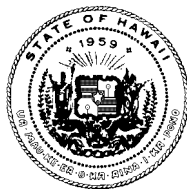


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE  
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

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 25, 2025

To: The Honorable Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 961 SD1 – RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Hearing: February 27, 2025, Time 10:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill and provides the following comments.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/2027. (SD1)

The Committee on Health and Human Services amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2027, to allow the Department of Human Services to complete the implementation of its new eligibility system for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

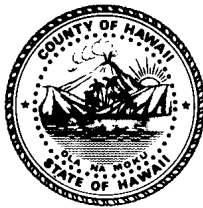
The Department has identified that the current SNAP household count is at approximately 84,000, with the number of individuals participating totaling nearly 160,000.

Individuals aged sixty (60) years of age or older comprise twenty (20) percent of the overall number of SNAP participants and are part of approximately thirty-five (35) percent of all SNAP households. More research is needed to determine the number of households that are only composed of individuals aged sixty (60) years or older and the number of households entirely composed of adults with disabilities. However, we anticipate the proposed change to the number of eligible senior households would increase the overall workload and overload the processing capacity to process benefit eligibility determination using our current eligibility system and the present workforce.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) oversees SNAP and allows states the option to extend the certification period for SNAP households aged sixty years or older from twelve (12) months to twenty-four (24) months without a waiver. However, due to limitations of our present eligibility system, certification periods cannot be extended automatically beyond the 12 months.

The Department will be implementing a new eligibility system in the fall of 2026 that will be able to support what is proposed in this measure by having the ability to implement and automate the extended 24-month certification period.

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



## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

DATE: February 25, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member  
Council District 2

SUBJECT: SB 961 SD1

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

I am writing to you in strong support of SB 961 SD1, extending certification periods for most Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, (SNAP) households, including up to 36 months for kūpuna households.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP provides essential support to families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligibility issues, resulting in recipients losing their much-needed benefits.

Extending the certification period for all recipients would reduce these barriers and ensure more people are able to maintain their SNAP benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

I kindly ask that you **pass SB 961 SD1**.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

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

Jenn Kagiwada



## **SB961 SD1SNAP Adjust Min Period and Elderly Program**

### **COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Thursday, Feb 27, 2025: 10:30: Room 211 Videoconference

### **Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SB961 SD1:**

*ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.*

By increasing access to nutritional meals, especially for the elderly, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) **plays a crucial role in supporting individuals during their recovery process** when dealing with mental health conditions and substance use disorders:

1. **Support During Recovery:** Individuals undergoing treatment for substance use disorders or mental health issues often need additional resources to stabilize their lives. SNAP provides essential support to ensure they can focus on recovery without worrying about food access.
2. **Improved Treatment Outcomes:** Studies show that food insecurity is linked to worse outcomes for people with mental health conditions. SNAP may help improve adherence to treatment plans, better medication efficacy, and greater engagement in therapy.
3. **Indirect Community Support:** SNAP also supports caregivers and families of individuals with behavioral health illnesses. When families can access healthy meals, it creates a more stable and supportive environment for everyone.
4. **Reduced Financial Stress:** Many people with behavioral health illnesses face financial instability due to employment challenges or medical costs. SNAP helps reduce food insecurity, alleviating one major source of stress, which can exacerbate mental health symptoms.

By updating eligibility systems and workforce, SNAP will improve nutrition, reduce food insecurity and provide critical support, SNAP benefits act as a foundation for better health and recovery for those managing behavioral health challenges.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for questions.



1001 Bishop Street | Suite 625 | Honolulu, HI 96813-2830  
1-866-295-7282 | Fax: 808-536-2882  
aarp.org/hi | [aarphi@aarp.org](mailto:aarphi@aarp.org) | [twitter.com/AARPHawaii](https://twitter.com/AARPHawaii)  
[facebook.com/AARPHawaii](https://facebook.com/AARPHawaii)

**The State Legislature  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, February 27, 2025  
Conference Room 211, 10:30 AM**

TO: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
FROM: Keali'i Lopez, State Director, AARP Hawai'i  
RE: Support for S.B.961, SD1 Relating to SNAP Certification and ESAP

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez, and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 135,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families. **AARP supports S.B. 961 SD1 which adjusts the minimum certification periods for SNAP benefits households and participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP).**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides essential access to healthy food for many low-income households, including older adults. Enrolling in SNAP has been shown to improve overall well-being. However, it is crucial to simplify the SNAP application process to ensure more eligible individuals can benefit from this program.

Many older adults do not enroll in SNAP due to various reasons, such as not knowing they are eligible, stigma, and confusion regarding the application process. By reducing red tape and administrative barriers, we can help eligible kupuna access SNAP more easily.

AARP supports Hawaii's participation in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP). This initiative allows states the flexibility to simplify the application process for local residents and extend certification periods, thereby reducing the frequent entry and exit from the program.

Maintaining an adequate and nutritious diet is vital for health, quality of life, and independence as we age. Making it easier for kupuna to obtain the nutrition they need will lead to a healthier community.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 961, SD1.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:37:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits. Mahalo!

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:09:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott R Ziehm	Testifying for Indivisible Hawai'i Statewide Network	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

This written testimony is in support of SB 960 to prevent families from struggling to afford groceries. Unfortunately, one in three families in Hawai'i are food insecure. Federal SNAP benefits abruptly end once a family's income reaches 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), although a family needs to make 300% of the FPL just to make ends meet. Expanding benefits to 300% of the FPL will allow families to have a gradual decline in benefits as their income rises, allowing families to earn their way out of poverty rather than being stuck in a no-win situation where they lose thousands in benefits just by earning \$1 over the income limit. Please pass this bill as a solution to end family hunger.

Scott R Ziehm, DNP, RN, NEA-BC



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, February 27, 2025; 10:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0961, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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** Senate Bill No. 0961, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

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 measure, as received by your Committee, would direct the Department of Human Services (DHS) to:

- (1) Set the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to 24 months for households in which all adult members are 60 years of age or older, and 12 months for all other households;
- (2) Participate in the SNAP Elderly Simplified Application Project to adjust the benefit periods and other requirements for recipients based on age and disability status; and
- (3) Report demographic and utilization data to the 2027 and 2027 Legislatures.

This bill would take effect on July 1, 2027.



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.

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.

While COVID-19 no longer poses the threat it did in years past, Hawaii's citizens still struggle because of stagnant wages and the rising cost of housing, food and other essentials. The lines for surplus food are still long as citizens continue to be challenged in putting food on their tables.

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.

**For these reasons, the HPCA respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this measure.**

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](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Support for S.B. 961 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 10:30AM

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Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **S.B. 961**, which would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP), and report to the Legislature.

SNAP is a critical lifeline for more than 160,000 Hawai‘i residents. Without it, many of these individuals would not have any money to pay for food at all. Since benefits are federally funded, federal rules require tedious paperwork and documentation both upon initial application and for periodic recertification.<sup>1</sup> Some SNAP users lose these crucial benefits during the recertification process, despite no changes to eligibility. This phenomenon, known as “churn,” adds significantly to the administrative burden of administering SNAP at the state level.

This bill would provide some relief for the churn issue. Federal rules allow states to extend the SNAP certification period to 12 months for most households, with just a six-month “interim report.” However, Hawai‘i currently requires a full recertification every six months, increasing the possibility for churn. For households with seniors or people with disabilities, Hawai‘i allows a longer 12-month certification, but for these households, it can be as long as 24 months, or even up to 36 months using what’s known as the ESAP waiver. In addition to the three-year certification period, this waiver allows those who are 60+ to waive the recertification interview and allows for a simplified application process. As of 2024, 23 other states have already implemented ESAP and there are more to follow suit.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1. Hawai‘i certification periods vs. maximum federal certification periods**

Group	Hawai‘i’s current certification period	Maximum allowable certification period
Kūpuna (ages 60+) or adults with disabilities	Every 12 months	Every 36 months*
All other households	Every 6 months	Every 12 months

\*36 months is only allowable as part of the ESAP waiver; 24 months requires a simpler waiver application

The proposed extended certification periods for most households have twofold benefits, reducing workload for both applicants and eligibility staff. We have a unique opportunity to ease the burden on both sides of the application process. Thank you for considering these comments in your deliberation of S.B. 961.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP Data Tables: National and/or State Level Monthly and/or Annual Data,” Food and Nutrition Service, 2024. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP State Options Report,” Food and Nutrition Service, 2024, p. 26. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-16th-state-options-report-june24.pdf>

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Re: **SB 961 SD1 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**  
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference  
February 27, 2025, 10:30 AM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of SB 961 SD1**. This bill requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP), and report to the Legislature.

In Hawai'i, SNAP plays a critical role in supporting many of our most vulnerable residents. In fact, more than half of SNAP recipients in Hawai'i are in families with children, and SNAP lifted 62,000 people above the poverty line in Hawai'i, including 26,000 children, per year between 2015 and 2019, on average.<sup>1</sup>

The average SNAP benefit per household with children in Hawai'i was \$1,098 per month in fiscal year 2022. In 2024, Hawai'i received \$732.5 million in SNAP benefits, not only lifting up low-income families, but also directly supporting approximately 900 food retailers in Hawai'i.

There is a lot of room to enhance SNAP's reach. From 2017 to 2019, only 62% of eligible Hawai'i residents participated in SNAP,<sup>2</sup> indicating that there are tens of thousands of people in Hawai'i who need the support of SNAP but are not getting it.

These measures proposed in this bill would streamline access to SNAP benefits for all households, but particularly for Hawai'i's elderly and disabled populations. By simplifying access and reducing administrative hurdles, the state can ensure that more eligible Hawai'i residents receive the assistance they need and that the local economy is boosted with more dollars going to local food retailers.

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

Sincerely,

Nicole Woo  
Director of Research and Economic Policy

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap\\_factsheet\\_Hawai'i.pdf](https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_Hawai'i.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/snap-eligibility-access.html>



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |

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P: 808-533-1292 | e:

[info@hawaiiifood.com](mailto:info@hawaiiifood.com)

#### **Executive Officers**

**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Chair*

**Kit Okimoto**, Okimoto Corp., *Vice Chair*

**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*

**Lauren Zirbel**, HFIA, *Executive Director*

**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*

**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*

**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*

**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 27, 2025

TIME: 10:30am

RE: SB961 SD1 Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Position: Support

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

HFIA supports this measure. Food insecurity has reached alarming rates in our state in recent years. Current data suggests up to 30% of families in the State face food insecurity and that in some areas that number could be as high as 40%.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a vital resource to help families in need in Hawaii. It also benefits all Hawaii consumers by bringing much needed Federal funds into our food systems and acting as a stabilizing force in the food industry at large.

Ensuring that everyone who needs food assistance has access to SNAP should be a top priority for our state Government.

Setting the minimum certification period for SNAP to 12 months or 24 months for kupuna households gives families and kupuna more time to utilize these benefits and achieve financial stability. This timeline can help ensure that eligible users do not lose benefits due to having to rapidly reapply. The adjusted certification timeline may reduce the administrative burden on the Department of Human Services if they are not having to process reapplications so frequently.

We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## Protect Democracy Move Forward

[www.indivisiblehawaii.org](http://www.indivisiblehawaii.org)

[info@indivisiblehawaii.org](mailto:info@indivisiblehawaii.org)

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Hearing Date/Time: February 27, 2025 10:30AM  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211  
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB961 SD1

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

Members of Indivisible Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB961 SD1 which would require the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature.

The SNAP recertification process requires difficult paperwork and documentation, making it difficult for the applicants to complete the application. Hawai'i can extend the SNAP certification, increasing the chance of eligible recipients receiving the benefits. Hawai'i can also participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project which would allow kupuna to recertify every three years instead of every year. Please pass this measure to help the struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits. No one should go hungry because they couldn't recertify for the SNAP benefits.

Sincerely,  
Indivisible Hawai'i Working Families Team

*We're a grassroots movement of thousands of local Indivisible groups with a mission to elect progressive leaders, rebuild our democracy, and defeat the Trump agenda. In Hawai'i, we have ten groups across four islands, representing over a thousand pro-democracy citizens.*



To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Hearing Date/Time: February 27, 2025 10:30AM  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211  
Re: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB961 SD1

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

Members of AAUW of Hawai'i thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB961 SD1 which would require the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for households, and participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project.

The SNAP recertification process is complex and many eligible applicants face difficulties applying to receive this benefit. Hawai'i can extend the SNAP certification period and reduce the number of recipients losing the benefits. Hawai'i can also participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project which would allow kupuna to recertify only once every three years. Please pass this measure to help the struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

Sincerely,  
Younghee Overly  
AAUW of Hawai'i Public Policy Committee

*The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawai'i is an all-volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaua'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward O'ahu. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity through research, education, and advocacy. Our goal is economic security for women in Hawai'i .*



## HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS  
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Medical-Legal Partnership  
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai  
HMSA

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

## HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a  
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &  
Evaluation

Community Health  
Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Network

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &  
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: February 25, 2025

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Support for SB 960 Relating To The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Hrg: Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 10:30 AM, Conference Room 211

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Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)<sup>1</sup> and the Healthy Eating, Active Living<sup>2</sup> (HEAL) coalition is in **support with amendments of SB 961**, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for households, and would participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project.

**Please amend this bill for it to go into effect in 2025, not 2027.**

One in three households in Hawai'i faces food insecurity. Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are a lifeline to many of these residents. Local families in need receive over \$600 million annually in SNAP benefits. Unfortunately, the state has made accessing these benefits incredibly difficult. The state needs to improve the enrollment process and ensure local SNAP-eligible residents can receive the federal benefits they need.

## Short Certification Periods

Residents in Hawai'i face frequent SNAP recertification requirements, with some needing to re-certify as often as every six months. Kūpuna (60 years and over) are required to recertify annually, even though federal regulations permit them to do so only once every three years.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.

<sup>2</sup> The Healthy Eating + Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, formerly known as the Obesity Prevention Task Force, was created by the legislature in 2012 and is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations. The HEAL Coalition works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

<sup>3</sup> USDA - SNAP State Options Report.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/waivers/state-options-report>



Hawai'i has the opportunity to extend SNAP certification periods to the federal maximum for all recipients. This change would significantly reduce the paperwork burden on families and kūpuna, easing stress and administrative challenges.

Importantly, it would also reduce the risk of losing benefits during the recertification process, a common issue caused by paperwork difficulties and bureaucratic barriers. By adopting this policy, Hawai'i can ensure more consistent access to essential food assistance for its residents.

#### **Decreased Workload for SNAP Staff**

Hawai'i's SNAP department faces overwhelming demand for its services, yet it lacks sufficient staffing to meet that demand effectively. By reducing the frequency of recertification, the department can significantly decrease its administrative workload.

This would free up valuable resources and allow staff to focus on improving the overall efficiency and accessibility of both the SNAP application and recertification processes. Streamlining these operations would benefit not only the department but also the thousands of residents who rely on SNAP for essential food assistance.

#### **Manual Extension is Better than No Extension**

While the current SNAP eligibility system may not be designed to automatically accommodate three-year certification periods, manually extending certifications is a far more efficient solution than requiring full reapplications. The time required for staff to manually process an extension is significantly less than the time needed to review a new application, reducing administrative burden and ensuring continued access to food assistance for those in need. We cannot afford to delay this critical change based on the uncertain timeline of a new eligibility system that may eventually support it.

Please pass SB 961 to ensure we're doing everything we can to make SNAP as accessible as possible. Mahalo for your consideration.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Hix".

Nate Hix  
Director of Policy and Advocacy





## 2025 Network Members

Aloha Harvest  
Aloha United Way  
Chef Hui  
City and County of Honolulu  
County of Hawai'i  
Hawai'i Alliance for  
Progressive Action (HAPA)  
Hawai'i Appleseed  
Hawai'i Children's Action  
Network  
Hawai'i Dept. of Agriculture  
Hawai'i Dept. of Health  
Hawai'i Food Bank  
Hawai'i Food Bank - Kaua'i  
Branch  
Hawai'i Good Food Alliance  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute  
Kōkua Kalihi Valley  
Lanakila Pacific  
Mālama Kaua'i  
Maui Department of  
Agriculture  
Maui Food Bank  
Parents and Children Together  
Supersistence  
The Food Basket  
The Pantry, by Feeding Hawai'i  
Together  
Wai'anae Coast  
Comprehensive Health Center

[hawaiihungeraction.org](http://hawaiihungeraction.org)

## Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 27, 2025, at 10:30AM

### **RE: SUPPORT for SB 961, RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Hunger Action Network, a coalition of more than twenty local organizations with the mission to advocate for food security for Hawai'i households, would like to express strong support for **SB 961**. This bill would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP), and report to the Legislature.

SNAP is critical to the over 160,000 residents who receive benefits in Hawai'i. However with 1 in 3 households experiencing food insecurity, it is still not reaching everyone who needs help. One issue our Network members report is that the frequent need to recertify can result in some families losing benefits, even when they still qualify. Extending certification periods to the maximum allowable by federal law could alleviate the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff workers.

This bill would extend the certification period to 12 months for most households and up to 36 months for kūpuna and people with disabilities—an opportunity to reduce the risk of losing benefits due to paperwork issues. Following suit of 23 other states, implementing ESAP would also simplify the process by allowing kūpuna to waive recertification interviews.<sup>1</sup>

Mahalo for your leadership and for your consideration of **SB 961**. Extending SNAP certification periods will be a tremendous relief for struggling families as well as eligibility staff.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, "SNAP State Options Report," Food and Nutrition Service, 2024, p. 26.

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-16th-state-options-report-june24.pdf>



**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

**Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Strongly Supports: SB961 SD1**

February 27th, 2025 at 10:30am; Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and members of the committee,

HAPA is testifying in support of SB961 SD1 which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature.

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

Please support SB961 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Anne Frederick,  
Executive Director



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday, February 27, 2025

10:30 a. m.

State Capitol Conference Room 211 and via videoconference

Re: SB 961 SD 1 Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

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. I am offering testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition.

The Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition strongly supports SB 961 SD 1, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature.

An extension in the certification periods for SNAP benefits households and participation in the Elderly Simplified Application Project will reduce the possibility of SNAP recipients, who rely on SNAP to afford the nutritious food essential to health and well-being, losing their benefits.

We urge you to support SB 961 SD 1, and we urge you to recommend its passage.

Mahalo for seriously considering the bill.

Very sincerely,

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

Gary Simon



Email [garysimon@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:garysimon@hawaii.rr.com)

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:32:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
W. Nick Cambra	Testifying for Our Lady oif Mount Carmel Foodbank Coordinator	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

As the Foodbank Coordicator I see the effect that the economy has on our Kupuna. SNAP provides essential support to our Kupuna. Extending the complicated certification period for them, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please make this bill effective this year, not in 2027. Our people need help now. Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of this bill.



www.getfitkauai.com

P.O. Box 392, Kilauea, Kauai, HI, 96754

PHONE: (808) 212-4765 • FAX: (808) 828-2027 • E-MAIL: [bbrody1@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:bbrody1@hawaii.rr.com) • WEB SITE: [www.getfitkauai.com](http://www.getfitkauai.com)

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

**Thursday, February 27, 2025 - 10:30 AM**

**Get Fit Kauai Supports SB 961**

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Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Agaran, and respected committee members,

My name is Bev Brody and I am the director of the Healthy Eating Active Living Coalition of Kauai County (Get Fit Kauai). Get Fit Kauai is a community-focused organization dedicated to promoting health, wellness, and safer living environments for all residents of Kaua'i. We strongly support Senate Bill 961, which proposes extending certification periods for most households, including 36-month periods for kūpuna.

The current SNAP recertification process presents significant challenges for applicants, especially for kūpuna, who often lose benefits due to difficult paperwork and documentation. Extending certification periods would reduce the chances of beneficiaries losing support during recertification.

Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify once every three years, significantly reducing their burden. Additionally, extending certification periods would ease the workload for both applicants and SNAP staff, improving the process for everyone.

I urge you to support SB961 and make this bill effective this year, rather than waiting until 2027. Our people need help now, and delaying action would prolong the hardships many are facing.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your support in ensuring access to vital benefits for our community.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

*B Brody*

**Bev Brody**

**Get Fit Kauai – Director**

H.E.A.L. (Healthy Eating Active Living)

Community Coalition of Kauai County

(808) 212-4765

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:14:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Huycke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB961.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:23:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Morgan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:38:38 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Claudia Wright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and Kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 7:57:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Kai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill.

Kanani Kai

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:42:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha. The SNAP application is extremely complicated and the recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits. Our children and our kupuna deserve access to healthy meals. Mahalo.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:45:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda L Jenks	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:47:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yvonne Geesey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Malama na Kupuna.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:02:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Berreman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits. I speak from my experience as a pediatrician and public health physician.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:04:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JANE TOLLEFSRUD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits!

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:07:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
DeWaine Tollefsrud	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:20:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits. This is a program where a penny spent is worth a pound of prevention of all kinds of problems.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 10:53:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:04:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail Morrison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:18:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
martha chantiny	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. extending the certification periods will help struggling families and kupuna receive the SNAP benefits they need.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:27:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Marsh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:38:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:56:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janian K Thurman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 12:35:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy D Moser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In STRONG SUPPORT of SB961 SD1.

Aloha Chair and members of the Committee,

Please vote YES on this measure to extend SNAP benefits to help struggling families and kupuna to obtain food and sustain lives.

Nancy Moser in Waikoloa on Hawai'i Island

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 12:53:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorothy Zipp Malinski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Having a college degree and worked in accounting at large companies over the years, I found as a senior retired low-income person that the paperwork is onerous to apply for SNAP benefits. There's no need for it to be so complicated! Please streamline the process.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 1:05:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

Mahalo,

Jennifer Lum, 'Ewa Beach

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 1:50:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 2:33:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane Aquino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits".

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 2:44:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
gabrielle davidson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 3:06:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheryl Summers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 3:24:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James E Raymond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:58:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

This bill addresses the problem that the complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits by passing the bill. Mahalo.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:35:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha. The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:07:56 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Gately	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:47:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Hall Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Support our kupuna in need by simplifying the process for applying for SNAP. Some kupuna don't have family to help them navigate the system. I've volunteered for Our Kupuna to help shop for those without the means to get to the store. It can be pretty grim for those folks - we need to support them more efficiently.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:50:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richelle Concepcion	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 9:55:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyla Stueber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:04:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Bellamy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to support those in our community who need this program.

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 11:04:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elena Vorm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

No family should struggle to afford groceries, yet one in three families in Hawai‘i are food insecure. Federal SNAP benefits abruptly end once a family’s income reaches 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), although a family needs to make 300% of the FPL just to make ends meet. Expanding benefits to 300% of the FPL will allow families to have a gradual decline in benefits as their income rises, allowing families to earn their way out of poverty rather than being stuck in a no-win situation where they lose thousands in benefits just by earning \$1 over the income limit. Please pass this bill to help our families in need.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 12:45:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Nineth Ovando	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The reading comprehension and level of US citizens is at 3rd grad and the amount of people on SNAP is due to the high cost of living on this island. Not only should we be extending the certification process but we should be making it easier. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 1:14:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tanya Dean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am particularly interested in seeing the Elderly Simplification Application Program instituted. It's a win-win for our kupuna and the overly burdened SNAP offices. I have seen my community college students and families lose their SNAP benefits due to regulations that don't serve them. It is totally disruptive to their education and goal attainment as they juggle their education, finances, and employment. This bill will help such vulnerable recipients. Mahalo.**



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 2:01:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support SB961 in order to amend the certification process for applicants so that families receiving SNAP benefits do not lose their benefits because of paperwork issues.

The recertificaion process requires difficult paperwork and documentation and because of this yearly requirement many applicants end up losing benefits during this procedure.

Hawai'i needs to extend the SNAP certification period in order to reduce the number of recipients losing benefits. These changes would to recertify every three years would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff which would improve access to this vital program for everyone.

Thank you for supporting SB961

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 3:04:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamra Hayden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

As President Trump and Doge are making huge cuts to Medicaid and today I heard Medicare too, my family is going through be hurt by this. We are 67 and 68 and have been on disability for years. We are terrified we may not be able to eat, pay our bills or see the 8 Drs we both see for various issues. My partners heart and my neurology and liver problems for me We know SNAP will at least allow us to eat healthy and try to keep our health.

The recertification process requires difficult paperwork and documentation, resulting in many beneficiaries losing benefits during this process.

Hawai'i can extend the SNAP certification period, reducing opportunities for recipients to lose benefits.

Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years.

Reducing the workload for both applicants and SNAP staff will improve the application process for everyone.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:47:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rene Robertson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:18:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Burns	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

Sarah Burns

96816

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:09:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

**Please support and pass SB961.**

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jordan Smith

Honolulu, 96813

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:10:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raphael Moller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and helpstruggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:55:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shana Laririt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker I have witnessed first hand how devastating the impacts of loss of benefits can be as well as how stressful the application and recertification process is for our most disenfranchised populations.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:07:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Teare	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please extend the SNAP certification period, reducing opportunities for recipients to lose benefits. Participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Program which would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. This will improve the application process for everyone.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:35:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Humphrey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Respected Members of the Committee,

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits, and puts an exceptional burden on those who are struggling to get by. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

Respectfully,

Amy Humphrey, Psy.D.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:11:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann V Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All,

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.

Mahalo for all you do,

Ann V Saffery

Honolulu, HI

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:41:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for allowing me the ability to support SB 961 by Senator San Buenaventura. Fixing the minimum certification periods and participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Project will be a big help in serving those in need of SNAP benefits.

Mahalo,

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

Big Island

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:44:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
sandi ioakimi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:58:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lana Bilbo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Our Kupuna have some of the highest needs and the highest barriers to access support like SNAP. Many of them are living on fixed incomes that have not kept up with inflation, not to even consider the absurd jumps in cost of living we've faced in the last few years. They often don't have access to vehicles, have low stamina for physical activity, and struggle with computers and technology. I've seen some really heartbreaking situations for them through my work in community food systems. Lowering barriers for them to access aid like SNAP is essential to supporting them. Their health and financial situation are usually deteriorating further over time, and so extending the timeline for recertification makes particular sense in their case.

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:04:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee.

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:05:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealakai Hammond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kealakai Hammond

Honolulu, HI

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:23:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961. Mahalo.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:34:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tia pearson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Extending SNAP certification periods and participates in Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) can increase the access of these benefits.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:45:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Too many people lose their SNAP benefits because of the complicated recertification process. This leaves already-vulnerable people even more stressed, and can even endanger their health. I support this bill to make SNAP more accessible, especially for the elderly.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:09:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pilialoha Callahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

I Pilialoha Callahan am in strong support of SB 961. the cost of living and the cost of food here in Hawaii are ridiculously high and I believe that we can all benefit from the help of the acting government. I believe that allowing kupuna to apply and recertify once every three years lessens a burden on them and the stress of having to go through the process every 6 months. I also support households extending their recertification period and having that security of kokua for an entire year

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:48:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

I urge you to support SB961, which will allow recertification every three years. SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits.

Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

Thank you

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:18:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961. Eliel,Kapaa

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:16:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kencho Gurung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:39:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiana Otsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am writing in **STRONG support of SB961 SD1**, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature.

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kiana Otsuka, Moanalua

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:10:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Committee Mambers,

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Mahalo,

David Leake, Kaneohe



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:42:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits.

We are living in a state that imports 90% of its food, and where more than 1/3 of our population struggles with food insecurity. At a time when arbitrary federal cuts are being made across the board, we need our state to stand with the people it's meant to represent and protect from tyranny.

Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:35:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cardenas Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cardenas (Cards) Pintor

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:15:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:55:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joell Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB961

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Joell Edwards, Wainiha Kaua'i

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:41:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Mahalo, Bobbie Best, Wailuku

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:37:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lela Kalama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

mahalo,

Lela Kalama

Keaau, HI

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:48:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Mahalo,

Nalani A. From Lahaina

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:52:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Ease the burden.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:01:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha nō,

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Na,

Leo Nahe Smith | Pearl City, HI

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:11:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey Ilagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha pumehana kākou,

My name is Lindsey Ilagan, and I appreciate your commitment to advance this bill on behalf of our ‘ohana, friends, and neighbors who benefit from SNAP as an essential lifeline. The truth is that we ALL benefit, whether we are directly enrolled in SNAP or not, as SNAP helps us to draw down and infuse federal dollars into our local community and keep our communities healthy. Through SB961, we have a low-hanging fruit of an opportunity to maximize the impact of SNAP by simplifying the application and recertification process--one of the most common pitfalls that causes eligible recipients to lose these critical benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients would significantly reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain the benefits that they already qualify for. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program (ESAP), something that many other states already do, would allow kūpuna to recertify once every three years. Why would we deny Hawai‘i’s kūpuna this option that has been proven to increase food security among those who are potentially the most vulnerable? The cost of inaction is great; leaving this solution on the table sends a message that we’re willing to accept kūpuna struggling to put food on their tables. Hawai‘i is a place where we cherish and honor our kūpuna--implementing the ESAP is in alignment with our local values and has the potential to significantly change the trajectory of kūpuna health, especially as this segment of the population continues to grow. Implementing the ESAP empowers kūpuna with the resources needed to maintain our best health through nutrition, helping kūpuna to age successfully in place. The changes proposed by this bill would ease the unnecessary burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please make this bill effective this year, not in 2027. Our people need help now. Mahalo piha.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:26:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 961. SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan, Lawai, Kauai

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:42:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Remy Hirai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please make this bill effective this year, not in 2027. Our people need help now.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:43:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaelin Tancayo-Spielvogel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I urge you to pass SB961 to simplify the SNAP application and recertification process, ensuring that eligible individuals—especially our kūpuna—can maintain access to the essential food assistance they need.

Right now, too many families and elderly individuals lose their benefits not because they no longer qualify, but because the process is overly complicated, burdensome, and difficult to navigate. Extending the certification period for all recipients would reduce unnecessary paperwork and prevent eligible families from slipping through the cracks. More importantly, by adopting the Elderly Simplified Application Program, we can make a meaningful difference for our kūpuna, allowing them to recertify only once every three years instead of navigating frequent bureaucratic hurdles.

These reforms aren't just about efficiency—they are about dignity. They ensure that families and seniors aren't forced to repeatedly prove their need for help just to put food on the table. They also relieve strain on overworked SNAP staff, improving service for everyone who relies on this vital program.

But this change must happen now. Delaying implementation until 2027 means years of continued hardship for those who need help today. Every day of delay is a day someone goes hungry because of bureaucratic red tape. Our kūpuna, our families, and our most vulnerable neighbors can't wait. Please pass SB961 with immediate implementation—our people deserve better.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:55:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Kono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I fully support SB961 in efforts to provide SNAP benefits to families statewide. The complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefit. Extending the certification period for all recipients would reduce those barriers and ensure that more people are able to maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kupuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff. Please make this bill effective this year. Our people need help now more so than ever.

Mahalo,

Jill

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:39:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing in support of SB961. SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

Thank you,  
Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:17:18 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

support



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:20:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please make this bill effective this year, not in 2027. Our people need help now.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:44:04 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Hatzistavrakis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I fully support **SB961 to extend certification periods for most households, including periods of 36 months for kūpuna**. SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. By extending the certification period for all recipients, these barriers would be reduced, enabling more people to maintain their benefits. Especially for our kūpuna who may not have access to the internet or transportation to fulfill this reporting process. In addition to making the process easier for SNAP recipients, the burden on customer service representatives would also be lessened.

Thank you for your consideration of **SB961** to extend certification periods for most households, including periods of 36 months for kūpuna.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:29:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Adair-Leland Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.**

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 1:11:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tasman Kekai Mattox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone. Please support SB961.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 4:41:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglass Adams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in STRONG support of SB961 SD1, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits households and participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project. SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the complicated application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients, would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. These changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

I encourage the Committee to pass this measure with a favorable recommendation for Senate passage.

very respectfully,

Douglass Adams

Hilo, Hawai'i

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 4:43:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
G L Hutchinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please extend certificaton period

help our families!

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:20:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

## Comments:

SB961 must be passed. The SNAP application process is long and arduous. The amount of information that must be provided just to get some assistance with food is astounding. After an applicant has gone through the complicated process and been approved, can we not then allow them to keep these benefits longer? The recertification process can be just as difficult. I speak from personal experience. I keep all my pharmacy receipts and try to track my medical expenses so I have them to provide to the government. I was unable to provide everything on time for my last recertification. Therefore my benefits have lapsed and it has become much more difficult to buy healthy food.

I went to the local food pantry this afternoon. I was in line for over an hour, getting worried that the food would run out. The line was BY FAR the longest I've seen it in the last several years. I don't go to the food pantry regularly but after losing my SNAP benefits I've had to utilize other resources.

The only reason I don't currently have SNAP benefits is due to the frequency of recertifications. Now I'm worried I may never have them again with all the huge funding cuts that are happening. I have to start the application process all over.

It would be so beneficial for the people in our country to spend less time recertifying applications just to get some help with food. Just so they can prove that they still have a financial need.

Will you please support SB961 and encourage your fellow Senators to do so as well? Make it just a little easier for us to have food.

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 2:24:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am in favor of simplifying the certification for SNAP so it is more accessible for those people who qualify for the program. Mahalo.



**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 4:44:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Senator Moriwaki and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Please support SB 961 SD 1 which, to my understanding, would expand Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program access.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 7:41:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marion McHenry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee members,

Please support this excellent bill. SNAP provides essential support for those most vulnerable in our communities, yet the recertification process can be difficult to navigate especially for our kupuna. The changes this bill provides would ease the burden on both the recipients and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone in need.

Mahalo,

Robert and Marion McHenry

Princeville, Kauai

**SB-961-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 9:00:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/27/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily N	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The complicated SNAP application and recertification process often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Please extend the certification periods and help struggling families and kupuna receive their SNAP benefits.