

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

February 27, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 460 HD1 – RELATING TO FOOD BANKS.**

Hearing: Thursday, March 2, 2023, Time 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 211 & 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.

**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. Providing OCS with additional funds to purchase food and distribute it will provide additional food resources for low-income residents.

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

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNTSMAN  
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  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.hawaii.gov/labor](http://www.hawaii.gov/labor)  
Phone: (808) 586-8675 / Fax: (808) 586-8685  
Email: [dlir.ocs@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.ocs@hawaii.gov)

IN REPLY, REFER TO:  
**OCS 23.1098**

February 28, 2023

To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair,  
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 211, 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

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.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, March 2, 2023; 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0460, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO FOOD BANKS.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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. 0460, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO FOOD BANKS.

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.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, to fund the purchase, storage, and transportation costs of food for distribution to those in need. The bill also specifies that the funds be distributed according to the same methodology used by the Emergency Food Assistance Program of the Food and Nutrition Services of the United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to federal law. The funds would be expended by the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on January 1, 2050.

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. With so many people unemployed and underemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis. Even as the public health emergency draws to a close, families continue to struggle.

Because of this, it is imperative that the Legislature shore up Hawaii's social service safety net of which the network of food banks is a vital component. This is especially warranted in light of record general fund surpluses and the possibility of economic downturns in the near future.

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 0460, Senate Draft 1**  
**Thursday, March 2, 2023; 10:00 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

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.

**Despite this technical observation, the HPCA strongly 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.



*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: Senate Committee on Labor and Technology  
Re: **SB 460, SD1 - Relating to Food Banks**  
Hawai'i State Capitol and via videoconference  
Thursday, March 2, 2023, 10:00 AM

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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

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<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>



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**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*  
**Charlie Gustafson**, Tamura Super Market, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Wednesday, March 2, 2023  
TIME: 10am  
PLACE: Conference Room 211

RE: SB460 SD1 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.





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**Stan Brown**, Acosta Sales & Marketing, *Advisor*

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

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

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

**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Immediate Past Chair*

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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

## Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday March 2, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.

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

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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.

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.



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 2, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, 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.



# WAI'ANAE COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

(A nonprofit organization serving our community)

P. O. Box 2308, Wai'anae, Hawaii 96792

Phone: (808) 723-9161

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Patty Kahanamoku Teruya  
President/Director

Keoki K. Aiwohi  
Vice President/Director

Christopher L. Kuaiwa  
Secretary/Director

Katherine N Lundgren  
Treasurer/Director

February 28, 2023

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

My name is Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya, President of the Wai'anae Coast Community Foundation (WCCF), testifying on behalf of our nonprofit organization, who has been involved in the Hawaii Food Bank since 2015.

We, support HB 314, 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.

The Hawaii Food Bank has assisted many communities island wide providing nutrition food which during 2020, 2021, toughest time of COVID our organization continued to serve monthly food bank, served over 600 vehicles lined up to get food from 4:00 am. Since then, we continue to do our monthly food banks from Waianae Kapolei to Ewa Beach. It is a true need even after the COVID pandemic.

I urge support funding for HB 314 for the Hawaii Food Bank so we may continue to provide service to communities' island wide.

Mahalo Ke Akua,  
Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya

Patty Kahanamoku-Teruya,  
Director

Angel Network Charities  
53639 Kalaniana'ole Hwy  
Honolulu, HI 96821

March 1, 2023

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Sen. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

I am testifying on behalf of Angel Network Charities, Inc (ANC).

I support HB 314, 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.

ANC provides support to the East Oahu communities through its food pantry. With no paid employees and approximately forty regular volunteers, ANC manages to extend its reach across Oahu with the assistance from the Hawaii Foodbank to over 1,000 families each month. Since the onset of the COVID pandemic, the demand for ANC pantry services has not diminished and the food insecurity continues to increase. The Hawaii Foodbank donates over 75,000 pounds to our pantry each month.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

Jewell K. Tuitele  
President  
Angel Network Charities



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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS  
Thursday, March 2, 2023 — 10:00 a.m.

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

Dear Chair Dela Cruz 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*





March 1, 2023

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Sen. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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



# THE FOOD BASKET

HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

**LATE**

March 2, 2023

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

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 Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Agaran,

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 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-three-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  
Executive Director, The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KRISTIN FROST ALBRECHT

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SAMANTHA COLLINS

WWW.HAWAIIFOODBASKET.ORG

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

**SB-460-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 9:26:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2023 10:00:00 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.

**SB-460-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 4:41:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hannah Hyun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB460 that will continue the State Emergency Food Assistance Program that provides funding to our counties' food banks. With inflation on top of the struggles many in our community are still experiencing from the pandemic, our food banks just can't keep up nor rely on donations. They need State funds to continue to meet the increased need across our Islands.

Please consider supporting our food banks and helping one in six Hawaii residents to experience food insecurity - a basic necessity.

Mahalo!

**SB-460-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 5:46:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2023 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Our organization supports this bill. We serve up to 5000 bags of groceries per month in the Kalihi Palama area, primarily to elderly people. There is significant food insecurity in our county and the need for state assistance to continue to support. Foodbank is crucial. Please pass this bill for the sake of our elders, and for the sake of our children.



## HIPHI Board

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## 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: February 27, 2023

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Support for SB460 SD1, Relating to Food Banks

Hrg: Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 10:00 AM, Conf Rm 211

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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/>

**LATE**

**SB-460-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 11:26:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hunter Heavilin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of SB460, which proposes the appropriation of funds to the Office of Community Services of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations for the purpose of purchasing, storing, and transporting food to be distributed to food banks in the State. This bill is a critical step in addressing the increasing need for food assistance in our communities, especially during these challenging times when many individuals and families are struggling to put food on the table.

The funds appropriated through SB460 will go a long way in ensuring that food banks in the State have the resources they need to provide food to those in need. This will help to alleviate the burden on families who are struggling financially, and it will also ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. I urge all lawmakers to support SB460, as it is an important measure to help those who are most vulnerable in our society.