

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **3333**

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1518
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Health and Human Services, to which was referred H.B. No. 1518, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) By January 1, 2028, require the Department of Human Services, upon obtaining a federal waiver, to establish a pre-release Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application process for inmates nearing release; and
- (2) Allow all individuals convicted of an offense involving the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance to apply for SNAP benefits, regardless of treatment status.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission; Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Department of Research and Development of the County of Hawaii; one member of the Hawaii County Council; Hawai'i Public Health Institute; Catholic Charities Hawai'i; Community Alliance on



Prisons; Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!; Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice; AlohaCare; ACLU of Hawai'i; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Hawai'i Hunger Action Network; Malama Kaua'i; Hawai'i Foodbank; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; and twenty-seven individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Human Services.

Your Committee finds that individuals leaving correctional facilities face an immediate period of vulnerability, often with limited financial resources, unstable housing, and barriers to employment. When these individuals are engaged with support services, such as access to basic necessities like food, housing, and income, before their exit from correctional facilities, their chances of successful reintegration into communities are increased and the likelihood of recidivism is lowered. Your Committee further believes ensuring timely access to SNAP benefits for individuals leaving correctional facilities provides a critical stabilizing resource that supports lawful reintegration and reduces the pressure to return to survival-based criminal activity. This bill strengthens the community reentry pipeline by allowing individuals in correctional facilities to begin SNAP eligibility processing before release, eliminating unnecessary gaps in support during a high-risk transition period.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of February 28, 2027, for this measure's pre-release SNAP application process; and
- (2) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Health and Human Services that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1518, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1518, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Health and Human
Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



