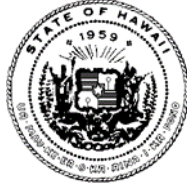


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

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

March 28, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SCR 187/ SR 171 – URGING THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ISSUE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE GUS SCHUMACHER NUTRITION INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE MATCHING FUNDS FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE STATE DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS PROGRAM TO ALL APPROVED SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RETAIL OUTLETS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 1:10 p.m.  
Conference Room 224 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports these resolutions and provides comments.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of these resolutions is to urge the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture to issue additional funding for the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to provide matching funds for the expansion of the state Double Up Food Bucks Program to all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program retail outlets throughout the State.

The Hawaii healthy food incentive dollar-for-dollar matching program, also known as the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks Program, is popular among SNAP participants. It allows doubling SNAP participants' purchasing power of locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. Additional funding for this program will increase the purchasing power of SNAP recipients and will be an economic boost to support local farmers and keeps food dollars in the local economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these resolutions.

Wednesday, March 29, 2023, at 2:00 PM  
Via Video Conference; Conference Room 224

**Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Herbert "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

**Senate Committee on Health and human Services**

To: Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry Aquino, Vice Chair

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

**Re: Testimony in Support of SCR 187/SR 171  
Urging The National Institute Of Food And Agriculture Of The United States  
Department Of Agriculture To Issue Additional Funding For The Gus Schumacher  
Nutrition Incentive Program To Provide Matching Funds For The Expansion Of The  
State Double Up Food Bucks Program To All Approved Supplemental Nutrition  
Assistance Program Retail Outlets Throughout The State.**

---

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

HPH writes in SUPPORT of SCR 187/SR 171 which urges the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture to issue additional funding for the Gus Schumacher nutrition incentive program to provide matching funds for the expansion of the state double up food bucks program to all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retail outlets.

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

helps low-income families that receive double the purchasing power for healthy, Hawaii-grown produce, and benefits Hawaii by keeping dollars in the local economy.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

March 29, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**TESTIMONY ON SCR 187/SR 171**

URGING THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ISSUE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE GUS SCHUMACHER NUTRITION INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE MATCHING FUNDS FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE STATE DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS PROGRAM TO ALL APPROVED SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RETAIL OUTLETS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

Conference Room 227 & Videoconference  
1:10 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and San Buenaventura, Vice-Chairs Richards and Aquino, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SCR 187/SR 171**, which urges the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture to issue additional funding for the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to provide matching funds for the expansion of the state Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX) to all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program retail outlets throughout the State.

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

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

The Double Up Food Bucks program works by doubling the value of federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits spent on locally grown fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets, grocery stores, food hubs, and community-supported agriculture projects. In Hawaii, the Double Up Food Bucks program is managed by The Food Basket and is known as "DA BUX" Double Up Food Bucks. The DA BUX program presents a "win-win" scenario by supporting local farmers with an increased customer base and low-income families who receive double the purchasing power for healthy, Hawaii-grown produce.

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



To: The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)  
and  
The Senate Committee on Health and Human Services (HHS)  
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 1:10pm

**In strong support of SCR187/SR171**

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Richards and Aquino, and Committee members,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of SCR187/SR171** that urges the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture to issue additional funding for the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to provide matching funds for the expansion of the state Double Up Food Bucks Program to all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program retail outlets throughout the State.

The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh local produce. SCR187/SR171 will expand this important program to retailers in rural areas, and by doing so, help more low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars will stay in the local economy.

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

Please pass SCR187/SR171.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this very important resolution.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



# THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

March 28, 2023

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST  
ALBRECHT

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair  
Committee on Health and Human Services

BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS

From: Kristin Frost Albrecht  
Executive Director

ANN EBESUNO  
BOARD CHAIR

Chelsea Takahashi  
Director of Healthy Food Access Initiatives

MARK  
KRZYZANOWSKI  
VICE-CHAIR

The Food Basket, Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

DENNIS LIN  
TREASURER

Subject: **Testimony in Strong Support of SCR 187/SR 171 Resolution:** Relating to  
Double Up Food Bucks Program; Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program;  
Funding

JULIA ZEE  
SECRETARY

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, Chair San Buenaventura, and Vice Chair Aquino,

STEPHEN UEDA

We are in strong support of the SCR 187/SR 171 Resolution Urging the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) of the United States Department of Agriculture to issue additional funding for the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to provide matching funds for the expansion of the State Double Up Food Buck Program to all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retail outlets throughout the state.

WARREN LEE

SAMANTHA  
COLLINS

In keeping with The Food Basket's (TFB) overarching mission to "end hunger", we are the statewide administrator for DA BUX. TFB established DA BUX as a statewide program upon receiving a \$985K federal grant through the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). Additionally, we secured the 100% non-federal matching funds that GusNIP requires. We scaled the program in 2021 after receiving two additional GusNIP awards totaling \$7.6 MM in federal dollars. Today, TFB administers DA BUX at 58 food retailers across 100+ locations statewide, including grocery stores, farmers markets and

[WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG](http://WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG)

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

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





# THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

food hubs. DA BUX partner retailers continue to offer 50% discounts on Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables solely to low-income customers paying with SNAP food dollars (formerly known as food stamps).

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

We are humbly requesting the State to invest \$3MM per year in DA BUX to support program sustainability and continuous affordable healthy food access to SNAP recipients. Furthermore, a State commitment will be leveraged in our FY '23 GusNIP application to unlock \$3MM in federal funds to meet the grant's requirement of a 100% non-federal match. It is our intent to eventually scale DA BUX to a \$20MM annual program in the State of Hawai'i pending the approval of expanded federal GusNIP funding. We, along with the Alliance for National Nutrition Incentives (ANNI), are actively advocating for a new tier of GusNIP funding in the 2023 National Farm Bill that would be reserved for successful statewide SNAP nutrition incentive programs, including DA BUX.

KRISTIN FROST  
ALBRECHT

BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS

ANN EBESUNO  
BOARD CHAIR

MARK  
KRZYZANOWSKI  
VICE-CHAIR

The expanded GusNIP funding, along with State matching funds, would allow us to expand DA BUX to all the State's SNAP retail outlets increasing affordable food access statewide as well as bolstering Hawai'i's agriculture sector and food security.

DENNIS LIN  
TREASURER

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this Resolution.

JULIA ZEE  
SECRETARY

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

STEPHEN UEDA

*Kristin Frost Albrecht*

Kristin Frost Albrecht  
Executive Director

WARREN LEE

Chelsea Takahashi  
Director of Healthy Food Access Initiatives

SAMANTHA  
COLLINS

WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG

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

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



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Wednesday, March 29, 2023 — 1:10 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SCR 187/ HR 171.**

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committees:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports SCR 187/ SR 171**, which urges the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture to issue additional funding for the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to provide matching funds for the expansion of the state Double Up Food Bucks Program to all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program retail outlets throughout the State.

Ulupono strongly supports the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program within the DOA. This resolution seeks to shed some light on the importance of the "DA BUX" Double Up Food Bucks Program, administered by The Food Basket, Hawai'i Island's food bank, and find ways to expand dedicated resources to better serve our local community. With increased Federal and State support, this program can continue to serve as a triple-win solution for our communities as SNAP-eligible recipients double their spending power at point of purchase with healthy local produce, local farmers are able to expand their markets, and all money spent is kept right here in our state. In addition, this program leverages federal funding at a 1:1 match.

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

---

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

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



We are hopeful that the State can consider a \$3 million appropriation, per year, for the DOA program to support the continued efforts of DA BUX through HB 1248 or the Budget Bill. A \$3 million investment by the State would receive a direct match of \$3 million in federal funding. Furthermore, our analysis shows that with that level of state funding in place, the potential economic impact created by DA BUX in Hawai'i reaches nearly \$19 million.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

See Attachment

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



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

— Dawn Marquez  
SNAP Shopper,  
Waimanalo, HI

# DA BUX

## DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS PROVIDES A TRIPLE-WIN

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

— Toby Taniguchi  
President, KTA Super Stores

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

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

— Ryan Earehart  
Farm Owner, Oko‘a Farms

# DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks provides a Triple-Win

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

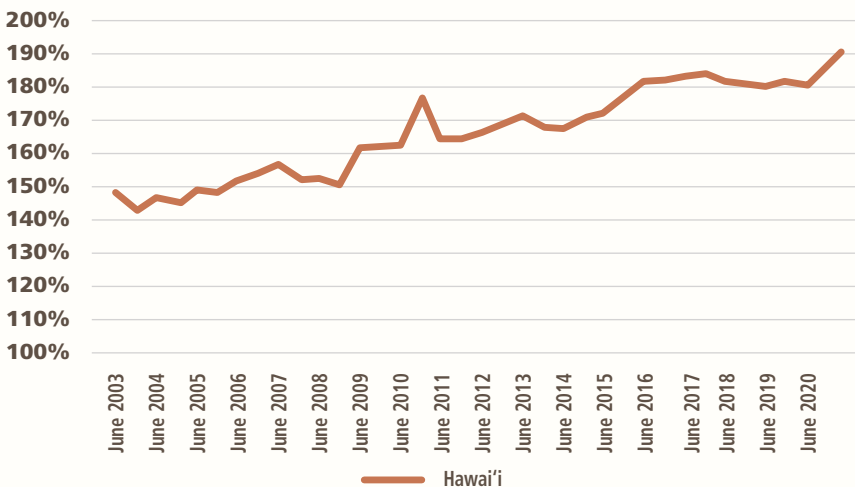
## THE PROBLEM

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

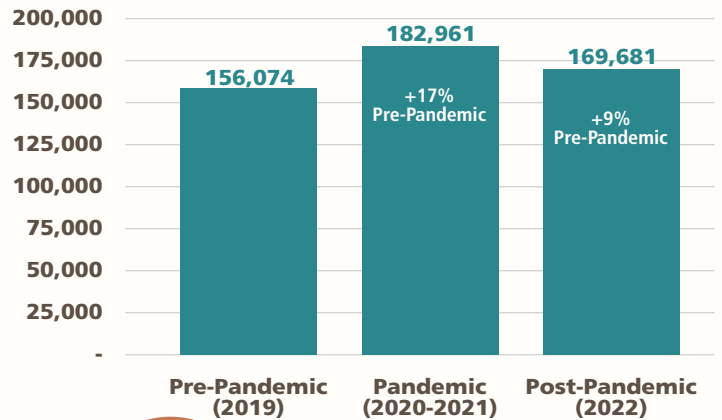
## BY THE NUMBERS

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

## Hawaii Monthly Thrifty Plan Cost vs. National Average



## Monthly Average of Individual SNAP Recipients in Hawaii



## THE SOLUTION

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

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

## HOW IT WORKS

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

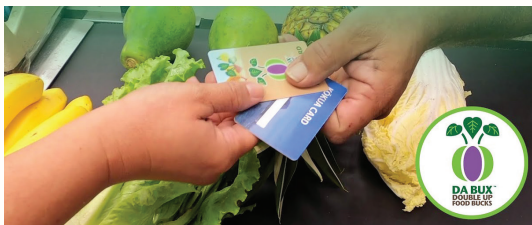


grown fruits and vegetables — \$10 of SNAP benefits would be worth \$20 of Hawaii grown produce. Thus, each \$1 funded into the program provides \$2 worth of local food purchases.

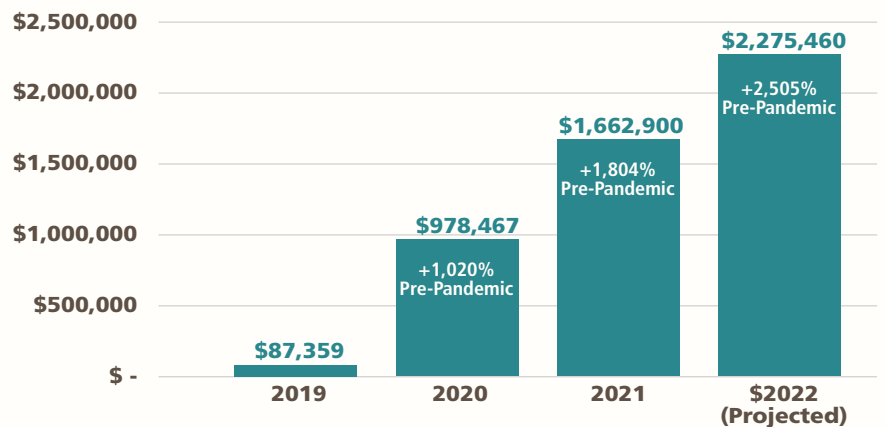
# State Support is Key to Federal and Philanthropic Funding

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

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



## Annual DA BUX Discounts Issued to SNAP Shoppers



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

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

<sup>1</sup> Based on the "The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives" report prepared by Colorado State University, and the percentage of 2021 DA BUX discounts issued via farm-direct outlets and food retailers. Refer to the report at: [https://fairfoodnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Economic\\_Contributions\\_Incentives\\_2\\_2\\_21.pdf](https://fairfoodnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Economic_Contributions_Incentives_2_2_21.pdf)

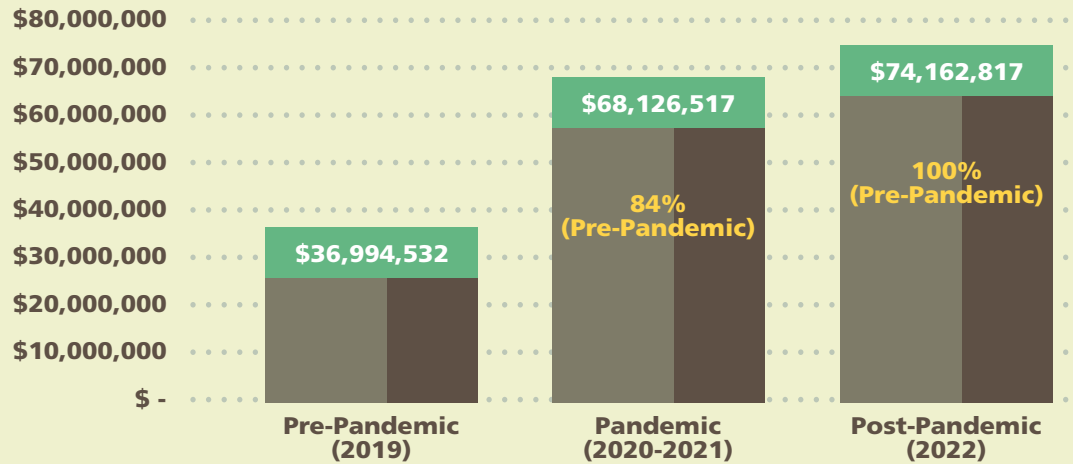
<sup>2</sup> Based on the "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier" report prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. Refer to the report at: [https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err265\\_summary.pdf](https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err265_summary.pdf)

# More Impact for State 'BUX'

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

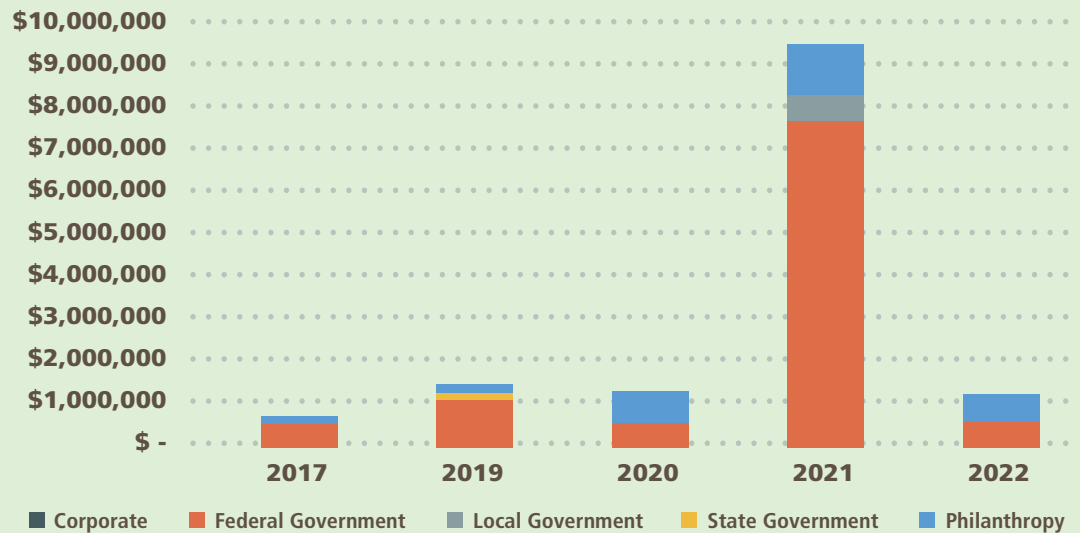
- 8th highest poverty rate (10.5% of the population living at or below the poverty line)
- 9% increase in the number of individuals in Hawai'i receiving SNAP benefits
- 100% increase in the annual total amount of SNAP benefits paid in Hawai'i
- 26x increase the annual total of DA BUX discounts issued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

## Average Monthly SNAP Benefits Paid for Hawaii SNAP Participants



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

## DA BUX Fundings by Source (2017-2022)



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

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

**SCR-187**

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 11:23:45 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/29/2023 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isabella Filipone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Isabella Filipone**

**S.R. 171**

**I am in full support of S.R. 171, as it gives more funding to the Nutrition Incentive Program, as well as matches the money if food is bought locally which further promotes a healthy economy and supports farmers. In 2019, 155,061 residents of Hawai'i received support from SNAP and those numbers are expected to be higher post-covid. If this bill passes, those participants will now have more access to eating healthy. S.R. 171 encourages economic growth as well as many health benefits. Heart disease is the number one cause of death in Hawai'i and it can be prevented by eating healthy, which with this bill, will be more accessible to those on welfare than it was prior.**