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DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKALE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
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TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKALE

February 1, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative Lisa Marten, Chair
House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1747 – RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 3, 2026, Time 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of the bill and provides comments. This bill requires the Department to request and implement waivers or extensions from the federal government to make sugary drinks and candy ineligible for purchase using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

In October 2025, the Department applied to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) for a demonstration waiver to impose additional purchase restrictions on certain SNAP-eligible food items. The Department's waiver request was approved in December 2025 to restrict the use of SNAP benefits to purchase soft drinks that are defined as a nonalcoholic beverage that is made with carbonated water and is sweetened with more than 10 grams of sugar per serving, and does not include a beverage that contains milk, milk products, soy, rice, or other milk substitutes, or that is greater than 50% vegetable or fruit juice by volume. The implementation date for this restriction is August 1, 2026.

Understanding this is a new initiative for the State and USDA-FNS, the waiver process provides states with flexibility to determine implementation considerations, as these

restrictions will need to be implemented at the retailer level. The Department had limited the restrictions it would pursue for this reason. Statutorily prescribing the restrictions to be pursued at this time would restrict or negate the Department's ability to first assess the complexities in implementing, monitoring the implementation of this type of waiver, and the impact it has on the community, especially smaller retailers, in addressing the intended purpose of consumers opting for healthier selections, before considering further expansion of restricted items.

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



Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Opposition for HB 1747 – Relating to Human Services
House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness
Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 9:00AM

Dear Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and members of the Committee:

Hawai‘i Appleseed opposes **HB 1747**, which would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to request and implement waivers or waiver extensions from the federal government to make sugary drinks and candy ineligible foods for purchase with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

At face value, limiting SNAP purchases to “unhealthy” items may seem like a straightforward public health measure. However, evidence from other states shows these restrictions have failed to yield meaningful health outcomes and can create serious unintended consequences—posing major challenges for Hawai‘i’s 894 retailers¹ and 157,000 residents² who rely on SNAP.

These waivers have been publicly opposed by dozens of national and local groups representing public health professionals, child and anti-poverty advocates, and the food industry,^{3,4,5} citing the following concerns:

- **Targeting SNAP Recipients:** Sugary products are a health concern for the entire state, and policies to decrease our state’s sugar consumption should be focused on all of our residents, not just those who receive federal SNAP benefits. Targeting only those who receive SNAP is an attack on their dignity and autonomy, and diverts attention from more comprehensive, evidence-based public health solutions.
- **Impact on Retailers:** For many food retailers, SNAP makes up a significant portion of sales. While Hawai‘i’s waiver is currently limited to soft drinks, it still would require retailers to reprogram cash registers and online systems, retrain staff, and manage a more confusing checkout process. Some retailers might decide to drop out of the program entirely – threatening access to food assistance in communities where grocery options are already limited. Costs will likely be passed on to all customers, potentially driving up the price of food across the board.⁶

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (n.d.). [SNAP retailer locator](#).

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP Data Tables: National and/or State Level Monthly and/or Annual Data,” Food and Nutrition Service, 2025. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

³ Alliance to End Hunger, Bread for the World, Church World Service, *et al.* 2024. [Sign-On Letter: SNAP-Choice](#). May 20, 2024.

⁴ Child & Student Nutrition Alliance, *et al.* 2024. [Letter to the Senate: Oppose SNAP Restriction Pilots](#). March 1, 2024.

⁵ American Bakers Association, Alliance to End Hunger, American Beverage Association, *et al.* 2024. [Letter to the Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack, USDA: Avoid Advancing SNAP Food-Choice Restrictions](#). July 30, 2024.

⁶ Krobath, Danielle M., et al. “Safeguarding SNAP as an Effective Antihunger Program: Myths and Potential Harms of Adding Diet Quality as a Core Objective.” *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 115, 2025, pp. 37–41, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2024.307863>

- **Administrative Burden:** DHS is working hard to implement the recently passed federal budget reconciliation bill, which adds new costs and eligibility changes onto the state.⁷ This additional restriction only adds red tape and diverts staff time away from critical tasks like ensuring timely benefits and reducing error rates.
- **Incentives Over Restrictions:** Finally, there are other proven, effective ways to strengthen SNAP and improve diets, namely through expanding incentives for local, nutritious foods so that healthy options are more affordable than processed alternatives. Research has found no significant improvements in diet quality among SNAP participants subject to restrictions⁸; however, increasing fruit and vegetable incentives amongst SNAP participants has been proven to increase fruit and vegetable purchases while also decreasing purchase of sugar-sweetened beverages.⁹ Programs like Hawai‘i’s DA BUX are proven to be much more effective at producing healthy outcomes than restrictions, while preferred by the public.¹⁰

SNAP food-restriction waivers for Hawai‘i and other states does not strengthen this vital safety net—it complicates it, stigmatizes recipients, and threatens access for many who need SNAP the most. Thank you for your consideration.

⁷ Hay, Jeremy. “New Federal Rules Ramp Up the Pressure on People Who Count on Food Stamps.” *Honolulu Civil Beat*, October 29, 2025, <https://www.civilbeat.org/2025/10/new-federal-rules-ramp-up-pressure-people-who-rely-food-stamps/>

⁸ Krobath, Danielle M., et al. “Safeguarding SNAP as an Effective Antihunger Program: Myths and Potential Harms of Adding Diet Quality as a Core Objective.” *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 115, 2025, pp. 37–41, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2024.307863>

⁹ Thapa, Keshab, et al. “Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Restriction or Fruit and Vegetable Purchase Incentive in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Participant’s Voice and Choice Behavior.” *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2024, pp. 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2023.2179448>

¹⁰ Durward, Carrie M., et al. “Double Up Food Bucks Participation Is Associated with Increased Fruit and Vegetable Consumption and Food Security among Low-Income Adults.” *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, vol. 51, no. 3, 2019, pp. 342–347, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2018.08.011>

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 & Homelessness
Re: **HB1747 – Relating to Human Services**
Hawaii State Capitol & Via Videoconference
February 3, 2026; 9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, I am writing in **OPPOSITION to HB1747**, which would require the Department of Humans Services (DHS) to request and implement waivers or waiver extensions from the federal government to make sugary drinks and candy ineligible foods for purchase with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently approved a similar waiver for Hawai'i under the Make America Healthy Again initiative.¹ We are concerned that these new SNAP food restrictions will add more red tape to the program, stigmatize participants and threaten access to food assistance for those who depend on it most, without delivering meaningful improvements in health outcomes.

While sugary products contribute to preventable health conditions, banning them from SNAP is not an effective public health strategy. The true obstacle to healthy eating is affordability. Instead of improving health, the policy restricts choice and unfairly targets low-income residents.

Research shows that expanding incentives for healthy foods is far more effective than imposing restrictions. Studies have found little evidence that food bans improve diet quality, while programs that reward fruit and vegetable purchases, such as our SNAP DA BUX program, consistently increase healthy eating and reduce sugary drink consumption.²

For many grocery stores, SNAP represents a substantial share of their revenue. This waiver will force retailers to reprogram systems, retrain staff, and manage confusion at checkout registers. Some stores may choose to withdraw from the program altogether, putting food access at risk in already underserved communities. These added costs are likely to be passed on to all shoppers, potentially increasing food prices statewide.

DHS, which administers SNAP in Hawai'i, is already under pressure to implement federal changes to SNAP that introduce new costs and eligibility requirements. Adding new food restrictions diverts staff from essential responsibilities, such as delivering benefits on time and reducing errors.

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

Thank you,
Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/waivers/foodrestriction>

² <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/SNAP-Choice-Restriction-Waivers-Risks.pdf>



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Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Human Services and Homelessness
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 3, 2026
TIME: 9am

RE: HB1747 Relating to Human Services
Position: Oppose

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

HFIA is in strong opposition to this measure and in strong support of SNAP Choice. We believe that Hawaii residents are best qualified and equipped to determine how they spend their grocery budgets, regardless of whether that budget includes some SNAP funding.

Furthermore, waivers aimed at limiting SNAP choice create unnecessary administrative burdens for the Department of Human Services, retailers, and suppliers. We are already seeing challenges with implementation of the existing SNAP waiver in the state. Other states that have attempted to include items listed in this bill such as "candy" and "confectionary items" are facing even greater challenges with implementation.

If the intent of this measure is to improve the access to healthy food for SNAP users then we urge the Committee to instead look at increased support for programs such as the



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Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

Double Up Food Bucks, “DA BUX” program which makes locally grown produce more affordable for SNAP users.

SNAP is a cost effective and functional program that ensures that all participants can participate in our food systems and buy groceries with dignity. We strongly encourage the Committee to not undermine this essential program by taking away the autonomy of Hawaii SNAP users.

Please hold this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Written Testimony of
David Thorp, American Beverage Association
Before the House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness
In Opposition to H.B. 1747: Relating to Human Services/SNAP Waiver
February 3, 2026**

Good morning, Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition to H.B. 1747 – relating to human services and a SNAP waiver.

I am David Thorp, Vice President, State Government Affairs West for the American Beverage Association (ABA). The American Beverage Association is the trade association representing the non-alcoholic beverage industry across the country and here in Hawaii.

Hawaii Has Already Taken Action on SNAP

The Hawaii Department of Human Services submitted a SNAP waiver to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in October 2025 and received approval in December 2025 for its SNAP demonstration project beginning August 1, 2026. Time is needed to allow the state, retailers and SNAP recipients to implement the approved SNAP waiver before potential additional changes to the program are made.

Opposition to Restricting SNAP Choices

While we certainly agree on a desire for a strong, healthy Hawaii, we have fact-based doubts that this acutely narrow approach of a SNAP waiver proposed in H.B. 1747 will achieve the desired outcome.

We appreciate the desire to strengthen the vibrancy of Hawaii and its citizens. Hawaii's beverage companies share that goal and demonstrate it every day through the breadth of products we make, growth in good-paying jobs we provide and the economic impact we deliver for Hawaii communities and residents.

Importantly, we are actively pursuing this shared goal by doing our part to create healthy and strong communities. This is demonstrated by our successful work in Hawaii to reduce beverage calories in the marketplace through innovation, choice and improved access to zero-calorie beverages. We are delivering results: nearly 60% of the beverages now sold contain zero sugar.

We are proud to be part of Hawaii's communities and the work we do every day to deliver for our neighbors. That includes our leadership to build healthier communities and deliver the choices Hawaii residents want and the information they need to decide what's best for their families. Our industry's unrelenting focus on product innovation helps Americans find balance across the entire beverage portfolio – there is something for everyone.

Policy Considerations

Health

Obesity and chronic disease are serious problems facing our country that impact not only our health but the economy, national security and more. Tackling obesity requires comprehensive solutions, not a simplistic focus on one category of the diet or specific portion of the population.

Soft drinks are not driving obesity in America. While adult obesity has increased 37.4% and Medicaid costs are up 300% since 2000, beverage calories per serving are down 42% and full-calorie sales are down 22.9%. Further, according to the USDA, only 5.96% of the calories come from beverages, the vast majority of calories come from food.

The decline in beverage calories over the last 25 years is intentional. Our members listened to Americans, policymakers and the public health community. We transformed the beverage aisle, delivered clear information and helped Americans find balance. We introduced front-of-pack calorie labels, “mini” cans and popular and great tasting zero calorie alternatives to flagship products. As a result, nearly 60% of beverages Americans buy today have zero sugar, up from 49.5% just a decade ago.

SNAP restrictions will not improve health. [According to an analysis published in the journal of the American Public Health Association](#), “Evidence does not support the assertion that setting nutrition standards for eligible SNAP purchases will improve diet quality or health.”

Further, the families and veterans on SNAP make the same decisions we all do when it comes to buying groceries and they deserve the freedom to choose what they buy. In fact, USDA research shows SNAP households have the same spending habits as non-SNAP households. When it comes to beverages, SNAP households spent 5 cents per dollar on beverages compared to 4 cents per dollar for non-SNAP households. That’s a penny difference.

Conclusion

America’s beverage companies believe that providing Americans with more choices along with clear, transparent information is the best way to support balance and improve health. We will always stand up for our consumers and their right to make the best decisions for their families. That includes families on SNAP, most of whom are working but simply can’t make ends meet.

We are happy to continue the dialogue on this important issue. We can work together on impactful solutions that provide Hawaii residents with choice, information and access.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Thorp

David Thorp
American Beverage Association
Vice President, State Government Affairs West



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Health

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
Worker Initiatives

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Climate Change and Health
Working Group

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Immunization Coalition

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: January 30, 2026

To: Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair
Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Human Services and Homelessness

RE: Opposition to HB 1747, Relating to Food Security

Hrg: February 3, 2026 at 9:00 AM in Conference Room 329

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)¹ and the Healthy Eating, Active Living² (HEAL) coalition **opposes HB 1747**, relating to food security, which requires the Department of Human Services to request and implement waivers or waiver extensions from the federal government to make sugary drinks and candy ineligible foods for purchase with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Limiting Support Rather than Expanding It

SNAP's core purpose is to reduce hunger by ensuring low-income households have access to food that meets their needs. As anti-hunger advocates have noted, limiting eligible foods through food restriction waivers undermines the program's long-standing statutory structure, which intentionally allows broad food choice to ensure flexibility for diverse household needs.³

SNAP Recipients Deserve Agency and Support

Limiting the authority of SNAP recipients to make decisions for themselves, frames them as less capable than the rest of society. What is hurting them is not their personal capacity, but instead their economic one. If we want to encourage healthier behaviors, we should focus on ensuring economic security.

Full-time workers are dependent on SNAP benefits because their wages are too low and living costs are too high. 1 in 3 households face food insecurity each year. The state must adopt policies to ensure no person goes hungry in this state, or is dependent on SNAP benefits to help make ends meet.

¹ Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.

² The Healthy Eating + Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, formerly known as the Obesity Prevention Task Force, was created by the legislature in 2012 and is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations. The HEAL Coalition works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

³ <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/SNAP-Choice-Restriction-Waivers-Risks.pdf>



Healthy Behavior Changes Should be Focused Statewide

Hawai'i Public Health Institute supports policies that discourage unhealthy choices, but they should be focused on the population at-large, rather than just low-income families.

Instead of pursuing further SNAP restrictions, lawmakers could establish a sugary drink fee, which has been implemented in at least 40 countries and eight major U.S. cities. These fees have been shown to reduce sugary drink consumption for all income levels, while providing much-needed revenue for programs that benefit low-income communities.⁴

HIPHI urges the committee to oppose this measure. We encourage you to pass equity-driven and evidence-based policies that enhance food access for those who need it most.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nate Hix".

Nate Hix
Director of Policy and Advocacy

⁴ <https://PMC10686549>

HB-1747

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 5:46:42 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dalene McCormick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please consider passing this bill. As a taxpayer my hard work supports the SNAP program. I am grateful our country is getting more healthy. I do not support providing sugary drink and candy being able to be purchased using this program. Thank you

HB-1747

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 6:15:41 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Loree Jean Searcy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of bill HB1747

Food stamps or SNAP is provided for individuals needing help with their food and nutrition! As a registered dietitian as I am currently, candy and soft drinks and other sweets in general are non nutritious foods and contribute nothing to one's healthy intake. They are, in fact, contributing to increased propensity for chronic disease. Yes, eliminating these foods from their diets will be beneficial.

Thank you,

Loree Searcy, RDN

HB-1747

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 8:28:20 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Ilar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. As a registered nurse in the outpatient setting. I would say 70% of our patients are at least prediabetic or diabetic in all ages. It is important that we implement these type of legislation and be audited yearly. SNAP recipients are relying on tax payers. Most likely than not, they are also on some type of tax payer funded health insurance. As a taxpayer, it's unfair for me to work so hard, 2 jobs mind you, only to fund unhealthy individuals who may be younger and stronger physically than I am. SNAP recipients should be able to purchase only healthy foods...no alcoholic beverages, no fast food, no junk food (candies, potato chips). Since they are home most of the day, they have the time to cook healthy meals. Also, they need random drug testing. I heard that some SNAP recipients sell the products they purchase and use that money to purchase drugs and alcohol (that's another subject).

HB-1747

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 9:20:27 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Since sugar, especially in drink form, is a huge contributor to the obesity problem in the US, and obesity is such a big risk factor for many serious diseases including diabetes, it makes sense to discourage consumption as much as possible. I urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Dr. Lorna Holmes, Mo'ili'ili 96826

HB-1747

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 2:54:39 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vernelle Oku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Human Services & Homelessness Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1747, which would require the Department of Human Services to request and implement federal waivers or waiver extensions to make sugary drinks and candy ineligible for purchase using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and to submit annual reports to the Legislature on waiver status, ineligible foods, and implementation impacts.

My name is Vernelle Oku, and I live in Honolulu. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB1747 because I believe public assistance programs should be aligned with public health goals and the long-term well-being of Hawai‘i’s families.

Thank you for your kind consideration. I hope you and the committee vote in Support of HB 1747.

HB-1747

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 5:11:49 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Chen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Human Services & Homelessness Committee,
Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am in support of House Bill 1747.

I am concerned with Hawai'i's high rates of diet-related illnesses, including diabetes and obesity, which place significant strain on families, the healthcare system, and public resources. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is intended to support access to nutritious food but still allows for these unhealthy and unnutritious snacks and drinks.

This bill doesn't reduce access to food or limit households to meet basic needs. Instead, it allows for better stewardship of taxpayers' monies by aligning SNAP policy with evidence-based nutrition standards.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Committee to pass HB 1747 with a favorable recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Chen

HB-1747

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:18:36 AM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Bishop	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and HHS Committee Members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bipartisan bill that helps bring some common sense back into the SNAP program.

Please Support and pass HB1747.

With Aloha,

Lisa Bishop

Oahu Resident, homeowner, tax payer, voter

HB-1747

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:44:50 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am Jennifer Lum from 'Ewa Beach. I am writing in opposition of HB1747 - Banning Sugary Products for SNAP Recipients.

This bill would ban SNAP recipients from purchasing sugary products using SNAP benefits. This is very problematic as it frames SNAP recipients as incapable of making smart choices and it removes their agency to decide what's best for them. I am opposing this measure, as I would rather see the state prioritize improving the lives of SNAP recipients and adopting healthy eating policies for the entire state rather than just SNAP recipients.

- 1 in 3 households face food insecurity. We need to prioritize bringing that number down to 0 rather than imposing new limits on those in need.
- SNAP recipients deserve agency over their own purchases, just like the rest of the population has.
- Attacking the decision-making authority of SNAP recipients frames them as incapable of deciding what is best for them. SNAP recipients do not deserve this treatment.
- Please oppose this bill and work to improve our economy to ensure no person faces food insecurity.

Hawai'i already has a food security issue, with 80-90% of our food imported, making it hard to find affordable locally grown food for even the most secure families. Any help the state could provide to the least of our people would be our kuleana. Letting people be in control of their own decisions is also our kuleana.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Jen Lum, 'Ewa Beach

HB-1747

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:04:56 PM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 3, 2026
Testimony in OPPOSITION of HB 1747
Relating to Human Services
Committee on Human Services and Homelessness

Dear Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB1747.

SNAP exists to help families put food on the table with dignity and stability. HB1747 would move Hawai‘i in the opposite direction by directing DHS to pursue federal waivers to restrict what low-income households can purchase and to police food choices.

Evidence shows these food restriction waivers create more harm than benefit. They increase confusion for families, add costly administrative burdens for already stretched state staff, and place new compliance burdens on local retailers who serve as essential food access points. For a program designed to reduce hunger efficiently, this adds red tape and costs without clear benefit.

If the goal is better health, we should fund what actually works. Hawai‘i already has a proven model in Double Up Food Bucks (DA BUX), which increases fruit and vegetable purchases while supporting local farmers and circulating dollars back into our local economy. DA BUX has demonstrated measurable health and economic returns, yet the Legislature has only recently begun to meaningfully invest in it. Please do not waste government time and resources on failed, punitive measures that do not improve health. Instead, strengthen and fund evidence-based solutions like DA BUX that deliver real outcomes for families and communities.

If we care about cost efficiency, we should avoid expensive system changes that burden DHS and retailers. If we care about dignity, we should trust families to make their own food choices.

Finally, it is striking that this bill has so many Republican co-sponsors who for decades have cried against government overreach and “Big Government” telling people what to do. Yet this proposal would have the government monitoring grocery carts and restricting personal choices. How big is government now?

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to hold HB1747.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jordan Smith
Honolulu, 96817

HB-1747

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:55:46 AM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

HB-1747

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:40:35 AM
Testimony for HSH on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tessy Kekahuna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support, sugary drinks and candy should be ineligible for purchase.

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

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Finance

Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday February 3, 2026, 9:00am

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, CR 329 & Videoconference

Re: Judith Ann Armstrong Oppose the HB1747 Relating to Human Services

Dear Chair Rep. Lisa Marten, Vice Chair Rep Ikaika Olds and members of the Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

I, Judith Ann Armstrong, Oppose HB1747 Banning Sugary Products for SNAP Recipients

This bill would ban SNAP recipients from purchasing sugary products using SNAP benefits. This is very problematic as it frames SNAP recipients as incapable of making smart choices and it removes their agency to decide what's best for them. HIPHI will be opposing this measure, as we would rather see the state prioritize improving the lives of SNAP recipients, and adopting healthy eating policies for the entire state rather than just SNAP recipients.

As a T1 diabetic I on occasion need to consume something sugary to correct low blood sugar in my system.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith Ann Armstrong