

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16, 2024

RE: H.B. No. 1525
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 1525 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, commonly known as the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks Program, and to provide matching funds to beneficiaries who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; AlohaCare; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; The Food Basket; Local Food Coalition; Ulupono Initiative; Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Public Health Institute; and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that food insecurity is a challenge many residents are facing due to the rising cost of food in the State. Initiatives such as the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks Program provides a dollar-for-dollar match to Supplemental Nutrition



Assistance Program beneficiaries who purchase Hawaii-grown fruits and vegetables at participating food retailers. Therefore, it is critical that the State continue to support these food assistance initiatives that promote the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and ensure that low-income households have access to healthy foods.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

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

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2024-2025.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1525, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1525, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,



CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair



