STAND. COM. REP. NO. 245-24

Honolulu, Hawaii MAR 25 , ²⁰²⁴

RE: H.C.R. No. 42 H.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Human Services, to which was referred H.C.R. No. 42 entitled:

"HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII ECONOMIC RESEARCH ORGANIZATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF WAYS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to request the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization to conduct a study of ways to increase access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, including:

(1) Public policy options for addressing the benefits cliff created by SNAP's eligibility requirements, including a costbenefit analysis of expanding eligibility to households that are three hundred percent above the federal poverty level; and

(2) An estimate of the number of Hawaii residents whose income is below the three hundred percent federal poverty level and who may become eligible for SNAP benefits if the State expands income eligibility to this level; and



STAND. COM. REP. NO. / SS-24 Page 2

(3) An estimate of the number of residents who are currently eligible for SNAP, but not enrolled; and

(4) Other issues that the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization determines to be important in increasing access to SNAP benefits.

Your Committee received testimony in support from Democratic Party of Hawaii; Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice; AlohaCare; and Hawaii Hunger Action Network. Your Committee received comments from the Hawaii State Department of Human Services; University of Hawaii; and UHERO.

Your Committee finds that Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are crucial in providing food assistance to some of Hawaii's most economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Many families just below SNAP's income eligibility threshold decline pay increases because the financial benefit of increased economic opportunities does not exceed the potential cost of losing SNAP benefits, thus creating a SNAP benefits cliff. Your Committee further finds that increasing access to SNAP benefits would help economically vulnerable households meet their basic needs without limiting their earning potential.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- Striking language regarding education level requirements of SNAP recipients;
- (2) Adding language requesting relevant State departments and agencies to provide the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization with access to information to successfully complete the study;
- (3) Adding language requesting the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization to submit both a preliminary and final report of the study; and
- (4) Amending the date that the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization is requested to submit a preliminary and final report of the study.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Human Services that is attached to this report, your



STAND. COM. REP. NO. /365-24 Page 3

Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.C.R. No. 42, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.C.R. No. 42, H.D. 1.

> Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Human Services,

RTEN,



State of Hawaii

House of Representatives The Thirty-second Legislature

Record of Votes of the Committee on Human Services

Bill/Resolution No.: HCR 42	: Committee Referral: Date: 2 HOS, FIN 03.21,2024			D24
The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: Pass, unamended (as is) Pass, with amendments (HD) Pasd Hold Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
HUS Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. MARTEN, Lisa (C)		Contraction and the second		
2. AMATO, Terez (VC)				
3. BELATTI, Della Au				
4. ILAGAN, Greggor				
5. KOBAYASHI, Bertrand				
6. TAKENOUCHI, Jenna				
7. NISHIMOTO, Scott Y.	V			
8. GARCIA, Diamond				
			<u> </u>	
TOTAL (8)	7		0	0
The recommendation is: Adopted If joint referral, did not support recommendation.				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee O Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				