a number of retail and farmers market locations across the state. However, current funding does not allow for expansion of the program to all geographic areas of the state meaning that not all in need have access to its benefits. The proposed funding would allow the DA BUX program to expand more broadly across the state, reaching thousands of additional residents in need, and to sustain existing programs. HB 1248, HD1 would also allow the state to draw down matching federal funds doubling the health and economic benefits to Hawaii.

The American Heart Association urges legislators to support HB 1248, HD1 and to fully fund the \$3 million request to help reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables to those who might be economically challenged to afford access to those foods vital to improved health and reduced obesity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald B. Weisman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Donald B. Weisman
Hawaii Government Relations/Communications and Marketing Director



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023; 11:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 1248, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

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. 1248, House Draft 1, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

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 amounts of general funds for fiscal years 2023-2024, and 2023-2025, to be expended by the Department of Agriculture, for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

This bill would take effect on June 30, 3000.

SNAP, formally known as the "Food Stamps Program", is the largest federal food assistance program that is currently in operation. It provides food-purchasing assistance for low- and no-income people. SNAP provided assistance to approximately 40 million persons in 2018, at an expenditure of \$57.1 billion. Approximately 9.2% of American households received SNAP benefits at some point during 2017, with approximately 16.7 of all children living in households receiving SNAP benefits.

Testimony on House Bill No. 1248, House Draft 1
Thursday, February 23, 2023; 11:30 a.m.
Page 2

Founded during the height of the Great Depression, SNAP is the cornerstone of our national social safety net. It is intended to prevent mass starvation precipitated from unemployment and homelessness. The program was also seen as a way of helping the poor while boosting the economy and ensuring that America's farmers would obtain a fair price for their labors by allowing government to purchase and distribute excess goods in time of crisis.

The COVID-19 Pandemic demonstrated how food scarcity and poverty threatened the health and welfare of our citizens in times of dire crisis. With so many people unemployed, entire families struggled to put food on the table on a consistent basis. Lines at the food bank and food drives stretched for miles and people waited for hours to receive surplus food.

The HPCA has strongly endorsed this Program in previous years and we continue to urge your support. Additional SNAP benefits for a recipient can mean the difference between having to decide whether someone's last amount of cash will go for food or rent or medications or other necessities.

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.

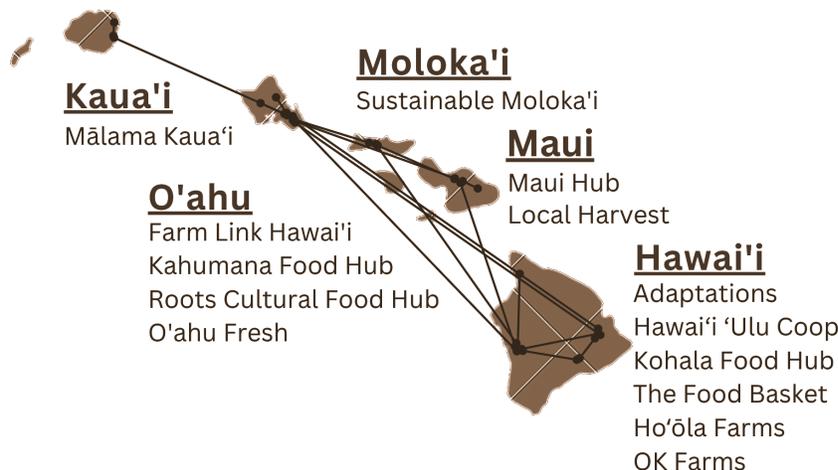
Hawai'i Food Hub Hui

2/21/2023

Dear FIN committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Hawai'i Food Hub Hui (HFHH) strongly supports HB1248. Snap Double Up Food Bucks is a program that doubles the value of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits when used to purchase locally grown, fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets and other direct-to-consumer venues. The program is designed to increase access to healthy, affordable food for SNAP recipients.

As you can see from our 2022 SNAPshot (next page), food hubs are playing an essential role in increasing access to locally grown foods for Snap recipients in Hawai'i.



HFHH is a collaboration dedicated to supporting local food hubs and promoting the consumption of locally grown, culturally preferred foods. Food hubs do this by aggregating, storing, processing, and distributing locally grown produce to Hawaii's residents. Our collaboration was created in 2017 and currently encompasses 14 food hubs across the states supporting 1,337 farms that serve approximately 14,465 customers every year. The HFHH's efforts ensure that small- and medium-sized farms have access to the resources they need to thrive, as well as providing access to fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods to local residents.

Saleh Azizi Fardkhales, Ph.D.
Director
Hawai'i Food Hub Hui
(808) 383-5224 | info@foodhubhui.com

HAWAI'I FOOD HUB HUI 2022 SNAPshot

Increasing affordable local food access through USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program



\$1,289,213

SNAP sales + Double Up Food Bucks supporting Hawai'i food producers

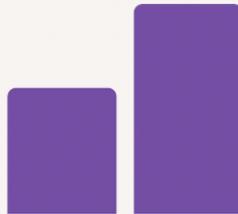


492

Households served weekly

\$50

Average weekly SNAP & DA BUX spending per consumer



31%

Growth in total SNAP & DA BUX sales from 2021



11 of 14

Food hubs accept SNAP

80%

Of those accept DA BUX



FACT: Online markets provide increased food access with **island-wide** coverage via home delivery & near home pick-up options.

REFERENCE:

FOOD HUB HUI '22 IMPACT SURVEY
CONTACT: SALEH@HAWAIIGOODFOODALLIANCE.ORG



Kaua'i
Mālama Kaua'i



Moloka'i
Sustainable Moloka'i



Maui
Maui Hub

O'ahu
Farm Link Hawai'i
Kahumana Food Hub
Roots Cultural Food Hub

Hawai'i
Adaptations
Hawai'i 'Ulu Coop
Kohala Food Hub
Da Box (Food Basket)
Hilo Farm to Car





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Department of Pediatrics

Titiimaewa Ta'ase, JD
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public
Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

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

Date: Tuesday, February 2, 2023

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

Re: Strong Support for HB1248 HD1, Relating to Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: Thursday, February 23, 2023, 11:30 AM Conf Rm 308

The Obesity Prevention Task Force (OPTF), a program of the Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI), is in **Strong Support of HB1248 HD1**, which provides continued funding for the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program.

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for families, farmers, and the local economy.

The Hawai'i Healthy Food incentive program, also known as DA BUX, provides a dollar-for-dollar match on locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients. Through this program, SNAP recipients can bring home healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and increased income, and more money goes into and grows our local economy.

Incentivizing SNAP dollars for fresh fruits and vegetables stretches food dollars for families, especially with increasing food costs. Furthermore, the doubling effect that DA BUX has on SNAP dollars gives families more room in their budgets for other necessary expenses.

Double Up Food Bucks demand has risen significantly over the last several years.

Year after year, this program has grown its impact making a significant impact on SNAP recipients. In 2019, SNAP shoppers spent \$87,359 through the DA BUX program; by 2022, SNAP shoppers spent \$2,275,460 through the DA BUXⁱⁱ. That money has brought healthy foods to homes while positively impacting our local economy.

Double Up Food Bucks provides a strong return on investment.

SNAP is proven to stimulate the economy by being an economic multiplier. For every SNAP dollar spent, it generates \$1.79 in economic activity. These dollars ripple out throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees; these people, in turn, spend their dollars to help support economic activity further and so on. If the state provides \$3 million in funding for this program, the federal

government could provide up to an additional \$3M of matching funds. This \$6M would result in over \$9.9M of total economic activity. In other words, the \$3M investment has a return of over 230%.

Health and food security are positively impacted.

Double Up Food Bucks' focus on locally grown produce helps to bring healthy foods to homes and supports the local agricultural industry. Studies have found that a lack of food security is associated with diet-related chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressureⁱⁱⁱ. Supporting local agriculture also aligns with the renewed calls to increase local food production and decrease Hawai'i's dependence on imported goods for a more sustainable and resilient food system.

A \$3 million investment can help expand the program to more stores.

The Double Up program has seen significant growth. It started with KTA in Hawai'i County and is now accessible statewide through Times, KTA, Foodland, and participating farmers' markets. These stores are locally based and operated, ensuring the economic impact is amplified. There are still ways for the program to grow its impact.

The \$3M will increase the program's reach and participation by engaging more people through educational campaigns in areas where there has been stalled growth, as well as provide the ability to engage more retail outlets that were unable to participate due to a limit of SNAP funding for participants.

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for health, agriculture, and the local economy and is a lifeline for many during the pandemic. We strongly support this measure and respectfully ask you to **pass HB1248 HD1**.

Mahalo,



Peggy Mierzwa
Policy & Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and healthcare environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

ⁱⁱ https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bca7bc67eb88c2e986a5203/t/62f6dc8f8e3f8d1a809e2e9a/1660345536073/2020-2021_Outcomes_Report_0.9.8.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4584410/>



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

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) 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 strongly supports HB1248.**

Not only is this program beneficial to SNAP recipients, but it has a huge impact on our local agricultural industry in Hawaii. This incentive program helps to bridge the gap between small farms and access to nutritious food for SNAP beneficiaries, by providing an incentive for purchasing locally grown products. It also increases economic opportunities for small farms and farmers, providing an additional source of income and increased rural jobs. The Hawaii-grown products purchased through this program serve to improve healthy diets, and the financial support helps to ensure a secure local source of food.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, February 23, 2023 — 11:30 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative strongly supports HB 1248 HD1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives.

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 strongly supports HB 1248 HD1, which appropriates funds to the State Department of Agriculture (DOA) for the continued administration of the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

Ulupono strongly supports the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program within the DOA. The "DA BUX" Double Up Food Bucks Program, administered by The Food Basket, Hawai'i Island's food bank, is a triple-win solution for our communities as SNAP-eligible recipients double their spending power at point of purchase with healthy local produce, local farmers are able to expand their markets, and all money spent is kept right here in our state. In addition, this program leverages federal funding at a 1:1 match.

From 2020-2021, DA BUX has supported more than 470 farm producers and eight distributors through farm product sales. With rising inflation and Hawai'i's high cost of living, SNAP participation and benefits continue to climb since 2019 levels.¹ These numbers substantiate the need to support our local community as food insecurity continues to increase.

We are hopeful that the State can consider a \$3 million appropriation, per year, for the DOA program to support the continued efforts of DA BUX. A \$3 million investment by the State would receive a direct match of \$3 million in federal funding. Furthermore, our analysis shows that with that level of state funding in place, the potential economic impact created by DA BUX in Hawai'i reaches nearly \$19 million.

¹ 9% increase for those receiving benefits; 100% increase in total annual SNAP benefits paid; and, 26 times increase in the annual amount of DA BUX discounts issued to SNAP shoppers since 2019.

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



We appreciate the Legislature's attention to this highly impactful program and look forward to sustained funding to support our SNAP community and our local producers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

See Attachment

OUR STATE HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO UNLOCK SIGNIFICANT FEDERAL AND PHILANTHROPIC DOLLARS IN SUPPORT OF THIS PROVEN AND HIGHLY IMPACTFUL PROGRAM



DA BUX

**DOUBLE UP
FOOD BUCKS PROVIDES
A TRIPLE-WIN**

“The most I saved in one trip was \$28 and some change. **I really love this program because I am diabetic and need fresh veggies and fruits to help keep me healthy.** Mahalo for this amazing program. Also, DA BUX helps me with my kids too. They love looking for the DA BUX label on produce & can choose what they want. They love to eat! Carrots, cabbage and cucumbers are their faves as well as local apple bananas to name a few.”

— Dawn Marquez
SNAP Shopper,
Waimanalo, HI

“For over a century, KTA Super Stores has strived to serve as an essential source for locally grown produce for our Hawai‘i Island community. DA BUX provides us the opportunity to support our local growers. **Since launching DA BUX in September 2017, we have seen transactions associated with the DA BUX program more than quadruple at our seven store locations.** We see this as positive sign that DA BUX is motivating families to purchase and consume more healthy fruits and vegetables and that this increased demand will drive increases in agricultural production for the state.”

— Toby Taniguchi
President, KTA Super Stores

DA BUX continues to be an amazing way to connect our farm directly to the

consumers who need it most. Being able to offer the best quality fresh locally grown food in a very affordable way removes a big hurdle for people; [DA BUX] helps to make feeding them and their families easy. **This program helps to support local agriculture so we can more easily compete with imported food and gives us farmers a big incentive to produce more fruits and vegetables to satisfy the increased demand for our goods.**”

— Ryan Earehart
Farm Owner, Oko‘a Farms

DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks provides a Triple-Win

HAWAII IMPORTS APPROXIMATELY 85-90% of its food and has food costs that are 91% higher than the national average. Dependence on food imports threatens the sustainability of food producers throughout the islands and places the entire population directly at risk of food shortages in the event of pandemics, natural disasters, and economic disruptions. Furthermore, with the highest cost of living in the nation, Hawai'i is challenged with growing food costs and food insecurity, and 12% of its population receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2022.

THE PROBLEM

Overall, Hawai'i faces an estimated \$83 million in annual costs related to food insecurity and hunger. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rising inflation, Hawai'i households are facing increasing food costs. Compared to the rest of the nation, Hawai'i households spend the highest percentage of their annual budget on food. This is compounded with the rising inflation that has increased food prices and overall cost of living in Hawai'i by 6.6% and 7.4%, respectively. Increasing food prices reinforces many residents' reliance on cheaper, less healthy fast food options that have long-range impacts on health and wellbeing. This situation creates a significant need to help feed low income families AND support local agricultural food producers.

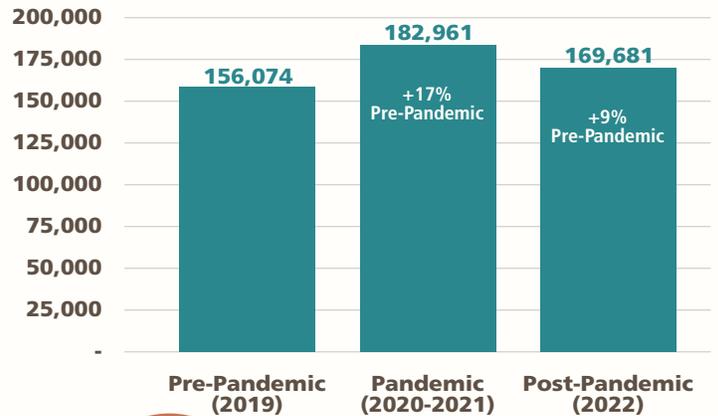
BY THE NUMBERS

- 90% Imported Food
- 91% Higher Food Costs (Refer to the graph for the increasing trend of Hawai'i's cost of food under the USDA Thrifty Food Plan compared to the national average cost of food)
- 12% Received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance in 2022

Hawai'i Monthly Thrifty Plan Cost vs. National Average



Monthly Average of Individual SNAP Recipients in Hawai'i



THE SOLUTION

DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks is a triple-win solution because it doubles the purchasing power of low-income SNAP families for healthy, Hawai'i-grown produce; it supports local farmers with an increased customer base; and it benefits the entire island community by keeping dollars in the local economy.

An appropriation of up to \$3 million in state funds will bring in additional federal funds to sustain, expand and extend the statewide DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program. Given the broad benefits of DA BUX for our state, it is imperative to secure sustained funding for DA BUX and ensure it is a staple service providing economic relief to SNAP households and directly supporting local agricultural food producers across the state. Based on the projected spend down rate, current funding of the DA BUX program will only last through August 2024.

HOW IT WORKS

The program offers SNAP participants a DA BUX Access Card or voucher at point of sale that doubles their purchasing power when they buy locally



grown fruits and vegetables — \$10 of SNAP benefits would be worth \$20 of Hawai'i grown produce. Thus, each \$1 funded into the program provides \$2 worth of local food purchases.

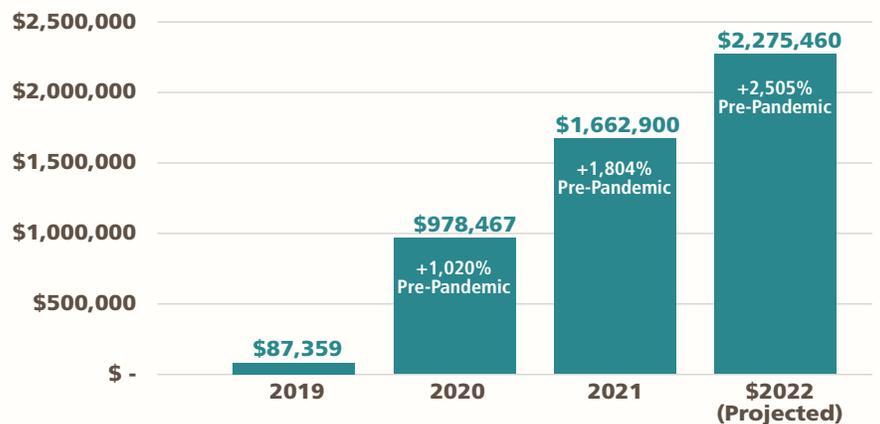
State Support is Key to Federal and Philanthropic Funding

	State Investment of \$1M	State Investment of \$2M	State Investment of \$3M
State Funding	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000
Federal GusNIP grant	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000
Total Funding for DA BUX discounts	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$6,000,000
Economic multiplier on DA BUX discounts ¹	1.7	1.7	1.7
Potential economic impact of DA BUX discounts	\$3,328,020	\$6,656,041	\$9,984,061
Federal SNAP benefits	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$6,000,000
Economic multiplier of SNAP benefits ²	1.5	1.5	1.5
Potential economic impact of SNAP benefits	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$9,000,000
Total funding for SNAP & DA BUX	\$4,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$12,000,000
Potential economic impact	\$6,328,000	\$12,656,041	\$18,984,061
Economic impact multiplier of state funding	6.3	6.3	6.3

Over the course of the pandemic, DA BUX has become a critical service for low-income SNAP beneficiaries struggling with economic hardship and food insecurity. There has been significant growth and demand for the program due to the increase in SNAP participation and participating DA BUX retail locations across the state.



Annual DA BUX Discounts Issued to SNAP Shoppers



Local Food Sales Driven By SNAP DA BUX				
County	2019	2020	2021	2022 (Projected)
Honolulu	\$ -	\$929,217	\$1,659,101	\$2,397,563
% increase		100%	79%	45%
Hawai'i	\$174,718	\$842,482	\$1,125,573	\$1,244,464
% increase		382%	34%	11%
Kaua'i	\$ -	\$87,574	\$191,309	\$211,498
% increase		100%	118%	11%
Maui	\$ -	\$97,661	\$349,817	\$697,394
% increase		100%	258%	99%
Statewide Total	\$174,718	\$1,956,934	\$3,325,800	\$4,550,919

- From 2020 through 2021, DA BUX supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors by incentivizing the sale of their farm products sold at participating farm direct retailers.
- In January 2022, local produce sales to SNAP shoppers at participating farm direct retailers increased an average of 531% from 2019
- DA BUX gives farmers the opportunity to feed local residents (rather than exporting product to the mainland) and to increase production towards a self-sufficient local food supply for the state. The program strengthens the relationship between local residents and food producers. Increasing local food production capacity can help to bring prices down, making healthy local food accessible and affordable to more people.

¹ Based on the "The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives" report prepared by Colorado State University, and the percentage of 2021 DA BUX discounts issued via farm-direct outlets and food retailers. Refer to the report at: https://fairfoodnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Economic_Contributions_Incentives_2_2_21.pdf

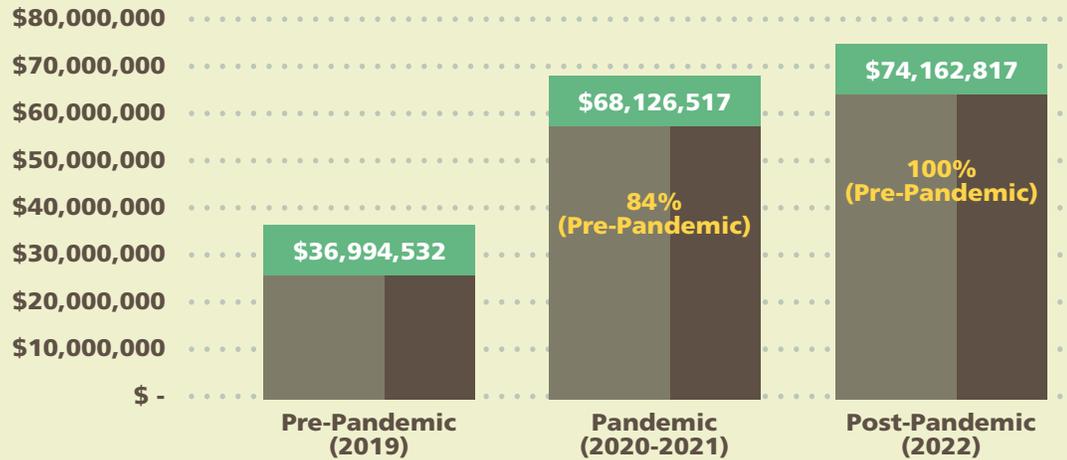
² Based on the "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier" report prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. Refer to the report at: https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err265_summary.pdf

More Impact for State 'BUX'

Due to rising inflation and higher cost of living, SNAP participation and SNAP benefits in Hawai'i continue to be significantly higher compared to 2019 levels.

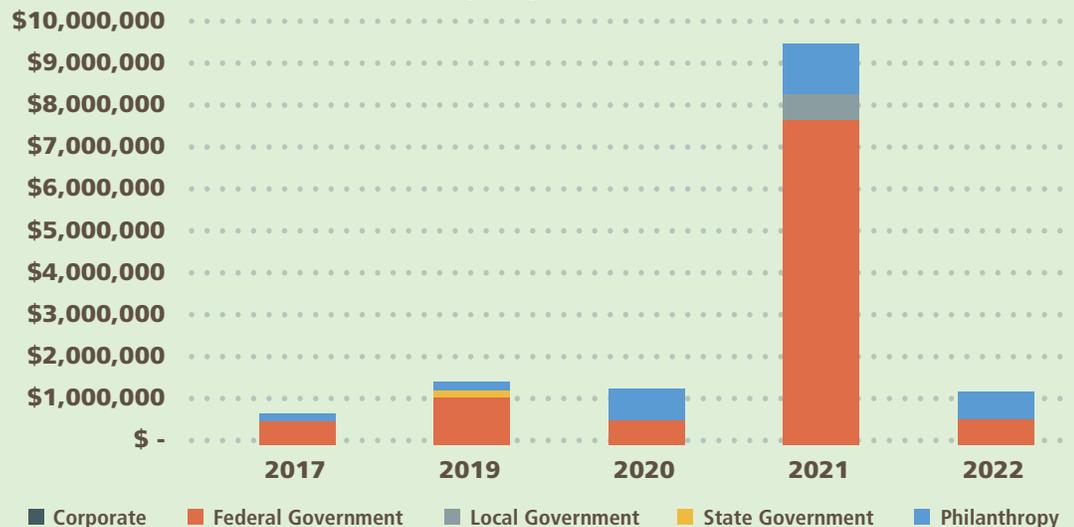
- 8th highest poverty rate (10.5% of the population living at or below the poverty line)
- 9% increase in the number of individuals in Hawai'i receiving SNAP benefits
- 100% increase in the annual total amount of SNAP benefits paid in Hawai'i
- 26x increase the annual total of DA BUX discounts issued to SNAP shoppers

Average Monthly SNAP Benefits Paid for Hawaii SNAP Participants



Historically, the DA BUX program has been primarily funded by Federal grants and philanthropic/private funding (representing almost all of total program funds). To date, the State of Hawaii has only provided \$94,000 in General Funds, and allocated \$500,000 in Federal CARES Act funds to the program.

DA BUX Fundings by Source (2017-2022)



Secure and sustained state funding for DA BUX program is the key to federal and philanthropic funding matches. State funds can generate significant leverage:

- Stimulate economic activity of \$19 million (6.3x of state funding) while increasing local food production for local consumption.
- \$3 million can be matched by \$3 million in federal dollars from a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) grant, as well as \$6 million from SNAP purchases, resulting in \$12 million going toward local food purchases and supporting local farmers
- Given the impact achieved and successful track record, state funding will be a worthwhile investment and position the DA BUX program for future federal funding.
- Other states have recognized the benefit and impact of double up food bucks programs by investing state funds in expanding and sustaining their programs. There are nine states that have invested state funds in their double up food bucks programs, totaling approximately \$94.5 million from 2015 through 2021.



HAWAII APPLSEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for H.B. 1248 – Relating to SNAP Incentives
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30AM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitigawa, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **H.B. 1248**, which would provide matching funds to appropriate funds to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (DOA) for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program and beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

SNAP is a proven economic stimulus. In fact, the [USDA estimates](#) that every dollar in SNAP generates an additional \$0.54 in economic activity. **In 2022, nearly 170,000 Hawai'i residents drew down over \$900 million in federal SNAP funds to purchase food—an estimated \$1.4 billion dollar investment in Hawai'i's food system after applying the economic multiplier.**

While SNAP is an important program for ensuring the food security of low-income Hawai'i households, the individual household benefit is often still not enough to afford fresh fruits and vegetables. This results in most of these economic stimulus funds leaving the islands—right into the pockets of major mainland food companies, rather than getting recirculated locally into our local agriculture industry.

SNAP incentives like those proposed in H.B. 1248 address this concern by providing an additional subsidy for SNAP users when they purchase local fruits and vegetables. The federal program that funds this incentive requires a one-to-one match, meaning that every dollar the state invests will be matched by federal funding. **Therefore, a \$3 million investment by the state would be doubled with matching federal funds. Factoring in the \$1.54 multiplier mentioned earlier would ultimately result in \$9.24M million in economic impact.** Passing this bill would be an impact investment for the State, channeling much-needed capital into local businesses and farms.

Hawai'i's existing SNAP incentive program, known as DA BUX, has already been enormously successful and popular among SNAP users, retailers, and farmers alike. According to the latest [program outcomes report](#), DA BUX has already directly supported 470 farm producers, eight distributors, and increased local produce sales by 531% at farm-direct retailers.

SNAP incentives are a win for everyone—families, farmers and local businesses. There is no downside. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 8:03:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Redfeather	Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Da Bux Program is a bright spot in our desire to increase the nutrition of people who are struggling to make ends meet, especially at the dinner table. The Program rewards both those in need and our local farmers, large and small. I hope this Program can continue.

Mahalo for your consideration and support of HB 1248 HD1

Nancy Redfeather - Director Ka Ohana O Na Pua

The Waianae Store
85-863 Farrington Hwy., Waianae HI 96792
T(808)696-3131 / F(808)696-7411



Nanakuli Super
87-2090 Farrington Hwy., Waianae HI 96792
T(808)668-2055 / F(808)668-2223

February 21, 2023

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

From: Kit Okimoto
CFO
Okimoto Corporation dba Waianae Store, Nanakuli Super and Friendly Market Center

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1248, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

I am in strong support of bill HB1248 and the appropriation of funds for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program, otherwise known as DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, or DA BUX.

DA BUX benefits the state's food system through three different ways. First, DA BUX offers discounts on Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables to low-income recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, allowing them to purchase more, healthy food. Second, DA BUX helps farmers increase their customer base and compete with imported produce. And third, DA BUX supports the local economy, generating increased revenue for 57 participating food retailers across 100+ statewide locations.

DA BUX has proven to be beneficial for Hawai'i's economy. According to a study conducted by Colorado State University, each program dollar used to incentivize local produce contributes \$2.10 to Hawai'i's economy. Additionally, if DA BUX was further scaled to food retail locations statewide, the potential economic contribution would be \$14-\$22 million in one year.

Furthermore, a \$3 million State investment will serve as significant match funds needed to unlock federal grant dollars from the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). As the GusNIP only accepts proposals that have secured 100% non-federal matching funds, a State investment will strengthen the program's FY '23 application.

State investment is critical to the long-term sustainability of DA BUX and its ability to provide positive, lasting impact both for the economy and the well-being of individuals across the state.

Sincerely,

Kit Okimoto
CFO, Okimoto Corporation



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 1248, HD1 - Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
February 23, 2023, 11:30 AM

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 1248, HD1**. This bill appropriates funds to DOA for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program ("DA BUX") and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

Investing DA BUX is investing in our keiki, as more than 60% of SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) participants in Hawai'i are in families with children,¹ and the program has been shown to increase the fruit and vegetable consumption of its participants.²

Especially with high inflation and the most expensive groceries in the nation,³ it is nearly impossible for the low-income families in Hawai'i who qualify for SNAP to afford to buy healthy food, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

That's where DA BUX comes in. It is designed to help low-income families afford fresh produce, by doubling the value of their SNAP benefits when they purchase Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables.

DA BUX truly is a triple-win for our state. First, it helps families afford fresh produce, which benefits their health and well-being.⁴ Second, it helps local farmers by increasing their sales. And third, it helps our local food stores and markets by bringing more dollars to them and keeping those dollars in the local economy.

SNAP shoppers' local produce purchases at DA BUX grocery stores nearly tripled in January 2022 compared to 2019, and at DA BUX farm direct retailers those sales were more than five times larger.⁵ In addition, every \$1 spent on DA BUX is estimated to create \$2.30 in local economic activity.⁶

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

Thank you,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_hawaii.pdf

² <https://dabux.org/for-advocates>

³ <https://meric.mo.gov/data/cost-living-data-series>

⁴ <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/vegetables-and-fruits/>

⁵ <https://dabux.org/for-advocates>

⁶ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oU3wNy7IKmJ4ITLEgR6Td-o1_DscDPzX/view



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 23, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1248, HD1
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INCENTIVES

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
11:30 AM

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 1248, HD1, which appropriates funds to DOA for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

SNAP offers nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and families, increasing their food purchasing power and improving their nutrition. SNAP also provides economic benefits to farmers participating at farmers' markets, roadside stands, CSA programs, grocery stores, and other food retailers.

Some of HFB's farmers' markets participate or have participated in the SNAP program. We believe that access to locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein to low-income individuals and families provides benefits to both SNAP participants and Hawai'i farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

February 21, 2023

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

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST
ALBRECHT

From: Kristin Frost Albrecht
Executive Director, The Food Basket, Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

Chelsea Takahashi
Healthy Food Access Initiatives Director, The Food Basket, Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

ANN EBESUNO
BOARD CHAIR

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Support of HB1248 HD1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

MARK
KRZYZANOWSKI
VICE-CHAIR

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Vice Chair Kitagawa,

DENNIS LIN
TREASURER

We are in strong support of HB1248 HD1 and the appropriation of funds for the continued administration of the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, otherwise known as DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, or DA BUX.

JULIA ZEE
SECRETARY

In keeping with The Food Basket's (TFB) overarching mission to "end hunger", we are the statewide administrator for DA BUX. TFB established DA BUX as a statewide program upon receiving a \$985 K federal grant through the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). Additionally, we secured the 100% non-federal matching funds that GusNIP requires. We scaled the program in 2021 after receiving two additional GusNIP awards totaling \$7.6 MM in federal dollars. Today, TFB administers DA BUX at 57 food retailers across 100+ locations statewide, including grocery stores, farmers markets and food hubs. DA BUX partner retailers continue to offer 50% discounts on Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables solely to low-income customers paying with SNAP food dollars (formerly known as food stamps).

STEPHEN UEDA

WARREN LEE

SAMANTHA
COLLINS

Philanthropy has largely carried the weight of our GusNIP match needs over the years; however, we cannot expect philanthropy to meet this need over the long term. We are humbly requesting the State to invest \$3 MM per year in DA BUX to support program sustainability and continuous affordable healthy food access to SNAP recipients.

WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG

Administration and East Hawai'i Warehouse
40 Holomua Street, Hilo, HI 96720
808-933-6030 Phone | 808-934-0701 Fax

West Hawai'i Warehouse
73-4161 Ulu Wini Place, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
808-322-1418 Phone | 808-322-7373 Fax



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

Furthermore, a State commitment will be leveraged in our FY '23 GusNIP application to unlock \$3MM in federal funds to meet the grant's requirement of a 100% non-federal match.

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

While a wide range of financial support and programs were available during the pandemic, Hawai'i's low-income residents are perhaps now more in dire need of this support as pandemic relief wanes and inflation rates have soared above historical averages. Sustained high participation in SNAP above pre-pandemic levels and climbing food insecurity in Hawai'i are indicative of the widespread economic hardship residents continue to face. The Food Basket remains steadfast in our commitment to ensuring DA BUX savings for local fruits and vegetables will be continuously available for these households.

KRISTIN FROST
ALBRECHT

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

ANN EBESUNO
BOARD CHAIR

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

MARK
KRZYZANOWSKI
VICE-CHAIR

DENNIS LIN
TREASURER

JULIA ZEE
SECRETARY

STEPHEN UEDA

WARREN LEE

SAMANTHA
COLLINS

Kristin Frost Albrecht
Executive Director

Chelsea Takahashi
Healthy Food Access Initiatives Director

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West Hawai'i Warehouse
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808-322-1418 Phone | 808-322-7373 Fax

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:12:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hawai`i SEED supports HB1248, HD1 Funding for "Da Bux"

It would be mutually beneficial to help people afford healthy nutrition. Appropriating funds to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) for the continued administration of the Hawai`i healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program is a positive step for our community.

Mahalo,

Jeri Di Pietro, President



February 22, 2023

Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

RE: Testimony in support of HB 1248, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I **support HB 1248**, which would appropriate funds to Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, where one in six residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. SNAP is one of our most important anti-hunger programs, offering choice and healthy options for families who need extra support putting food on the table. We strongly support DA BUX, which doubles the purchasing power of SNAP when it is used for locally produced food.

- **DA BUX increases consumer purchasing power.** Locally grown produce is often more expensive than imported items. DA BUX stretches dollars farther and makes it possible for more people to choose local.
- **DA BUX advances nutrition, health and well-being.** Healthy food can also be more expensive, and we consistently hear requests for more produce and healthy proteins from our distribution partners and the people we serve. DA BUX makes these desired, healthier food items more affordable.
- **DA BUX invests in farmers and statewide food security.** With an estimated 85%-90% of our food imported, programs that support Hawai'i farmers are important to us all. The Hawai'i Foodbank regularly purchases from local farmers, and programs that invest in local production capacity help us better support those we serve.

The Hawai'i Foodbank gathers donated, rescued, and purchased food and distribute it to those in need through our network of more than 200 agency partners. We also advocate for policies and programs that end hunger, and we strongly support DA BUX as a critical food security effort that advances the health and well-being of the people we serve.

Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Miller Marvin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank

Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 11:30 AM
Via Video Conference; Conference Room 308

House Committee on Finance

To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB 1248, HD1
Relating To The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

HPH writes in SUPPORT of HB 1248, HD1 which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program, and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

HPH recognizes the strong connection between access to healthy foods with health and wellness. Adults who eat a healthy diet live longer and have a lower risk of obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers. Healthy eating can help people with chronic diseases manage these conditions and avoid complications. However, many low income families continue to struggle to put food on the table.

HPH has supported the Double Up food bucks program since 2019 to both foster strengthening local food systems and allow SNAP recipients to access good nutrition. The program has been successful in encouraging SNAP recipients to make healthy food choices. Fresh fruits and vegetables are an integral part of a healthy diet and central to the prevention of obesity and chronic disease. While every community should have access to fresh and healthy dietary options, the high cost of fresh produce often makes that difficult. This challenge is felt acutely by participants in the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program, a low-income population that struggles to afford healthy food. The double up food bucks program is a viable model that supports local farmers, helps low-income families that receive double the purchasing power for healthy, Hawaii-grown produce, and benefits Hawaii by keeping dollars in the local economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



WAI'ANAE COMMUNITY RE-DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MA'O Organic Farms @ Puhawai and @ Palikea
PO BOX 441, Wai'anae, Hawai'i 96792, TEL/FAX: 808-696-5569
www.maoorganicfarms.org

February 22, 2023

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of HB1248, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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

MA'O Organic Farms is a social enterprise in Wai'anae, O'ahu committed to building a future of mā'ona, of plenty, by connecting youth and land through the daily practice of aloha 'āina, empowering youth to succeed in college and secure sustaining careers, and growing organic produce that yields individual and communal vitality.

We are writing to voice our strong support of HB1248 and the appropriation of funds for the continued administration of the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, otherwise known as DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, or DA BUX.

DA BUX benefits the state's food system in ways already.

- DA BUX offers a 50% discount on Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables to low-income recipients of the SNAP program (formerly known as food stamps), allowing them to purchase more, healthy food.
- DA BUX helps farmers increase their customer base and compete with imported produce; and,
- DA BUX supports the local economy, generating increased revenue for the participating food retailers across 100+ statewide locations.

A \$3 million investment by our State will serve as significant match funds to unlock federal grant dollars from the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). As the GusNIP only accepts proposals that secure 100% non-federal matching funds, a State investment will strengthen the program's FY '23 GusNIP application. State investment is critical to the long-term sustainability of DA BUX and its ability to provide positive, lasting impact both for the economy and the well-being of individuals across the state.

In 2022, MA'O grew nearly 360,000lbs of certified organic fruits and vegetables, which we distributed to markets, grocers, restaurants, and institutions across O'ahu. Within that context of growth, the growing of healthy soil and the growing of healthy people, we have trebled the availability of healthy food for our community through programs such as Double Up Food Bucks (DA BUX). We have recognized increased distribution and sales through our farmers market channels. In particular, our outlet at the Wai'anae Farmers Market continues to provide a venue for EBT patrons who need healthier options to fresh, organic and healthy fruits and vegetables.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our **Support of HB1248!**

Aloha for now,

Kukui Maunakea-Forth, Executive Director

WCRC-MA'O Organic Farms

J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth



February 21, 2023

Testimony in Support of HB1248, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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

We are writing to voice our strong support of HB1248 and the appropriation of funds for the continued administration of the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, otherwise known as DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, or DA BUX.

The Hawaii Good Food Alliance (HGFA) is a 501(c)(3) corporation formed by a statewide collaboration of organizations that are engaged in the production and distribution of food with the goal of rebuilding thriving community food systems. HGFA is a cross-sector network of food producers, food hubs, food banks, farmers markets, and healthcare providers from each major Hawaiian island. Our mission is that we join together—with a sense of urgency—to raise community voice and support one another in the belief that each and every person in Hawai'i can share in healthy, locally produced food.

DA BUX benefits the state's food system through three different ways. First, DA BUX offers a 50% discount on Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables to low-income recipients of the SNAP program (formerly known as food stamps), allowing them to purchase more, healthy food. Second, DA BUX helps farmers increase their customer base and compete with imported produce. And third, DA BUX supports the local economy, generating increased revenue for the participating food retailers across 100+ statewide locations. Several of our member organizations offer DA BUX through their retail operations, allowing them to offer affordable local produce to all of their SNAP customers.

A \$3 million State investment will serve as significant match funds needed to unlock federal grant dollars from the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). As the GusNIP only accepts proposals that secure 100% non-federal matching funds, a State investment will strengthen the program's FY '23 GusNIP application. State investment is critical to the long-term sustainability of DA BUX and its ability to provide positive, lasting impact both for the economy and the well-being of individuals across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harmonee", written in a cursive style.

Executive Director, Hawai'i Good Food Alliance
harmonee@hawaiigoodfoodalliance.org, 808-646-1314



To: The House Committee on Finance (FIN)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Thursday, February 23, 2023, 11:30 am

In strong support of HB1248 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 HB1248 HD1.**

The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh local produce. HB1248 HD1 will help low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

Supporting this successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families and our local economy, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping produce in.

Please pass HB1248 HD1 so that we can reap all these benefits!

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this very important bill.
Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



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

Executive Officers

Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Chair*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Vice Chair*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
John Schilf, Rainbow Sales and Marketing, *Advisor*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Charlie Gustafson, Tamura Super Market, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Finance

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Thursday, February 23, 2023
TIME: 11:30am
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: SB1248 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Position: Support

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

The Double Up Food Bucks program is important as a means to combat food insecurity, support healthy eating, and as a way to support Hawaii's agricultural sector. During the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, food insecurity in our state soared to unprecedented levels, at the same time the local agricultural sector suffered disproportionate economic losses. The Double Up Food Bucks program has been a vital tool to increase the produce buying power of Hawaii consumers who use the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and helps grow our local agricultural sector. Continuing to fund this important program will ensure that the many benefits continue.

Fruits, vegetables, and healthy proteins tend to be more expensive per calorie than less healthy foods, which makes eating healthy a challenge for those with limited food budgets. Doubling the purchasing power for SNAP users makes it easier to choose fruits, vegetables, and healthy proteins when shopping. Data has shown that families use the Double Up Food Bucks Program eat more fruits and vegetables, a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, and fewer unhealthy foods. Getting more fruits and vegetables for each SNAP dollar also means that low-income families will have more in their budget to spend on things like housing and healthcare.

By prioritizing locally grown agricultural products this program also helps Hawaii farmers and encourages retailers to stock Hawaii grown produce and protein. This helps promote a resilient food economy where local farmers are selling to local stores that sell to local customers.

Each dollar spent in this program goes into Hawaii's agricultural sector and circulates from there into the larger local economy. This is a win for SNAP users, a win for Hawaii farmers, a win for Hawaii retailers, and a win for Hawaii's economy.

We urge you to vote yes on this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



House Committee on Finance

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB1248 HD1

Thursday, February 23, 2023 11:30 a.m. Conference Room 308

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

HAPA strongly supports HB1248 HD1 appropriates funds to DOA for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

The Da Bux program partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders. Through DA BUX, SNAP benefit dollars are doubled when they're spent on qualifying local food items at more than 70 participating retail locations statewide. Those items tend to be healthier produce and fresh foods and being locally sourced directly supports Hawai'i's food economy.

Even before the pandemic DA BUX program was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways including:

- It's putting more food on the tables of local families in need.
- It's providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- It's strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- It's improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.

The DA BUX program works and should be continued and expanded upon where possible. The program is a tangible solution to supporting local food production and helping families have access to quality fresh food.

Please support HB1248 HD1.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:53:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leanne Kami	Kohana Family Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

IN STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha kākou, my name is Leanne Kami. I work in Hilo as a strategy consultant for Kamehameha Schools, focused on sustainable food system development in Hawai'i. I also own and manage Kohana Family Farms, a small organic farm in Pana'ewa. I am writing this letter as a farmer and member of the Hawai'i Farmers Union United and the Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation.

I strongly support HB1248, which appropriates funds to DOA for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

The Double Up Food Bucks program administered under the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program is an important tool to leverage federal funding by doubling the value of federal SNAP benefits spent at participating farmers' markets and grocery stores. Investing in programs like Double Up Food Bucks creates a ripple effect of benefits. Low-income families bring home more healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

Promoting the consumption of local produce also has a ripple effect on the health of our low-income communities, which are most susceptible to diet-related health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Fruits and vegetables begin to lose their nutrients 24 hours after harvest. Local produce is fresher and picked closer to ripeness when nutrient levels are at their peak.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Mahalo,
Leanne Kami
Kohana Family Farms
Leanneokamoto@hotmail.com

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:20:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Galase	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports this measure.



Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023
11:30 p. m.

State Capitol Conference Room 308 and via videoconference

Re: HB 1248 HD 1 RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I am Gary Simon, a member of the board of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition, whose mission is to improve the quality of life of those who give and receive care by increasing community awareness of caregiver issues through continuing advocacy, education, and training.

The Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition (HFCC) strongly supports HB 1248 HD 1, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

HFCC is deeply appreciative of this effort to provide nutrition to the food insecure.

We urge you to support HB 1248 HD 1, and we urge you to recommend its passage.

We thank you for seriously considering the bill.

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Simon".

Gary Simon



Email gsimon@aarp.org



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 23, 2023 11:30 AM Conference Room 308

In **SUPPORT** of **HB1248 HD1**:

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB1248 HD1**, which would help to bolster local farmers and our islands' food security and self-sufficiency, while also providing access to healthy local produce and protein for local families.

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i supports efforts to keep food sustainability strong and thriving, as well as making locally-grown produce accessible for all of Hawai'i's residents. Act 153, SLH 2019, established the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, to be implemented by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. The "double bucks" for Hawai'i-grown produce incentivizes SNAP participants to purchase nutritious fruits and vegetables – which in turn helps local farmers and our agricultural economy, improves local families' health, and supports greater local food production into the future.

Continuing the successful SNAP double bucks program via HB1248 HD1 will help ensure that some of our islands' hardest working families can continue to purchase healthy fruits, vegetables, and proteins, and encourage sustainable agricultural practices by Hawai'i's local farms and loko i'a.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of HB1248 HD1**.



You're Someone Special

February 22, 2023

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

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Support of HB 1248, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

I am in strong support of bill HB1248 and the appropriation of funds for the continued administration of the Hawai'i healthy food incentive program, otherwise known as DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, or DA BUX.

DA BUX benefits the state's food system through three different ways. First, DA BUX offers discounts on Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables to low-income recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, allowing them to purchase more, healthy food. Second, DA BUX helps farmers increase their customer base and compete with imported produce. And third, DA BUX supports the local economy, generating increased revenue for 57 participating food retailers across 100+ statewide locations.

Since launching DA BUX in Sept 2017, KTA has seen transactions associated with the DA BUX program more than quadruple at our seven store locations. We see this as a positive sign that DA BUX is motivating families to purchase and consume more healthy fruits and vegetables and that this increased demand will drive increases in agricultural production for the state.

DA BUX has proven to be beneficial for Hawai'i's economy. According to a study conducted by Colorado State University, each program dollar used to incentivize the purchase of local produce contributes \$2.10 to Hawai'i's economy. Additionally, if DA BUX was further scaled to food retail locations statewide, the potential economic contribution would be \$14-\$22 million in one year.

Furthermore, a \$3 million State investment will serve as significant match funds needed to unlock federal grant dollars from the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). As the GusNIP only accepts proposals that secure 100% non-federal matching funds, a State investment will strengthen the program's FY '23 GusNIP application.

State investment is critical to the long-term sustainability of DA BUX and its ability to provide positive, lasting impact both economically and for the well-being of individuals across the state.

Sincerely,

Richard Chinen
KTA Super Stores
Vice-President

PHONE: (808) 959-4575
50 EAST PUAINAKO STREET, HILO, HAWAII 96720

WWW.KTASUPERSTORES.COM



February 22, 2023

HB1248 HD1

Title: Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

The **Pioneering Healthier Communities Initiative** brings together local, diverse leaders to discuss and support strategies, policies and programs that we can accomplish together to build healthier communities in our island home. The members of PHC Honolulu are involved in supporting efforts that enable children and families to become healthier through schools, afterschool programs, healthcare and more.

We strongly support HB1248 HD1.

The DA BUX program has been extremely successful in increasing access to fresh, healthy produce for food insecure families. This bill will provide \$3M in funding to support families, local farmers, and our economy.

Helps Families Eat Healthy

- Food insecurity has soared with the onset of COVID-19 pandemic.
- This program helps SNAP recipients buy more fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling their purchasing power.

Helps Local Farmers and Businesses – numbers are from dabux.org site

- DA BUX supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors.
- Local produce sales increased 531% at Farm Direct Retailers.
- Helps to grow our local food supply and put more money into our economy.
- The general sentiment from recipient interviews was that DA BUX is giving farmers the opportunity to feed local residents (rather than exporting products to the mainland) and increases production toward a self-sufficient local food supply for the state.

Helps Hawai'i's Economy

- SNAP Benefits are shown to have a large multiplier effect. For every dollar that is spent by a SNAP recipient, an additional \$0.79 moves throughout the economy.
- Farmers use that money to pay workers or buy other goods and services, continuing the benefit of SNAP dollars down the line.
- A \$3M dollar investment in Double Up Bucks would result in over \$9.9M in economic activity.

Opportunity for Federal Match

- If Hawai'i allocates \$3M for the DA BUX program, it could apply for an additional \$3M in federal matching funds, totaling \$6M.

Thank you very much for allowing us to testify.

May Okihiro

Daniel Leung

Paula Adams

Joy Barua

Stacy Evensen

Daniela Spoto

Ray L'Heureux

Jennifer Dang

Diane Tabangay

John Mai

Tina Tamai

Michael Libertini

Greg Weibel

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 2:59:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Of course this must be supported, passed for our fellow human beings.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 3:21:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support healthy food choices by continuing the Da Bux program. As a nurse, I see the impact processed foods can have on health, leading to chronic disease and illness. These chronic diseases negatively impact lives and put strain on our limited resources in the islands. I support DA BUX!!

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 3:35:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HD1. Thank you.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 3:47:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle K.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am **strongly supportive** of this bill because many low income folks will continue to benefit when the DA BUX program is sustain to feed them while at the same time, encouraging healthy eating from consumption of fruits and veggies. In addition, local businesses including 470 farm producers and 8 distributors also benefit from this program. Please do the right thing by providing the \$3M in funding because this program is a win-win for everyone participating. Thank you for your kind consideration!

Mahalo,
Michelle K.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 4:23:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Molina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Finance Committee,

Please support this program with funding. Da Bux, is a wonderful program that benefits both our local families and our local farmers. An investment of this nature provides for the short-term needs of addressing food insecurity today but also has the potential to support a more robust local food system and support local farmers to make a living in Hawai'i for the long term. Food is important for everyone, everyone has to eat. Reducing food insecurity means our students don't go to school hungry and that the opportunities are provided to them that encourage healthier choices. Please support this bill. We need to make serious investments in local food production for our keiki, for the community, and to ensure that Hawai'i remains both vibrant and resilient now and in the long term. Mahalo for your time.

Malama Pono,

Chris Molina

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 4:26:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha House Members,

Please support HB 1248. This measure makes Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders. This measure helps our local growers and local residents that are in need of nutritious local food.

Mahalo,

Pamela Burrell, Kalihiwai, Kaua'i

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 5:02:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa Powell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I have been a part of Da Bux program for a couple years now and eat a lot more produce than I have in the past. It's great to know that I am also supporting local farmers and it really helps the budget to get a discount because local food is not necessarily cheap. Even though it does not have to be trucked across the country or shipped here it costs more for land here and the supplies needed for farming. Taxes cost more and the food produced costs more so it very helpful to have a program that subsidizes both the farmer and the consumer. I also receive a bi-weekly CSA box from the Food Basket. That is also discounted because of my DA BUX card. I have learned to eat different vegetables that I had not been exposed to before. I feel healthier and happier knowing that the food I am eating was grown on the island I live on. It's also very important that I am supporting local farmers as well. It's a win win situation. Without DA BUX I probably would not be able to afford to eat local produce or be able to get a regular supply like the CSA box that I can count on and afford. Please help continue this program. I am sure there are others that need this program greatly and it would be a shame not to keep it going. So much would be lost in helping our local economy and local health. Please keep DA BUX going so we can have continued access to affordable local produce!

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:10:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harald Ebeling	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support of HB1248 which I consider such an obvious political, public-health, economic, and ethical slam dunk that I have trouble believing that anyone could conceivably be opposed. Let's support our local farmers, let's make healthy food affordable to those in need, let's make good use of those federal matching grants.

Please support DA BUX.

Mahalo,

Harald

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 6:21:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

DA BUX program is an excellent program. Please give your support to HB1248 HD1.until it passes..

DA BUX program partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders. Through DA BUX, SNAP benefit dollars are doubled when they're spent on qualifying local food items at more than [70 participating retail locations statewide](#). Those items tend to be healthier produce and fresh foods and being locally sourced directly supports Hawai'i's food economy.

Even before the pandemic, DA BUX program was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways including:

- Putting more food on the tables of local families in need
- Providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food
- Strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands
- Improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods

DA BUX program works and should be continued and expanded upon where possible. The program is a tangible solution to supporting local food production and helping families access quality fresh food.

Please support HB1248 HD1.

Mahalo,

Mary Lu Kelley

Lawai, Kauai

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:23:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

DA BUX program partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders. Through DA BUX, SNAP benefit dollars are doubled when they're spent on qualifying local food items at more than [70 participating retail locations statewide](#). Those items tend to be healthier produce and fresh foods and being locally sourced directly supports Hawai'i's food economy.

Even before the pandemic, DA BUX program was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways including:

- Putting more food on the tables of local families in need
- Providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food
- Strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands
- Improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods

DA BUX program works and should be continued and expanded upon where possible. The program is a tangible solution to supporting local food production and helping families access quality fresh food.

Please support HB1248 HD1.

Mahalo,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 7:33:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Da Bux is good for Hawai'i's families, farmers, and the local economy, I have been a supporter of da bux program for a few years and it is beneficial for myself and my ohana.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 8:39:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

The Dabux program has benefitted me greatly as a single mother, little income to work with and as a vegetarian, health and wellness focused individual.

i need an abundance of Whole Foods, and it's has a wonderful variety of local produce. This makes up the majority of mine and my childrens diet. To eat as local as possible also is amazing for our health. Healthy snacks being fruits! And Avos, and other food from the Aina, less processed the better!

i love knowing I can get 50 percent off meaning I can double the amount of the most important healthy food from kta with dabux.

please continue this, I believe it may also help to eliminate waste, and it supports the local farmers who are making their living through this agricultural business.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 9:37:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marisa Murray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My keiki and I have benefited greatly from the da bux program. We love to support local but it can be difficult when trying to stick to a budget. KTA has always supported and invested in local farming. Thanks to them and the da bux program we hunt for local first!

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:15:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support!

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:26:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai‘i Healthy Food Incentive Program—DA BUX double up food bucks program—first started with a pilot program in 2012 through Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services on O‘ahu and The Kohala Center on Hawai‘i island. The program provides a dollar-for-dollar match to supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiaries who purchase locally grown fruits, vegetables, and proteins at participating farmers’ markets, grocery stores, and community-supported agriculture projects.

By the end of 2021, the pilot program was available at 57 food retailers across 98 market sites and pick-up locations that include grocery stores, farmers markets, community supported agriculture programs, and other farm direct retailers. From 2020–2021, DA BUX supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors.

Each dollar reimbursed to participating DA BUX food retailers for their issued discounts on local produce has an economic multiplier of 2.1 times. This means that each program dollar issued for local produce incentives contributes \$2.10 to Hawai‘i’s economy. A \$3,000,000 investment by the state in this program would allow for a federal funding match that will contribute at least \$12,600,000 to our local economy annually.

This is a triple win for the state because it supports families, farmers, and the local economy. Please support HB1248 HD1!

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:59:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allison Shiozaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello and aloha to everyone.

I am writing as a citizen who supports Da Bux program and hope it will continued to be supported and ideally, expanded. Here in Hilo I have been a CSA member for Da Box which I believe works in conjunction with programs like this. Supporting local food systems is essential here, and the rising cost of food has had and continues to have a huge impact. Being better able to buy fresh produce and products like local poi is money well spent and I feel is the highest form of reasons to pay taxes. It's unfortunate that food is taxed here, adding another cost on already expensive groceries. I really believe that the Da Bux program is helping support a better, fresher more localized food system, that supports health, local agriculture & making culturally important foods like poi more accesible & enjoyed by more. Thank you.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:04:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deb Marois	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

As an individual and long-time consultant in the public health sector, I am writing to urge strong support for the DA BUX program. DA BUX partners with food retailers across the state to make Hawai‘i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for low-income recipients of federal food benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This program is a “triple win” for Hawai‘i: Low-income SNAP households are able to afford more healthy local produce; local farmers increase their sales to food retailers; and more federal SNAP dollars stay circulating in our state’s economy. Continued funding is needed to support this important program.

Each dollar reimbursed to participating DA BUX food retailers for their issued discounts on local produce has an economic multiplier of 2.1. This means each program dollar issued for local produce incentives contributes \$2.10 to Hawai‘i’s economy. Additionally, if DA BUX was further scaled to food retail locations statewide, the potential economic contribution would be \$14-\$22 million in one year. (reference: Dawn Thilmany et al., “The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives” (Fair Food Network, January 2021), <https://fairfoodnetwork.org/from-the-field/incentives-impact/>).

According to the Da Bux Outcomes report, this program not only gives families in need more buying power, it also has positively impacted the consumption of fruits and vegetables, helps educate keiki about nutrition and healthy eating and is an important component to addressing food insecurity statewide. Farmers also are able to feed local residents (rather than exporting product to the mainland) and increase production towards a self-sufficient local food supply for the state.

(https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bca7bc67eb88c2e986a5203/t/62f6dc8f8e3f8d1a809e2e9a/1660345536073/2020-2021_Outcomes_Report_0.9.8.pdf)

Mahalo for your consideration,

Deb Marois, Makawao

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:39:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Cwynar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As inflation and scarcity continue to drive food prices, it is more imperative now than ever to continue this program. Supporting local farms while simultaneously promoting healthier food choices by making them more affordable for low income residents is common sense.

Food security should be a huge focus on our islands and this is one of few programs that actually work to benefit the farmer, the consumer and downstream the healthcare system. Please continue this program and make it a model for other states to follow! Access to locally sourced, nutritious food should not be out of reach, especially for low income persons.

Lizzy and Ohana,

Ka'u District

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:24:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support HB1248 and the goal of ensuring that the people of Hawaii, through programs such as DaBux, have access to fresh fruits and vegetables so they can heal their chronic health issues and obesity that plaques so many. When people are able to properly nourish and support their bodies, through the eating of nutritious and affordable food, then their lives will benefit in all areas. I have been using the DaBux reduced cost program at my local KTA and save at least \$10-15 a shopping trip. The bulk of my grocery shopping takes place in the produce section as I shop to heal my body from several chronic health issues. The cost of non-nutritious and empty calorie foods should not be more affordable than the very "alive and nutritious" foods our bodies actually need to function and heal. The economic impact upon our farmers, when we as a state are supporting them, is also an impact of this bill. Our farmers should be supported as they choose to literally feed the people of Hawaii using their knowledge and backbone to produce the foods that will heal and benefit our people. This bill, when passed, can continue to help people, like myself, choose and be able to afford to eat the foods that will allow me to heal from the chronic health issues I have. Food is life and being able to support our bodies with the proper foods impacts not only our neighbors and family now, but also support our future generations to live strong healthy lives. I thank KTA and their commitment along with other stores that understand the importance of allowing their shoppers the benefits of lower costs on the foods they need to be eating. Thank you for providing me this time to share.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:51:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ariana Datta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee:

I strongly supports HB1248. This bill would appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, locally called DA BUX.

By providing matching funds to beneficiaries of SNAP, this program helps stretch their food budgets further, allowing them to purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and other healthy options. The result is a healthier, more sustainable diet for those who need it most, and a reduced burden on the healthcare system. In addition, the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program supports local farmers and the state's agriculture industry, creating a virtuous cycle of economic and health benefits. We strongly urge the legislature to support this bill and provide continued funding for this important program.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ariana Datta

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 7:57:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adriann Gin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and the rest of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems,

I am testifying in support of HB 1248. [DA BUX](#) provides a dollar-for-dollar match on fresh, locally-grown produce for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants. This program is a “triple win” for Hawai‘i: making healthy food more accessible for families in need, supporting agriculture and farmers, and keeping money within the local economy. Continued funding is needed to support this important program, and I list them below.

Helps Families Eat Healthy

- A survey conducted among DA BUX participants (n=436) revealed that 59% of participants are food insecure (dabux.org).
- This program helps SNAP recipients buy more fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling their purchasing power.

Helps Local Farmers and Businesses – numbers are from dabux.org site

- DA BUX supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors.
- Local produce sales increased 531% at Farm Direct Retailers.
- Helps to grow our local food supply and put more money into our economy.
- The general sentiment from recipient interviews was that DA BUX is giving farmers the opportunity to feed local residents (rather than exporting products to the mainland) and increases production toward a self-sufficient local food supply for the state.

Helps Hawai‘i’s Economy

- SNAP Benefits are shown to have a large multiplier effect. For every dollar that is spent by a SNAP recipient, an additional \$0.79 moves throughout the economy.
- Farmers use that money to pay workers or buy other goods and services, continuing the benefit of SNAP dollars down the line.
- A \$3M dollar investment in Double Up Bucks would result in over \$9.9M in economic activity.

Opportunity for Federal Match

- If Hawai'i allocates \$3M for the DA BUX program, it could apply for an additional \$3M in federal matching funds, totaling \$6M.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Adrainn Gin (Honolulu, Hawaii, 96821)

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:20:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hello,

Too many families in Hawai‘i are facing food insecurity, our farmers struggle to access affordable land and water, and climate change poses threats to our local food production. However, a more resilient food system can address these various challenges but only if we take a coordinated approach.

We can meet our goals of increasing local food production while also diversifying our local economy. Because our food system is so broad and complex, a plan will be needed to identify how the various sectors of our food system can work together to increase local food security.

A coordinated food systems plan led by key stakeholders across our food system can help connect the dots between local food producers, consumers, state institutional purchasing, and community anti-hunger efforts. This work is critical to identifying and advancing solutions to our reliance on imports and creating a sustainable and equitable food economy.

Please support HB308 HD1 to create a sustainable food systems working plan for Hawai‘i.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō‘ili‘ili

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Labor and Government Operations

February 3, 2023 at 1130hrs

By

Roxann Rowe, APRN-Rx, GNP-BC

HB1248 RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in very strong support of this bill HB1248. I am an Advance Practice Registered Nurse with a Certification in Gerontological Advance Practice and greatly appreciate this Committee's support of HB1248. The bulk of my patients are elderly and many of them live below the poverty level. In Hawaii, the majority of older adults receive Social Security benefits. This is often not sufficient to meet basic needs and they must rely on other sources of income including SNAP. The cost of living in Hawaii precludes many older adults from being able to purchase a variety of healthy foods. DA BUX program provides an excellent way to improve nutrition, support local vendors, and help Hawaii's economy.

Helps Families Eat Healthy

- A survey conducted among DA BUX participants (n=436) revealed that 59% of participants are food insecure (dabux.org).
- This program helps SNAP recipients buy more fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling their purchasing power.

Helps Local Farmers and Businesses – numbers are from dabux.org site

- DA BUX supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors.
- Local produce sales increased 531% at Farm Direct Retailers.
- Helps to grow our local food supply and put more money into our economy.
- The general sentiment from recipient interviews was that DA BUX is giving farmers the opportunity to feed local residents (rather than exporting products to the mainland) and increases production toward a self-sufficient local food supply for the state.

Helps Hawai'i's Economy

- SNAP Benefits are shown to have a large multiplier effect. For every dollar that is spent by a SNAP recipient, an additional \$0.79 moves throughout the economy.
- Farmers use that money to pay workers or buy other goods and services, continuing the benefit of SNAP dollars down the line.
- A \$3M dollar investment in Double Up Bucks would result in over \$9.9M in economic activity.

Opportunity for Federal Match

- If Hawai'i allocates \$3M for the DA BUX program, it could apply for an additional \$3M in federal matching funds, totaling \$6M.

I respectfully request that this Committee pass HB1248, un-amended. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 9:41:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Fox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is an exceptional opportunity to have our state funds leveraged with Federal dollars, to bring that money into the state and spent with our local food producers. Both economically and socially this is a win-win.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:13:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wen Yu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

We are a family of four living in Kailua-Kona that have been using Da Bux discounts since the beginning of 2020. It has since benefited our whole family tremendously. Before we got Da Bux benefits, I had to rely heavily on produces that were grown somewhere else and shipped in because they were usually the cheapest on the market, or I had to go one after another grocery stores to compare prices on local produces. We wanted to support local farmers, but we did not have the financial abundance to do so. Ever since we got Da Bux benefits, we have been using close to 90% local produces in our daily meals. We use it on discounted CSA programs, at Farmers Markets, as well as KTA. It not only had helped us eating more locally grown fresh food and we felt much heather and more vibrant, it also taught my two young daughters about all these beautiful local produce we had in Hawaii.

Given the high cost of living in Hawaii, Da Bux is definitely a great program in place to help people, at least us, feel connected to the land of Hawaii and feel hopeful. I cannot imagine us afford buying 90% of our daily grocery locally should this program ceased to exist. I highly support continuing this program!

Thank you for your time.

Wen

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:44:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Loren Lindborg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- 1) Da Bux helps families (59% participants are food insecure)
- 2) It helps farmers and businesses (has supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors)
- 3) It helps Hawaii's economy (a \$3 million investment would result in 9.9 million in economic act.)

**Statistics are from dabux.org*

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:45:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am completely in support of HB1248 HD1. There is no reason in the world why those who are in need of public food benefits should go without good, wholesome nutritious food, especially here in Hawaii where agriculture can be supported year round. Da Bux is a vital community service and should be amply financed.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:59:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

To:

The Honorable Representative Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

The Honorable Representative Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

From:

Dana Keawe

P.O. Box 492316 Kea'au, HI 96749

I am in strong support of bills HB1248 HB 1248, HD1(HSCR552) and the funding of DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, otherwise known as DA BUX.

DA BUX provides my family with an affordable and accessible option to purchase local, fresh fruits and vegetables. I use DA BUX every month and this usually saves me hundreds of dollars every year since 2020 when I signed up. The savings DA BUX offers leaves more money to spend on other household costs such as rent and gas. With food costs in Hawai'i 91% higher than the national average, DA BUX is a crucial supplement to my family's budget and provides reassurance knowing we can purchase twice as much produce than we normally would be able to.

This bill will continue to help families like mine purchase more Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables and support not only our local retailers and farmers but support my family's healthy lifestyle.

Sincerely,

Dana Keawe

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:15:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariana Monasi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Disclosure-

I am a legislative aide for Representative Kapela, and I'm submitting testimony as an individual citizen.

I am in strong support of this bill. I completed my graduate thesis on the affordability and accessibility of fresh locally grown produce, for people that use EBT. The fact is, food is extremely expensive and produce with short shelf life is extremely expensive, and with more than 90% of food being imported, it is a crucial time to invest into local agriculture and help our under resourced residents access healthy produce.

Expanding funding programs like dabux, through farmers markets, nonprofits like Roots Cafe or businesses like Farmlink allow local residents in need to access produce that they could otherwise not afford to buy, especially when it's locally grown.

helping families buy fresh produce at lower point prices, is also an investment in the future for both residents and the state's economy. When people eat more fresh produce and less processed food, chronic illnesses drop, which improves the quality of life for under resourced families and reduces the state's DOH expenditures, by reducing treatment needs for things like diabetes, dialysis, heart disease, etc.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 8:04:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suzanne Fields	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Supporting this measure SHOULD BE A NO BRAINER!!!! There are SO MANY reasons why this is a CRITICAL need for many in our community and here is why:

Helps Families Eat Healthy

- A survey conducted among DA BUX participants (n=436) revealed that 59% of participants are food insecure (dabux.org).
- This program helps SNAP recipients buy more fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling their purchasing power.

Helps Local Farmers and Businesses – numbers are from dabux.org site

- DA BUX supported 470 farm producers and 8 distributors.
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Helps Hawai‘i’s Economy

- SNAP Benefits are shown to have a large multiplier effect. For every dollar that is spent by a SNAP recipient, an additional \$0.79 moves throughout the economy.
- Farmers use that money to pay workers or buy other goods and services, continuing the benefit of SNAP dollars down the line.
- A \$3M dollar investment in Double Up Bucks would result in over \$9.9M in economic activity.

Opportunity for Federal Match

- If Hawai‘i allocates \$3M for the DA BUX program, it could apply for an additional \$3M in federal matching funds, totaling \$6M.

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 8:41:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Hee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

DA BUX program partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders. Through DA BUX, SNAP benefit dollars are doubled when they're spent on qualifying local food items at more than [70 participating retail locations statewide](#). Those items tend to be healthier produce and fresh foods and being locally sourced directly supports Hawai'i's food economy.

Even before the pandemic, DA BUX program was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways including:

- Putting more food on the tables of local families in need
- Providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food
- Strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands
- Improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods

DA BUX program works and should be continued and expanded upon where possible. The program is a tangible solution to supporting local food production and helping families access quality fresh food.

Please support HB1248 HD1.

Mahalo,

Marsha Hee, life-long resident of Hawaii, currently of Volcano - Hawaii Island

HB-1248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 10:00:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barryn Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We should be developing and promoting local food production, and using and increasing access to food produced by these programs, so I support this bill as part of that initiative.