

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

**FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023
9:30 A.M.**

CONFERENCE ROOM 325 AND VIDEO CONFERENCING

**SENATE BILL NO. 430 SD2
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM**

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

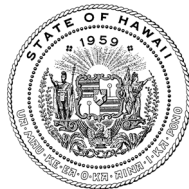
Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 430 SD2. This bill establishes the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program and the Hawaii Food Assistance Program Special Fund to alleviate food shortages in the State. As a steadfast advocate for local agriculture, the Department of Agriculture supports this bill and provides comments.

This proposed program will create a new market channel and provide an added opportunity for farmers and ranchers across the state to sell their fresh locally grown or produced food. The additional revenue stream will help to offset rising cost of operations facing so many of our local farmers and producers. This initiative will further provide an incentive for local agriculturalists to produce more food and to relieve the shortages experienced in the state during the recent pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 430, S.D. 2

March 17, 2023
9:30 a.m.
Room 325 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 430, S.D. 2, amends Chapter 371K, HRS, to add a new part to:

- Establish the Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank Program (HFFBP) to be administered by the Office of Community Services (OCS) within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to relieve food shortages by providing financial support through the distribution of fresh locally grown or produced food to residents of the State, including low-income and unemployed families and individuals, at no cost to the recipients.
- Establish the Hawai'i Food Assistance Program Special Fund (HFAPSF) to be administered by OCS to fund programs to provide hunger relief for those in need and for the purposes of the HFFBP.
- Exempt all procurements executed pursuant to this part from the requirements of Chapters 103D and 103F, HRS.

- Exempt the HFAPSF from Sections 36-27, 36-30, and 37-53, HRS.
- Appropriate an unspecified amount in general funds for FY 24 to be deposited into the HFAPSF.
- Appropriate an unspecified amount in special funds for FY 24 from the HFAPSF.
- Allow OCS to retain 10% of the appropriation from the HFAPSF for its administrative costs in entering into and overseeing contracts adopted pursuant to Section 371K-A, HRS.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding S.B. No. 430, S.D. 2, it is not clear why the HFFBP cannot be implemented using general funds and it is likely that the HFAPSF would not be self-sustaining as there is no defined revenue source for the special fund.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JOVANIA DOMINGO DELA CRUZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
www.hawaii.gov/labor
Phone: (808) 586-8675 / Fax: (808) 586-8685
Email: dlir.ocs@hawaii.gov

IN REPLY, REFER TO:
OCS 23.1123

March 15, 2023

To: The Honorable Cedrick Asuega Gates, Chair,
The Honorable Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Sustainability

Date: Friday, March 17, 2023

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 325, State Capitol & Videoconference

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

Position: Support

Re: S.B. 430, S.D.2 – RELATING TO FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM

I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

This bill would create a Farm to Food Bank program and a special fund, to be administered by the Office of Community Services (OCS), whereby OCS would distribute funds to food banks so that they could purchase locally grown and produced food and distribute it to qualifying low-income and unemployed people to supplement their food needs.

The bill would add two new sections to the legislation that created OCS – namely HRS Chapter 371K – to direct OCS to administer a Farm to Food Bank program and to create a special fund for OCS to receive appropriations and other moneys to purchase locally produced food and distribute it, through food banks, to low-income and unemployed people in the State. Section 2 of the bill would create the program within the OCS administrative structure, and Section 3 of the bill would establish the special fund.

Section 2(b) of the bill directs OCS to make funds available to food banks located in Hawaii. Section 2(c) would require the food banks to use the funds to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawaii to recipients at no cost to the recipients. Section 2(d) adopts the federal code's definition of "food bank" in 7 USC §7501(5):

(f) **Food bank** means a public or charitable institution that maintains an established operation involving the provision of food or edible commodities, or the products of food or edible commodities, to food pantries, soup kitchens, hunger relief centers, or other food or feeding centers that, as an integral part of their normal activities, provide meals or food to feed needy persons on a regular basis.

Section 3 of the bill would add this Farm to Food Bank special fund to the list of 34 other special funds that, under HRS §36-27, are exempted from a five percent administrative fee that is deducted from all other special funds and transferred to the general fund.

Similarly, Section 4 of the bill would amend HRS §36-30 to add this food assistance special fund to the current list of 28 other special funds that are exempt from responsibility to pay a pro-rata share of administrative expenses incurred by the department (here, DLIR) that is responsible for operations supported by the special fund.

Section 5 of the bill would appropriate an unspecified amount from general revenues, to be deposited into the Hawaii Food Assistance Special Fund.

Then, under Section 6 of the bill, this money is to be appropriated to contract with food banks to purchase locally produced food and distribute these commodities "to relieve food shortages experienced by residents of the State, including low-income and unemployed families and individuals."

Section 6 of the bill authorizes the use of an unspecified amount of special fund money "for uses consistent with the purposes of the Hawaii Food Assistance Program Special Fund for use in State FY 2023-2024 by OCS. Section 6 also states that OCS will expend the appropriated amount and that OCS may retain ten percent of the appropriation for OCS's administrative expenses in administering the Farm-to-Food Bank program.

II. CURRENT LAW

Currently, Hawaii has no legislation that creates a program at the State level in which a State agency receives appropriations for a special fund to purchase food and distribute it, through food banks, to low-income people in the State. OCS currently administers federal programs that 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 about \$23,000 to the State of Hawaii for a farm-to-food bank program. OCS administers this program through contracts with Hawaii Foodbank, serving Honolulu and Kauai, and with The Food Basket, which is the food bank for the Island of Hawaii. However, this program is very strictly limited because it provides funding only for administration and relies on donations from farmers. Moreover, the State (through its grantees) must provide one-for-one matching funds, which the food banks provide in donated labor and administrative funding.

III. COMMENTS ON THE BILL

The Office of Community Services **supports** S.B. 430, S.D.2, provided that passage of the bill would not replace or adversely impact priorities in the Governor's Budget Request. OCS applauds efforts to support local farming and the provision of **fresh** food commodities to people in Hawaii who are suffering from insufficient food security. This focus on fresh, locally grown foods would improve the quality of food available to people needing this support.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.



SB430 SD2
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

March 17, 2023

9:30 AM

Room 325

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers its **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS** for SB430 SD2, which would establish the Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank Program and to provide a source of funding for the program as well as to serve to stimulate the State's food systems economy and food needs. **OHA offers an amendment to enhance this measure's reach in terms of addressing the need for culturally relevant and responsive food and to encourage the local cultivation of these food sources.**

OHA, as the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians,¹ wishes to ensure that 'ai pono (healthy eating/lifestyle) is embodied by this measure to further address health and economic disparities faced by Native Hawaiians; access to culturally relevant foods is integral to improving Native Hawaiian health. With this in mind, OHA offers the following amendment to subsection (a) of this measure on Page 1, lines 13-17, and Page 2, lines 1-4, to read:

§371K-A Hawaii farm to food bank program. (a) There is established the Hawaii farm to food bank program to be administered by the office of community services within the department of labor and industrial relations. The purpose of the program shall be to relieve food shortages experienced by residents of the State, including low-income and unemployed families and individuals, by providing financial support for the distribution of fresh locally grown or produced food and culturally relevant food to those persons.

OHA takes care to note that Native Hawaiians face inequities and disparities at a disproportionately greater rate than others in the State. Native Hawaiians face health inequities, in part, stemming from the lack of access to culturally relevant foods; Native Hawaiians are disproportionately vulnerable to financial instability; and the high cost of

¹ HRS §10-3.



SB430 SD2
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

living, which includes the cost of land, has severed Native Hawaiians from their homeland and disadvantaged Native Hawaiian hānai ‘ai (food-producer-practitioners).²

I. Native Hawaiians Health Needs

Nā Pou Kihī (“The Corner Posts”) is a Hawaiian framework for achieving social and health equity³ at a time of ever-worsening health inequities and disparities faced by the Native Hawaiian people.⁴ Native Hawaiians are afflicted with chronic disease at a rate three times higher and a decade earlier than the general population of Hawai‘i.⁵ Native Hawaiians have the shortest life expectancy in their own homeland.⁶ The four interconnected corner posts of Nā Pou Kihī are Ke Ao ‘Ōiwi (Indigenous Cultural Space), Ka Mālama ‘Āina (Environmental Stewardship), Ka Wai Ola (Social Justice), and Ka ‘Ai Pono (healthy consumption) – together, they support an interwoven protective canopy over a collection of ideals that give hope to a people in great need; ideals, like food sovereignty, cultural relevance, and increased access to our traditional foods.

II. Native Hawaiian Economic Needs

The majority of Native Hawaiian families, in Hawai‘i, are unable to make ends meet,⁷ with 63% of Native Hawaiians reporting that they are finding it difficult to get by.⁸ Native Hawaiians have the lowest household income.⁹ Native Hawaiians have the highest poverty rates for individuals and families.¹⁰ Native Hawaiians make less money,¹¹ with lower average earnings for both men and women.¹² Native Hawaiians have the highest rate of

² ‘Apoākea (Infinite Reach) Native Hawaiian Innovation Institute, Hānai ‘Ai Hawai‘i Program.

³ Dept. of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, *Assessment and Priorities for the Health and Well-Being in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders*, 2020, p.16.

⁴ Id. at 9.

⁵ Id.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Aloha United Way / United for ALICE, *ALICE in Hawai‘i: 2022 Facts and Figures*, Nov. 2022, p.6.

⁸ Id. at 9.

⁹ Dept. of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, *Demographic, Social, Economic, and Housing Characteristics for Selected Race Groups in Hawaii*, Mar. 2018, p.3.

¹⁰ Id. at 13.

¹¹ OHA Report, *Affordable Housing for Hawai‘i and Native Hawaiians: Exploring Ideas and Innovation*, Aug. 2020, p.10.

¹² Dept. of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, *Assessment and Priorities for the Health and Well-Being in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders*, 2020, p.12.



SB430 SD2
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

using public assistance and homeless services.¹³ Native Hawaiians are overrepresented among the homeless in Hawai‘i.¹⁴

III. Native Hawaiian Food-Producer Needs

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFR) “as those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice.”¹⁵ The USDA has affirmed that Native Hawaiians are recognized under the SDFR characterization¹⁶ and a number of financial support instruments exist through the USDA for SDFRs.¹⁷ While this distinction and the needs of those within this designation exist at the federal level, the State of Hawai‘i has yet to adopt the necessary policies and mechanisms to address inequities and disparities faced by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, like Native Hawaiian mahi‘ai.

OHA appreciates the opportunity to support SB430 SD2 and **respectfully asks the Legislature to take OHA’s recommendation into consideration as a foundational step toward addressing culturally relevant food needs, while also supporting the food-producers that face disparate economic hurdles to providing these culturally relevant foods.** Mahalo nui loa.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Partners In Care, *2022 Point In Time Count*, p.7.

¹⁵ USDA Economic Research Service, *Socially Disadvantaged, Beginning, Limited Resource, and Female Farmers and Ranchers*, available at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/socially-disadvantaged-beginning-limited-resource-and-female-farmers-and-ranchers/#:~:text=The%20USDA%20defines%20socially%20disadvantaged,and%20Asian%20or%20Pacific%20I slander.>

¹⁶ USDA Farm Service Agency, *Minority and Women Farmers and Ranchers*, available at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/minority-and-women-farmers-and-ranchers/index>.

¹⁷ USDA Farm Service Agency, *Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Fact Sheet 2019*, available at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/2019/sda_loans-fact_sheet-aug_2019.pdf.



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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 17, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

**TESTIMONY ON SB 430, SD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, 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 430, SD2, which establishes the Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawai'i Food Assistance Program Special Fund to alleviate food shortages in the State.

The Coronavirus Pandemic 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 Foodbanks partnered with local food producers to ensure that farmers and ranchers could survive.

At the onset of the pandemic, Hawai'i's Foodbanks partnered with farmers and ranchers to provide local agricultural produce and proteins for their food assistance programs. As organizations that aggregate and distribute food, Foodbank staff brought valuable logistical insight to these programs. The combined efforts of Hawai'i's Foodbanks, 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.

A Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank Program with dedicated funding will provide funds to Hawai'i's food banks that support non-profit and community feeding programs by providing locally grown or produced foods to communities in need. This will also help Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers while also providing local nutritional food to those who need it most.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 16, 2023

TO: The Honorable Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 17, 2023; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 430, SD2, RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to establish the Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawai'i Food Assistance Program Special Fund to alleviate food shortages in the State.

The Maui County Council adopted Resolution 23-43, "URGING THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT AND ADOPT THE PRIORITY FOOD POLICIES RECOMMENDED BY THE TRANSFORMING HAWAII'S FOOD SYSTEMS TOGETHER INITIATIVE," in support of this measure. Therefore, I offer this testimony on the Council's behalf.

The Maui County Council **supports** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This provides a much-needed source of funding for food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i.
2. This measure advances the following Maui County General Plan policy: "Work with other levels of government and the nonprofit sector to expand services to address hunger. . ."
3. This measure advances the goal of ending hunger and increasing food security in Hawai'i, as outlined in Hawai'i's Aloha+ Challenge and the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations.

For the foregoing reasons, the Maui County Council **supports** this measure.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Friday, March 17, 2023; 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol; Conference Room 325
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0430, SENATE DRAFT 2, RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM.

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, 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 THE INTENT** of Senate Bill No. 0430, Senate Draft 2, 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 an unspecified amount of 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.

This bill would also take effect on July 1, 2050.

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

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0430, Senate Draft 2
Friday, March 17, 2023; 9:30 a.m.
Page 2

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.

On a technical note, we observe that this bill might be in conflict with Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and could be construed as facilitating direct state funding to private entities. Because of this, the HPCA strongly urges this committee to consult with the Majority Attorney for clarification on legal check.

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.



Food+ Policy Internship 2023

food@purplemaia.org

March 15, 2023

To: Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloe, and the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Subject: **SB430**, Relating to the Hawai'i Farm to Foodbank Program

Aloha,

Food+ Policy supports **SB430**. Providing this funding to Hawai'i's food banks can help alleviate the 1 in 10 people in Hawai'i who are experiencing hunger, according to Feeding America, while at the same time supporting our state's local farmers.

This bill helps to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, ending hunger while achieving food security. This bill supports a systematic approach to finding solutions for hunger and food insecurity and financial sustainability for farmers. This will also help to keep money circulating within the State of Hawaii. Supporting the Farm to Food Bank will help solve some of the most pressing issues our food system faces.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on bill SB430.

Mahalo,
Kelsey Amos & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2023, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

SB430 SD2

RELATING TO THE HAWAII FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM

Friday, March 17, 2023, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB430 SD2** which establishes the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawaii Food Assistance Program Special Fund to alleviate food shortages in the State.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports efforts to ensure that infrastructure is in place to alleviate food shortages. With the rising cost of living, hunger will continue to be a problem that we need to solve as a community. In the past, the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council has assisted its members to coordinate meat donations, and individual ranchers coordinated their own meat donations in addition. This program will establish a clear way for cattle producers to participate in food donations.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





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 Agriculture & Food Systems

Re: **SB 430, SD2 - Relating to the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program**
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
March 17, 2023, 9:30 AM

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing **in SUPPORT of HB 430, SD2**. This bill establishes the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawaii Food Assistance Program Special Fund to alleviate food shortages 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.¹ As a result, over 50,000 of our state's keiki, or 1 in 6, face hunger.²

HCAN Speaks! Board
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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.³

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 nation⁴ before the pandemic, and will continue to do so.

It's also important to support our local farms. That's why farm to food bank programs are win-win, by providing local food to those who need it while also supporting both local farmers.

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

Thank you,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

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

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

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

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

House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems Friday March 17, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

In Support: S.B. 430– Relating to the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of S.B. 430 – Relating to the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program, which would establish the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawaii food assistance program special fund to alleviate food shortages in the State.

Hawaii’s food banks play a central role in the network of national, regional, and local organizations working together to address the needs of food insecure communities across the state. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hawai’i food banks have established and strengthened relationships with local farmers, producers, and ranchers to meet the increased demand for food banks and pantries. Hawaii’s food banks are committed to providing healthy food for those in need.

While farmers have long donated to local food banks, state-funded farm to food bank programs go one step further and provide crucial financial incentives to farmers. Farm to food bank programs are a straightforward win-win: provide healthy food to those who need it while supporting both local producers and the economy.

Hawaii’s food banks are experiencing increased demand like never before, seeing a more than 60% increase in food distributed from pre-pandemic distribution levels. This program and funding is crucial for food banks to be able to continue to provide the healthiest options to the people that they serve.

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

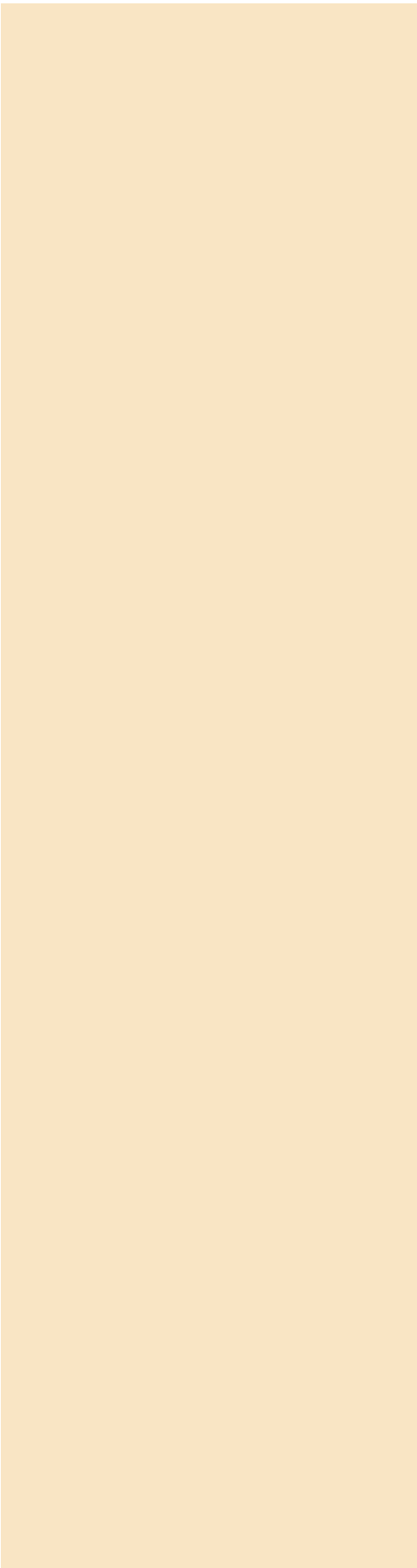
Kōkua Kalihi Valley
Comprehensive Health Center

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.





To: The House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems (AGR)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Friday, March 17, 2023, 9:30 am

In strong support of SB430 SD2

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and AGR Committee members;

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org **strongly supports SB430 SD2** that establishes the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawaii Food Assistance Program Special Fund to alleviate food shortages in the State.

Many families in Hawaii struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis, and the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated this situation. This measure is a wonderful idea that supports our farmers and at the same time helps our local families in need by providing local, fresh, healthy options. Efforts to support our farmers also builds our resiliency and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food.

Please pass SB430 SD2 so that we all may reap these benefits.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



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Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai
Molokai

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU strongly supports SB430.**

Food insecurity is a serious issue in Hawaii and the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated this problem. Our state's farmers are a vital part of the solution, and the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program provides a crucial link between our farmers and those in need. Further, this bill a win-win situation - farmers can sell their surplus crops, reducing food waste and increasing their income, while those in need gain access to fresh, locally grown food.

We believe it is essential to strengthen partnerships between the food banks and agricultural producers to bring fresh produce and other foods to households in need. Additionally, we are confident that the monetary appropriations will enable farmer and food banks to provide the much-needed food access for the state's residents.

We also recognize food banks need financial support beyond local purchasing and advocate for a prompt hearing of SB460, which will appropriate funds to the DLIR Office of Community Services to support food banks across the State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



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Garret Sugai
HMSA

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Kaiser Permanente

May Okihiro, MD, MS
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD
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 16, 2023

To: Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Re: Support for SB 430 SD2, Relating to the Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank
Program

Hrg: Friday, March 17, 2023, at 9:30 AM, Conf Rm 325

The Obesity Prevention Task Force (OPTF), a program of Hawai'i Public Health Institute¹ (HIPHI), is in **Support of SB 430**, which would establish and fund a farm to food bank program.

Ending Food Waste

Farmers sometimes produce supply beyond market demand. Currently, this excess would go to waste. However, with a robust farm to food bank program, the food bank system can act as a purchaser of last resort.² This system provides a solid backstop for the local farming community, ensuring an opportunity for them to sell excess food. This foodbank backstop adds security to farmers and lessens the risk in their business operations, helping them expand their business.

Help the Local Economy

This program will help local farmers sell more food within the State. The food they sell will go to those most in need here in Hawai'i that depend on the food bank system. This investment will flow in all sectors of our economy as the farmers and food distributors spend their earned money on other goods and services.

Increasing Food Supply

Without a farm to food bank program, a lot of food that's already grown would go to waste, never making it to market. Increasing the amount of food available within our supply chain through this program would provide more food for those using the foodbank system. There is consistent demand for fresh produce from the food banks, but it is often unavailable. This program can help fill that void by providing healthier food choices for our residents.

Mahalo,



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

1. Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations and works to make 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.
2. <https://kauainownews.com/2022/02/14/hawaii-food-basket-receives-donation-from-kaiser-for-new-program/>



March 16, 2023

Rep. Cedric Gates, Chair
Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

RE: Testimony in support of SB 430, Relating to the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawaii Foodbank, I **support SB 430**, which seeks to establish a Farm to Food Bank program to be administered by the Office of Community Services.

The Hawai'i Foodbank established our Farm to Foodbank program during the pandemic, when we dramatically increased our purchases to support local farmers during the sudden closure of the restaurant market and to meet the significant increase in food insecurity. For nearly three years, we have continued to fund purchases from local producers through philanthropic support and other sources. We believe long-term sustainable funding for farm to food bank programs is a win-win for agriculture and food security in Hawai'i.

We respectfully request that this bill also consider funding to the Office of Community Services for the administration of the program.

Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, where one in six residents lacks consistent access to healthy, nutritious food. The Hawai'i Foodbank gathers, donates, rescues, and purchases food to distribute to those in need through our network of more than 200 agency partners. Our ability to purchase food that is nutritious, culturally relevant, and desirable is a critical piece of our anti-hunger work.

Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank



March 16, 2023

Rep. Cedric Gates, Chair
Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

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Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank

SB-430-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 11:37:44 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

SB-430-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 3:46:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-430-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 10:20:42 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB430, which would establish Hawai'i Farm to Food Bank Program and provide a source of funding for the program. We should fund state food banks to purchase, store, and transport food grown or produced in Hawai'i to local communities for distribution. This program will serve the state's food needs, provide local food producers with a market to support their operations, and keep moneys circulating within the state to boost the local economy. Please pass this bill.

SB-430-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 6:17:44 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of SD2. Thank you.



THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

March 16, 2023

To: The Honorable Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
The Honorable Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

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

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 430SD2, Relating to appropriating funds to the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program

Aloha Chair Gates and Vice Chair Kahaloa,

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 Hawaii County". We strongly SUPPORT this bill.

The Food Basket has long depended on the farmers and ranchers on Hawai'i Island to provide healthy, nutritious food for our clientele. This was never truer than during the pandemic when the numbers of residents who needed our services soared to six times more than pre-pandemic. Had it not been for our farmers and ranchers, we would not have been able to source enough food to distribute to all who needed assistance. Establishing a statewide Farm to Food Bank program that would both provide financial incentives to local producers as well as meet the increased demand for emergency food for our food banks would be a double win -- healthy food for our residents in need, and vital support for our local producers and the economy.

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 ongoing 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. Although the economy is improving, we are still serving over three times more than we served pre-pandemic as our residents' grapple with the long-term impacts of the pandemic, as well as the rising costs of rent, groceries, gas, and utilities.

Food banks and Hawai'i's producers both provide a critical safety net in our food and disaster response system. This bill would provide crucial funding for both, increasing food security for our neediest residents and at the same time, strengthening our food system as a whole, benefitting all in the state.

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

SB-430-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 12:35:06 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Nelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify **in SUPPORT** of S.B. 430 – Relating to the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program, which would establish the Hawaii Farm to Food Bank Program and Hawai‘i food assistance program special fund to alleviate food shortages in the State.

Hawai‘i’s food banks play a central role in the network of national, regional, and local organizations working together to address the needs of food insecure communities across the state. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hawai‘i food banks have established and strengthened relationships with local farmers, producers, and ranchers to meet the increased demand for food banks and pantries. Hawai‘i’s food banks are committed to providing healthy food for those in need.

While farmers have long donated to local food banks, state-funded farm to food bank programs go one step further and provide crucial financial incentives to farmers. Farm to food bank programs are a straightforward win-win: provide healthy food to those who need it while supporting both local producers and the economy.

Hawai‘i’s food banks are experiencing increased demand like never before, seeing a more than 60% increase in food distributed from pre-pandemic distribution levels. This program and funding is crucial for food banks to be able to continue to provide the healthiest options to the people that they serve.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Lauren Nelson

Makawao, Hawai‘i

SB-430-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 12:35:06 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
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Lauren Nelson

Makawao, Hawai‘i