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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JOVANIE DOMINGO DELA CRUZ  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 420  
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IN REPLY, REFER TO:  
**OCS 23.1118**

March 10, 2023

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair,  
The Honorable Terez Amato, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Human Services

Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 329, State Capitol & Videoconference

From: Jovanie Domingo dela Cruz, Executive Director  
DLIR – Office of Community Services

Position: Support

**Re: S.B. 460, S.D. 1 - RELATING TO FOOD BANKS**

**I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

This bill would appropriate funds to the Office of Community Services (OCS) to distribute these funds to food banks so that they could purchase food and distribute it to qualifying low-income people to supplement their food needs. The bill would require that the funds be allocated among the counties pursuant to the methodology that OCS uses in administering The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), our largest federal food security program.

The bill would appropriate sums, in amounts to be identified, for the two upcoming State fiscal years – FY 2023-2024, which starts on July 1, 2023, and FY 2024-2025, which starts on July 1, 2024. The funds would allow food banks to pay for “the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution.” Up to 15 percent of the appropriation could be used for administrative costs.

**II. CURRENT LAW**

Currently, Hawaii has no legislation at the State level in which a State agency receives appropriations to purchase food and distribute it, through food banks, to low-income people in the State. OCS currently administers federal programs that

Re: S.B. 460, S.D. 1 – RELATING TO FOOD BANKS

March 10, 2023

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perform similar functions, notably TEFAP – The Emergency Food Assistance Program. Under TEFAP, OCS receives large amounts of surplus food from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that is distributed through Hawaii food banks as the primary agencies, which in turn distribute the food through smaller secondary agencies to recipient low-income people in the State.

Recently, USDA introduced a very small supplemental program within TEFAP that provides \$25,000 to the State of Hawaii for a farm-to-food bank program. OCS administers this program through contracts with Hawaii Foodbank and with The Food Basket, which is the food bank for the Island of Hawaii.

### III. COMMENTS ON THE BILL

The Office of Community Services **supports** the intent of S.B. 460, S.D. 1, provided that the measure's passage would not replace or adversely affect priorities in the Governor's Executive Budget Request.

This bill would provide funds for OCS to supplement the federal TEFAP emergency food assistance program. Currently, our service providers for the TEFAP program are Hawaii Foodbank for Oahu and Kauai, Maui Food Bank for Maui County, and The Food Basket for Hawaii County.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

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 11, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [SB 460 SD1](#) – RELATING TO FOOD BANKS.

Hearing: Tuesday, March 14, 2023, Time 9:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill and defers to the Office of Community Services as to administrative and resource needs. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget. The remaining amendments needed are an appropriation amount and an effective date.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to food banks in the State. Effective 1/1/2050. (SD1). SD1 amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the allocation of funds by the Office of Community Services shall be through TEFAP of the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture as provided in title 7 Code of Federal Regulations section 250;
- (2) Clarifying that administering agencies shall use not more than fifteen percent of their allocation to administer the program; and
- (3) Inserting an effective date of-January 1, 2050; to encourage further discussion.

DHS appreciates the Legislature's attention to the continuing nutritional needs of Hawaii's low-income residents as federal pandemic benefits are ending. The Department administers the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Since March 2020, SNAP has provided recipient households additional monthly SNAP benefits authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). This additional benefit is known as the Supplemental Emergency Allotment (EA). The minimum monthly EA amount issued is \$95, though the average household monthly EA amount has been \$199. The EA program has also helped boost revenue for local retailers.

Significantly, per the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, the last EA payment will be in March 2023. The end of the EA benefits will directly impact approximately 87,000 households statewide to maintain their nutritional needs. In addition, while the October 2022 increase in the minimum wage and January 2023 Social Security cost of living adjustment increased many residents' income, for SNAP recipients, these increases in monthly income decreased the monthly amount of SNAP benefits. Therefore, providing OCS with additional funds to purchase and distribute food will provide additional food resources for low-income residents.

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

**COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**Council Services Division**  
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209  
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

March 13, 2023

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN  
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON  
SB 460, SD 1, RELATING TO FOOD BANKS  
House Committee on Human Services  
Tuesday, March 14, 2023  
9:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 329  
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Mizuno and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong SUPPORT of SB 460, SD 1, Relating to Food Banks. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I wholeheartedly support SB 460, SD 1, which would appropriate funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to food banks in the State.

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry, and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the State for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 460, SD 1. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

**ADDISON BULOSAN**  
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AAO:mn

**SB-460-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 4:34:26 PM

Testimony for HUS on 3/14/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
david gierlach	st elizabeth's church	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB460 and HB 314: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry, and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food system because they support food banks' ability to purchase items people want – nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.

- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively. Mahalo for your consideration.



## HIPHI Board

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*State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public Defender*

## HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a  
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health  
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

Date: March 10, 2023

To: Rep. John Mizuno, Chair  
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Human Services

Re: Support for SB460 SD1, Relating to Food Banks

Hrg: Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 9:00 AM, Conf Rm 329

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The Obesity Prevention Task Force (OPTF), a program of Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>i</sup> (HIPHI), is in **support of SB 460 SD1**, which would provide funding for the food bank system in Hawai'i.

### **Many people can benefit.**

In Hawai'i, 1 in 10 people faces hunger, including 1 in 6 children. The cost to meet the demands of the more than 130,000 people in Hawai'i facing hunger is over \$80 million per year.<sup>ii</sup>

Many people in need do not qualify for SNAP benefits and depend on the food bank system for their meals. The demand for food is increasing, as Food Banks are giving out more food now than in previous years.<sup>iii</sup>

### **Strengthen the safety net by funding food access.**

The Hawai'i food bank system largely depends on private donations to help feed people. These donations help to provide a public good to our communities. This bill will bring state funding to those in need and not force food banks and their customers to rely solely on the generosity of private donors.

Food and housing are major financial obstacles in Hawai'i. Because there are few affordable state housing options for people, tens of thousands of residents leave for more affordable options. It is time for the state to support the social safety net to feed those who can barely afford housing and food.<sup>iv</sup> Other states provide funding to support their food banks, and it is time for Hawai'i to do so.

## **Rising costs have made procuring food more difficult.**

The increased cost of living worldwide has led to decreased donations to the Food Bank system. As prices rise for everyone, donations decline. The decrease in private donations has led to a food shortage for the Food Basket over the past year because private donations have fallen so sharply that they require significantly more funds to purchase food.<sup>v</sup> This situation is not unique to the Food Basket. All food banks need more support to provide food to those who need it. The State of Hawai'i can be a partner by funding the food banks so they can meet the needs of our community.

Mahalo,



Nate Hix  
Food Access Policy and Advocacy Coordinator  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

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

Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hawaii>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/09/people-are-really-struggling-hawaii-food-banks-scramble-to-meet-increased-demand/>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/01/hawaiis-population-drain-outpaces-most-states-again/>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2022/09/26/hawaii-news/demand-grows-at-food-banks/>



**Testimony to the House Committee on Human Services  
Tuesday, March 14, 2023; 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol; Conference Room 329  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0460, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM.**

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, 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. 0460, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK 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 establish the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program (Program), and provide a source of funding for the Program to assist food banks purchase, store, and transport Hawaii-grown or produced food to local communities for distribution. Specifically, this bill would appropriate \$5,000,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2023-2024 for deposit into a newly established Program Special Fund to facilitate the Program, and clarify that procurements executed by the Program be done in accordance with the Public Procurement Code when used for goods, services, or construction that directly benefits the Office of Community Services.

The HPCA asserts that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. Entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis. The COVID-19 pandemic has also greatly exacerbated the need for a program like this. Our overreliance on tourism has weakened our ability to bounce back from COVID's dire economic realities. The only way for us to protect ourselves from the next global pandemic is for Hawaii to diversify its economic base and become more self-sufficient. And for us to do that, we need to grow more food.

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0430, Senate Draft 1  
Tuesday, March 14, 2023; 9:00 a.m.  
Page 2

**Accordingly, the HPCA urges your favorable consideration of this bill.**

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).



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
Tuesday, March 14, 2023 — 9:00 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 460 SD1, Relating to Food Banks.**

Dear Chair Mizuno and Members of the Committee:

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

**Ulupono supports SB 460 SD1**, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to food banks in the State.

Over the last few years, one of the most pressing issues for many local families has been food insecurity. With many out of work and surviving on government unemployment support, communities have relied on the efforts of food banks and local food producers to meet their basic need to eat.

Federal monies injected into Hawai'i through county initiatives helped to support a local farm-to-food bank effort, in which food banks were able to purchase local products for distribution to needy communities. This effort was a win-win-win, in that local food producers had a market to sell their products when hotels and restaurants shuttered their doors, local families received fresh and nutritious food products made locally island-wide, and food banks that were struggling to purchase shelf-stable food due to nationwide shortages were rescued by Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers who provided local food to their communities.

The Farm to Food Bank efforts across the state led to many important foundational relationships between local farmers, ranchers, and community feeding organizations that helped struggling communities cope with the social and economic consequences of the COVID pandemic. Unfortunately, natural disasters, food supply chain disruptions, and state emergencies have become a harsh, consistent reality for our local communities. Food banks across the state will need support to meet these food security challenges.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



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 14, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

**TESTIMONY ON SB 460, SD1  
RELATING TO FOOD BANKS**

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference  
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Mizuno, Vice-Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

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

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 460, SD1**, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to food banks in the State.

The Coronavirus Pandemic has disrupted Hawai'i's local food systems and caused many local producers to lose their local markets. Many catered to tourism, large-scale events, hotels, restaurants, cruise ships, farmers' markets, and school lunch programs, which were non-existent during Hawai'i's shutdown.

Like small businesses around the state, without open and consistent markets, local farmers and ranchers will decrease food production levels and will likely downsize and/or go out of business. To help address the state's food security during the pandemic, Hawai'i's food banks partnered with local food producers to ensure that farmers and ranchers could survive.

After urgent health issues, feeding our community is the most critical challenge we face in the continuing coronavirus pandemic. With no clear end to the crisis within sight, we are already seeing the attention of leaders from around the world shift as food producer markets contract and transportation networks are shaken to their core.

During the pandemic, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau partnered with Hawai'i's food banks to provide local agricultural produce and proteins for their food assistance programs. This partnership provided nearly \$3,000,000 of locally grown, high-quality, nutritious

produce to our communities in need. We were also a food partner at the Foodbank's mass food distributions which provided locally grown produce for over 50,000 families. As an organization that aggregates and distributes food, the Hawai'i Foodbank staff brought valuable logistical insight to these events. The combined efforts of the Hawai'i Foodbank, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau, and other partner organizations allowed tens of thousands of families to have access to food during unprecedented times. This win-win partnership connected local producers that lost markets and revenue sources due to COVID-19 with the Hawai'i Foodbank to meet the increased demands of feeding Hawai'i's communities.

The dedicated funding for the emergency food assistance program will provide funds to Hawai'i's food banks that support non-profit and community feeding programs by providing community meals during emergencies. This also will help keep Hawai'i's farmers farming while also providing nutritional food to those who need it most. More than ever, the State of Hawai'i needs to assure local food production to meet the needs of the hundreds of thousands of Hawai'i families affected by this emergency and future emergencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



# THE FOOD BASKET

## HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

March 13, 2023

To: The Honorable Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Terez Amato, Vice Chair  
Committee on Human Services

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

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 460 SD1, Relating to appropriating funds to support Hawai'i's Food Banks

Aloha Chair Mizuno and Vice Chair Amato,

My name is Kristin Frost Albrecht, and I am the Executive Director of The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank. Our mission is to "End hunger in Hawai'i County". We strongly support this bill that would appropriate funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food distribution to food banks in the State.

The impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic have heightened the issues of food insecurity and hunger in our state to new levels. Due to the economic impacts of the pandemic on Hawai'i Island, our food banks in Kona and Hilo have faced the highest need in our thirty-four-year history, with record numbers of residents needing our services for the first time in their lives. In 2020, we served nearly six times more individuals than we served pre-pandemic. Although the economy is improving, but we are still serving three times more than we served pre-pandemic as our residents' grapple with the long-term impacts of pandemic unemployment, illness, and the rising costs of rent, groceries, gas, and utilities.

Due to ongoing breaks in the supply chain, the need remains high and is forecast to remain high for the next couple of years; federal commodities are falling; and philanthropy, while still higher than pre-pandemic levels, is much reduced over the height of the pandemic. The State's food banks need support to continue to ensure no-one goes hungry.

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

*Kristin Frost Albrecht*

Kristin Frost Albrecht  
Executive Director, The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST  
ALBRECHT

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WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG

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

West Hawaii Warehouse  
73-4161 ULU Wini Place, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740  
808-322-1418 Phone | 808-322-7373 Fax



**MAUI FOOD BANK**  
*Helping the Hungry*

Re: Letter of support for SB 460 and HB 314

Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **SB460** and **HB 314: Relating to Food Banks**, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry, and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want – nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Yust  
Executive Director  
Maui Food Bank



March 13, 2023

Rep. John Mizuno, Chair  
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

**RE: Testimony in support of SB 460, Relating to Food Banks**

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I **strongly support SB 460**, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with the emergency food assistance program's methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, and the State Emergency Food Assistance Program (SEFAP) established in 2022 provides important support to meet this ongoing need.

- Hawai'i has the highest cost of living in the nation, and food security is an ongoing challenge – one in six residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. One in four children is food insecure.
- The pandemic amplified the need, and the network of food banks responded by significantly increasing purchases to provide for our communities. We continue to serve 50% more people than we did before Covid.
- Inflation has increased food prices 24% since the beginning of the pandemic, making it difficult for many families to make ends meet and putting pressure on the charitable food system as well.
- Downturns in retail donations and USDA commodities have changed the food bank model. We purchase food efficiently and ensure we distribute equitably through our network of community partners.
- Purchasing food allows us to buy items that people want and need, rather than relying exclusively on donated and USDA commodity foods. We consistently hear requests for fresh produce and healthy protein, and SEFAP funds allow us to meet this demand and support the health and well-being of those we serve.
- Food banks are able to really stretch a dollar due to our relationships with producers, manufacturers, and distributors both locally and on the mainland. For each dollar received by Hawai'i Foodbank, we can provide food for more than two meals.
- Many other states support their network of food banks with core funding for food security needs.

Hawai'i Foodbank gathers donated, rescued, USDA commodity and purchased food and distributes it to those in need through our network of more than 200 agency partners. Ongoing, core funding allows us to purchase healthy foods, which helps us better support our agency partners who directly serve our communities and ensure no one goes hungry.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Amy Miller Marvin  
President and CEO, Hawai'i Foodbank

3/14/23 SB460 and HB314

Honorable State Representatives and Senators:

Thank you very much for your consideration of this very important measure. My name is Darin Shigeta, and I am currently the Board Treasurer for the Hawaii Foodbank, having been a Board Member for nearly 5 years.

I would like to submit brief testimony in support of H.B. 314 and SB460: Relating to Food Banks, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need, in accordance with existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

The Bill will facilitate the Foodbank's ability to continue our mission of providing food so that no one in our Community goes hungry. 1 in 6 Hawaii residents will struggle with hunger this year, including 82,000 children, lacking reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

As you are all aware, the COVID Pandemic completely changed the war on hunger on many fronts, a war that we are still fighting today. The Foodbank needed to almost double the amount of food distributed since the pandemic started, while also navigating changes to donation preferences, delivery protocols, operational impacts due to health and safety, and a very limited ability to hold fundraisers. While some have recovered from the pandemic's impacts, many have not, and now we are entering a new element of uncertainty with pandemic-related assistance used up, significant inflation, supply chain issues, and overall economic insecurity.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want – nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive;
- Allow food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items

In conclusion, the work that the Food Banks do on a daily basis is critical to supporting the needs of various communities within our Ohana. We respectfully request support for the crossover bills, which will allow us to continue to serve our mission to those who have been brave enough to raise their hand for help, advocating for those who have not yet drawn that courage, and positioning ourselves as Pillars of Hope in the event of a disaster or worst-case scenario.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration today.

Darin Shigeta



LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

#### Executive Officers

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**Charlie Gustafson**, Tamura Super Market, *Immediate Past Chair*

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TO: Committee on Human Services  
Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair  
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Tuesday, March 14, 2023  
TIME: 10am

RE: HB991 HD1 Relating to Food Banks

Position: Support

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

HFIA is in support of this measure. As the measure notes our state's food banks are essential every day in ensuring that food insecure individuals in Hawaii have access to food. In times of natural disasters or other crisis our food banks have also been tasked with taking the lead on mass feedings.

Unfortunately, due to the high cost of living and the recent historic inflation and other factors many people in our state face food insecurity. The food bank is a vital resource for these individuals and families.

These same issues mean that many people in Hawaii cannot afford to buy and store the two weeks of food that households are advised to have on hand in case of an emergency. Estimates vary but many experts agree that there is less than a week's worth of food in our state at any given time. Hoarding and panic buying by some could shorten that duration. As the agencies tasked with feeding our state in times of crisis it is vital that our food banks are adequately funded in order to fulfil that role, and of course to be able to continue to provide support to those who need it day to day.

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

## House Committee on Human Services

*Tuesday March 14, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.*

**In Support: S.B. 460 – Relating to Food Banks**

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of S.B. 460: Relating to Food Banks, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need.

### **Hawaii households are struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table.**

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity— meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Many of these households fall into the asset-limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE) population with incomes too high to receive financial assistance, but too low to survive. In these times, communities rely on food banks, food pantries, and other forms of charitable feeding to care for some of our most vulnerable citizens. When these communities come knocking, our food banks, and emergency food system have repeatedly answered the call—no matter how large.

### **Food banks serve a critical need in our community with ever increasing demand.**

Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry by sourcing, inspecting, and distributing over 21 million pounds of food in the last fiscal year alone. Food banks are experiencing increased demand like never before, seeing a more than 60% increase in food distributed from pre-pandemic distribution levels.

### **Funding prioritizes client choice and increases local food purchasing.**

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food banks and system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want –nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expand food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate as efficiently and effectively as our communities need them to.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HAWAII  
**HUNGER  
ACTION**  
NETWORK

Aloha Harvest

County of Hawai'i

Hawai'i Alliance for  
Community-Based Economic  
Development

Hawai'i Appleseed

Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Food Bank

Hawai'i Good Food Alliance

Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Kōkua Kalihi Valley  
Comprehensive Health Center

Lanakila Pacific

Malama Kaua'i

Maui Food Bank

The Hawai'i Hunger Action Network is composed of advocates statewide dedicated to connecting communities and taking action to ensure all people in Hawai'i have enough food to live healthy, dignified, productive lives.



March 14, 2023

The Honorable John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Terez Amato, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

Re: SB 460 SD 1 – Relating to Foodbanks

Dear Chair Mizuno, Chair Amato, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB 460 SD1, which appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to food banks in the State.

HMSA supports the efforts of The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) through DLIR's OCS and Hawaii's food banks to address food insecurity in the community. We have seen a significant increase in food insecurity in Hawaii and the stressors of the pandemic highlighted the growing challenge that families in our community face. As the Chair of the Hawaii Foodbank board of directors I have been able to see the issue up close and the concerning future in which food insecurity will be an ongoing challenge for years to come.

Therefore, we applaud the legislature's efforts to appropriate funds to support Hawaii's food banks to meet the needs of Hawaii residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 460 SD!.

Sincerely,



David R. Herndon  
Executive Vice President  
Chief Business Operations Officer



*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: House Committee on Human Services  
Re: **SB 460, SD1 - Relating to Food Banks**  
Hawai'i State Capitol and via videoconference  
Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 9:00 AM

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB 460, SD1**. This bill appropriates funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to food banks in the State.

Nearly half of children in Hawai'i live in households experiencing financial hardship. While almost 1 in 8 are in poverty, an additional one-third of families in Hawaii aren't officially poor but still don't earn enough to afford the basic life essentials.<sup>1</sup> As a result, over 50,000 of our state's keiki, or 1 in 6, face hunger.<sup>2</sup>

It is well established that the stresses of childhood poverty have both immediate and long-term effects on keiki's physical and mental health, behavioral self-control, academic achievement, and earnings as adults.<sup>3</sup>

That's why it's so important to support Hawai'i's food banks. They and their partner agencies help ensure that struggling families do not go hungry by distributing millions of pounds of food per year to those in need in our state.

Food banks were a lifeline during the pandemic when our state had some of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. But even with folks back at work, the current high inflation has led to our state's food banks to continue to see demand that's higher than before the pandemic. That is unlikely to abate, as Hawai'i had the most expensive groceries in the nation<sup>4</sup> even before the pandemic, and will continue to do so.

Many other states recognize the crucial role that food banks play in our community by providing them with funding to purchase food that they distribute to families who would otherwise go hungry. Hawai'i should do the same.

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

Thank you,

Nicole Woo  
Director of Research and Economic Policy

**HCAN Speaks! Board  
of Directors**

Liza Ryan Gill  
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*Treasurer*

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Teri Keliipuleole  
Jasmine Slovak  
Erica Yamauchi

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.auw.org/sites/default/files/pictures/ALICE-in-Focus-Children-Hawaii%20%283%29.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hawaii>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/indicator/2014/06/childhood-poverty>

<sup>4</sup> <https://meric.mo.gov/data/cost-living-data-series>



March 14, 2023

Rep. John Mizuno, Chair  
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Human Services

RE: SB 460, SD1, Relating to Food Banks

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Amato, and Committee Members,

I am writing to **SUPPORT** Senate Bill 460, Senate Draft 1.

My name is Charla Teves. I am a college student and a life-long resident of Honolulu. A formative experience for me when I was in high school was hearing news reports about radio djs mocking a popular local singer. She spoke about her experience with childhood food insecurity. Their insensitivity motivates me to support this bill. It opened my eyes to the intensive needs right here in our community. I am asking for your help to adopt policies that will eliminate hunger in our lifetime.

One in five Hawaii children struggle with hunger, according to Feeding America. At more than 55,000 children right here in our state, they would fill the Stan Sheriff Center four times over and still overflow into the parking lot. In 2021, I was one of 100 students nationwide awarded a Youth Service America and Sodexo Stop Hunger grant which enabled me to convene a Hawai'i virtual end hunger summit. Many state legislators, community leaders, students, and young adults convened to share their ideas such as supporting a statewide food policy and school gardens. I learned so much from the experience that I can no longer remain quiet. Since then, I have volunteered with many food drives and in other ways to help end hunger. Based on these experiences, I know for sure that your support of food banks in Hawaii will make a difference.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

**SB-460-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:39:16 AM

Testimony for HUS on 3/14/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB460 SD1.



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March 13, 2023

Re: Letter of support for SB 460 and HB 314

Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of **SB460** and **HB 314: Relating to Food Banks**, which would appropriate funds to the office of community services for the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need in accordance with existing methodology to determine allocations to each of the four counties.

One in six Hawai'i residents are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Hawai'i's food banks and their partners serve a critical role ensuring that those who are food insecure do not go hungry, and continue to serve significantly more people than prior to the pandemic. The food banks have the trusted relationships and purchasing power to source efficiently and distribute food equitably through their network of partners. They now need to be regularly supported by the state for the life-saving services that they provide to Hawai'i's citizens. Many states provide funding for food banks to purchase food to ensure they meet food insecurity needs.

Dollars for food purchase are important to our food system because they:

- Support food banks' ability to purchase items people want – nutrient dense foods like produce and protein are most requested.
- Expands food banks' ability to purchase local foods, which are often limited and more expensive; and
- Allows food banks to be more thoughtful about nutrition and purchase healthier items.

Food banks are a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system that need stable, core funding to operate efficiently and effectively. Mahalo for your consideration.

Mahalo,

/s/ *Craig K. Shikuma*